



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL MIGRATION and HOME AFFAIRS

Directorate A: Strategy and General Affairs
Unit A.1: Inter-Institutional Relations and Citizenship

SUBJECT: REPORT OF THE 28 JUNE 2017 CIVIL DIALOGUE MEETING

The Europe for Citizens Civil Dialogue meeting took place in Brussels on 28 June 2017, chaired by Ms Marta Cygan, Director of Strategic and General Affairs, DG HOME, European Commission. The European Commission, in accordance with Article 10 of the Council regulation establishing the Europe for Citizens Programme (EfCP) for the period 2014-2020¹, has "a regular dialogue with the beneficiaries of the programme and relevant partners and experts", called the Civil Dialogue.

Civil Dialogue meetings gather the key stakeholders involved in the EfCP, along with the European Commission, namely DG HOME and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA):

- organisations which have been selected to receive an operating grant under the current programme;*
- organisations who have received an operating grant under the former 2007-2013 programme and expressed their interest to take part in the dialogue;*
- organisations or think-tanks who expressed their interest for the programme and/or work in the same policy area.*

The 28 June meeting gathered 52 participants from civil society organisations, 2/3 of them receiving in 2017 an operating grant from the EfCP.

After welcoming the participants, Ms Marta Cygan reminded the importance of the civil dialogue for the European Union, in a quite difficult context, between the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome and Brexit, euroscepticism and populism. She underlined the opportunity that constitutes the White Paper on the Future of Europe, presented by President Juncker, allowing the Commission to listen more than ever to citizens, the Civil Dialogue being an excellent occasion to contribute to the debate. After reminding that we are at mid-term of the EfCP 2014-2020, Ms Cygan recalled that it is not only time to evaluate our work, but also to brainstorm on the subject, in order to share and confront our ideas to prepare the future.

1. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MID-TERM EVALUATION.

The European Parliament (EP) and the Commission worked or are working, at mid-term, on the evaluation of the EfCP 2014-2020. The EP delivered in February 2017 an implementation report

¹ OJ L 115, 17.4.2014, p.3

on the programme. On its side, the Commission is currently working on the mid-term evaluation of the 2014-2020 EfCP.

1.1. The mid-term evaluation of the Europe for Citizens Programme 2014-2020

Ms Jutta König-Georgiades (DG. HOME A1) gave a presentation on the current mid-term evaluation. The aim of this evaluation is first to verify if the recommendations of the ex-post evaluation of the 2007-2013 programme have been followed. It also has to check if the programme is on track to achieving its general and specific objectives.

The general objectives of the Europe for Citizens Programme 2014-2020 are:

- *to contribute to citizens' understanding of the Union, its history and diversity;*
- *to foster European citizenship and to improve conditions for civic and democratic participation at Union level.*

Specific objectives shall be pursued on a transnational level or with a European dimension:

- *to raise awareness of remembrance, the common history and values of the Union and the Union's aim, namely to promote peace, the values of the Union and the well-being of its peoples by stimulating debate, reflection and the development of networks;*
- *to encourage democratic and civic participation of citizens at Union level, by developing citizens' understanding of the Union policymaking process and promoting opportunities for societal and intercultural engagement and volunteering at Union.*

The report will also assess qualitative and quantitative aspects of the programme implementation and suggest future orientations for the future financial framework after 2020. After describing the timeline and indicating that she will only give some preliminary findings, Ms König-Georgiades noted that Deloitte, who is providing support for the evaluation in cooperation with Coffey International, shows clearly, in its draft report, that the EfCP is on track for achieving its objectives.

According to the preliminary findings of Deloitte, the general objectives appear to be relevant to the current needs in the EU to encourage civic participation and awareness of the EU values, history and diversity; the two EfCP strands are particularly relevant for responding to those needs. The activities funded by the EfCP have contributed to the programme's general objectives, with a significant number of direct and indirect participants being reached. Action and operating grants have been implemented in an efficient way and achieved their specific objectives. EfCP is coherent with other funding programmes in the field of EU citizenship.

1.2. The European Parliament Implementation Report on the Europe for Citizens Programme 2014-2020

Ms María Teresa Giménez Barbat, MEP, gave a presentation as rapporteur of the European Parliament's implementation report on the EfCP. Through the example of the effect of Brexit on the academic community, she explained how it shows the importance of the EfCP, notably due to the lack of shared sense of European identity.

She also insisted on the necessity to raise the budget of the programme in the future; compared with the former 2007-2013 EfCP, there has been a significant 14% decrease of the budget, when the EfCP is the only programme of the European Union totally dedicated to European Citizenship. She reminded that the report asks for a raise of budget up to EUR 500 million for the programme starting in 2021.

She noted that the report asked the European Commission to develop an innovative communication strategy on the programme, as it is currently still not well-enough known throughout Europe. For her, the European Remembrance strand should not only take into account Europe's past and memory, but should convey a new narrative underlining what we have in common; the aim is not to obliterate the memory, but this should be mainly the purpose of the recently inaugurated House of European History.

