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**COMMISSION STAFF WORKING PAPER**

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

*Accompanying the document*

**Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE COUNCIL establishing for the period 2014-2020 the programme "Europe for Citizens" to promote European citizenship**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Development of the programme**

The Europe for Citizens Programme 2007-2013 follows on from the Community Action programme to promote active European Citizenship (civic participation) 2004-2006. This programme was established by the Council in January 2004, for a period of three years ending in December 2006.

The overarching aims were to reinforce an open dialogue with civil society on the principles of transparency and democratic control and to intensify links between citizens of different countries. Although the EU had previously been supporting active European Citizenship for a number of years under various budget lines, there was no legal base for awarding grants in this field.

The 2004-2006 programme had a budget of €72 million (an annual average of €24 million) and a specific remit to co-fund, through an operating grant, organisations pursuing an aim of general European interest in the field of active European Citizenship (organisations promoting European ideas and debate and organisations and "think tanks" promoting European values and objectives) and actions initiated by civil society organisations (actions by nongovernmental organisations, associations and federations of European interest or cross-industry trade unions and town twinning projects). In total over 30 organisations received an operating grant, whereas around 250 NGOs, associations and federations and trade union projects received funding between 2004 and 2005. Over 2,800 town twinning projects received funding during the same period.

Prior to this, dating back as far as the years after the Second World War the first form of town-twinning was born. Particularly in France and Germany, the idea of building partnerships between cities, towns and municipalities gained speed. Since 1989, the EU has supported town-twinning projects to strengthen existing links and encourage new ones, especially where a European added-value can be shown.

Drawing on the experience gained from both town-twinning and the 2004-2006 Programme and justified by the lasting need for structured support for civic participation, the current Europe for Citizens Programme (2007-2013) was established. Its main objectives are to give citizens the opportunity to participate in the construction of an ever closer Europe, to develop a European identity, to