Ms Giménez Barbat also stressed the necessity to use the ordinary legislative procedure to adopt the future EfCP, contrary to the current one, which has been adopted through Art 352 TFEU, which imposes to the Council to act unanimously and to obtain the consent of the EP.

1.3. Debate on the Mid-term Evaluation and on the Implementation Report

Based on the statements made by Ms König-Georgiades and Ms Giménez Barbat, the debate was an opportunity for the key stakeholders to express their position and to ask for further details.

The exchanges have been opened by the **European Civic Forum**, which underlined the necessity for a strong support to civil society, notably on a financial point of view. **ECAS** noted on its side that communication and visibility have to be improved and asked if the mid-term evaluation shows areas of improvement for the EfCP. The **Intercultural Communication Leadership School** expressed its disappointment on the fact that the White Paper on the Future of Europe does not refer to citizenship and civil society, hence not giving a political support to the programme.

On remembrance, some NGOs supported Ms Giménez Barbat suggestion to not consider only the past and memory in Strand 1. For instance, **European Alternatives** noted that in UK, the vast majority of people do not know the reasons for which the EU has been created and that a lot could have been done on that. A lot of participants approved the idea of giving more space to the European Parliament in the legislative process, following Ms Giménez Barbat request to have a co-decision procedure for the future EfCP. For instance, **ALDA**, who also made an update on its *500 Million Voices* campaign, considered that the role given to the Council of the European Union – which did not participate to the meeting – is too high and that more leverage should be given to the European Parliament. On its side, **CCFE-CEMR** considered the Council to be an important partner in the programme. **Civil Society Europe** also indicated that the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is about to release an opinion on the funding of civil society, a potential reference for the EfCP. **Community Media for Europe (CMFE)** considered that the strong presence of governmental bodies could be changed by improving the role of small NGOs. **Europeum** underlined the importance of promoting the EU values.

European House insisted on the necessity to get the reaction of Member States on the future programme, which will begin after the 2019 European Parliament elections. The organisation also suggested identifying national members of the EU umbrella organisations, in order to create an informal gathering. The **Intercultural Communication Leadership School** also asked if the mid-term evaluation would contribute to in political and legislative decisions at national level. The **EUCLID Network** wonder if each invested Euro in the EfCP has an economic return and want to know it exists some research on digital democracy, suggesting bringing DG RTD on board.

Furthermore, **CCFE-CEMR** expressed the need to make better use of the Civil Dialogue, asking also for a dedicated discussion at higher political level. **EUNET**, who considers that EfCP is the

most important and most frustrating programme due to a very low success rate which undermines it, reminded that in the past, there were more regular meetings, also on political issues. However, the **Institut für Europäische Politik (IEP)** insisted on the fact that the EfCP is very different from other programmes – such as ERASMUS+, often quoted by participants – and that synergies will be limited.

- *The participants to the debate noted the positive aspects of EfCP, underlined by both the speakers.*
- *EfCP is considered as an important programme to consolidate and strengthen pro-European forces.*
- *Citizenship is also what the citizens want to make out of it; several participants insisted on the necessity to increase the participation to EP elections.*
- *Participants underlined the importance of political support for the programme in all institutions.*

2. FUTURE EUROPE FOR THE CITIZENS PROGRAMME POST-2020 – BRAINSTORM

The aim of this part of the meeting was not only to share elements to prepare the future programme, but also to address some issues, such as budget, the role of civil society organisations in the future and their capacity to contribute with expected lower resources and the evolution of the programme facing euroscepticism. Four points have been discussed:

- (1) Lessons-learnt and best practices
 - (2) Objectives of the future programme
 - (3) Activities to be supported
 - (4) How do participants see their role in the future programme?
- Some participants opened the debate by asking if the programme should remain shared into two strands or if each category should not have its own funding; on the contrary, some organisations do not want to change the structure of two strands, like the **European Association of History Educators**. The **Intercultural Communication Leadership School** also suggested to split the programme in three and to promote underrepresented groups. Some organisations, such as the **European Policy Centre**, supported the principle of creating a new narrative on EfCP. Some organisations found tricky to define this new narrative; according to **ALDA**, the new narrative could be the reintegration of the European identity in the programme. The important role of the national contact points (NCP) was underlined, notably by **CCRE-CEMR**, which suggested to use the civil dialogue to exchange with the NCPs. **European Alternatives** noted that the cities are the place for democratic innovation. The **European House** insisted on the necessity to keep the programme independent, while the **EUCLID Network** recommended not to instrumentalise the European civil society networks.
 - The participants took also the opportunity to ask questions, notably on grants application procedure, to the representatives of the EACEA. The agency will put on its website an example of the application. The next generation of programmes will take suggestions into

account. About feedback, EACEA gives a general overview to all the applicants. Discussions are ongoing to revise the process with HOME.

- The civil dialogue is frequently appreciated by the participants; some of them would however prefer it to take place more often. **CCRE-CEMR** insisted on the necessity to reinforce the civil dialogue, notably by developing the agenda together. The **Internationale Partnerschaft** suggested to simplify the rules and to include neighbouring countries. However, **ALDA** considered that a discrepancy exists between the existing programme/budget and its ambitions. This organisation noted that the link between the different parts of the programme adds value, and new points like the European Solidarity Corps have a good resonance. The **Social Platform** supports the continuation of the programme and insisted on the importance of the operating grants and of the multiannual priorities. In terms of structures and of diversity of organisations, some participants insisted on the size of the stakeholders; "Small is beautiful" has been repeated; but some participants also used the problems related to the budget to value the small projects ; as 80% (according to **ALDA**) of the projects cannot be funded, we still can valorise what is behind.
- The idea of diversity was very present: diversity of organisations and missions, diversity in history, diversity in origins, diversity in culture. The **EUCLID Network** supported this idea, considering it as strength. The question of better visibility and communication on the programme was also raised. Organisations like **CCRE-CEMR** regretted the fact that, beyond the newsletter, there was no dissemination of material on EfCP and considered that there is room for some improvement on communication. Some participants made a link between EfCP and the situation of migrants; the idea that their children could be European citizens during the future programme has been evoked. At the same time, **ALDA** valued the importance of the European identity.
- The budget issues have also been debated. Some participants, like **EUNET**, insisted on the necessity to keep the operating grants as part of the programme; the same participant insisted on the necessity to keep EfCP independent from other projects, with no link to JUST and with national agencies. The **European Academy Berlin** reminded that the current achievements are fragile and that the legal basis of the programme has been frequently discussed; a relative consensus appeared on the necessity to have a better involvement of the EP. The **Social Platform** reminded of the importance of Art. 11 TEU.
- Mr Philippe Chantraine (HOME A.1) reminded that a public consultation has been launch in the framework of the review of the citizen's initiative and that the contribution of the participants would be welcome. He also recalled that the presence of EfCP logos during events and on documents published by the beneficiaries remains important in terms of visibility and communication.

Ms Marta Cygan concluded the debate. She listed the points emerging from the brainstorming: simplification of procedures, budgetary constraints, legal basis and communication. She also developed the next steps:

- *The mid-term evaluation, with the release of the external study of Deloitte; the Commission will present its mid-term evaluation report by the end of 2017, based on the external study and our own assessment;*
- *The call for operating grants, to begin this summer.*
- *A conference with all the relevant stakeholders, beginning of 2018.*

ANNEX: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

European Commission

DG Home

Marta Cygan	Director, Strategy and General Affairs
Philippe Chantraine	Deputy Head of Unit, Inter-Institutional Relations and Citizenship
Jutta König-Georgiades	Policy Officer, Europe for the Citizens
Carine Lambot	Assistant, Europe for the Citizens
Daniela Mormile	Policy Officer, Europe for the Citizens
François Théron	Policy Officer, Europe for the Citizens
Pavel Tychtl	Policy Officer, Europe for the Citizens

EACEA

Gilles Pelayo	Head of Unit, Europe for the Citizens
Anna Cozzoli	Head of Sector, Europe for the Citizens

Participants

Oonagh Aitken	Volunteering Matters
Judit B.Horvath	Future of Europe Association
Adrian Balutel	Young European Federalists
Miklos Barabas	European House
Stephen Barnett	EUCLID Network
Vladimir Bartovic	EUROPEUM
Chloé Berthelemy	Young European Federalists
Carlotta Besozzi	Civil Society Europe
Elisabeth Bisland	European Policy Centre
Giulia Bonacquisti	TEPSA
Giulia Bordin	European Volunteer Centre
Kerstin Born-Sirkel	European Policy Centre
Paolo Celot	EAVI

Maurice Claassens	SOLIDAR
Clara Creixams	CIDOB
Charles de Marcilly	Fondation Robert Schuman
Claude Debrulle	AEDH
Valeryia Despaigne-Chemyak	ETUCE
François Fameli	CAFEBABEL
Petros Fassoulas	European Movement International
Judith Geerling	EUROCLIO
Ewelina Gorecka	Polish Robert Schuman Foundation
Thomas Heckeberg	EUNET
Natasha Ibbotson	Friends of Europe
Joana Judice	EFUS
Assya Kavrakova	ECAS
Mariam Khotenashvili	TEPSA
Julia Klein	IEP
Carlos Mascarell Vilar	CCRE-CEMR
Martin Michelot	EUROPEUM
Nicolas Migeot	European Movement International
Nicholas Milanese	European Alternatives
Marco Morelli	FONDACA
Alexandrina Najmowicz	European Civic Forum
Guido Orlandini	ICLS
Giuseppe Perretti	Active Citizenship Network
Weronika Priesmeyer-Tkocz	Europäische Akademie Berlin
Judith Purkarthofer	CMFE
Kélig Puyet	Social Platform
Monica Radu	Association Jean Monnet
Elfriede Reglsberger	IEP

Annica Ryngbeck

Social Platform

Piotr Sadowski

Volunteering Matters

Richard Stock

Centre européen Robert Schuman

Zuzana Stuchlíková

EUROPEUM

Victor Tanzarella

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ALDA

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Institut Jacques Delors

Mariano Votta

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Internationale Partnerschaft

Brikena Xhomaqi

Lifelong Learning Platform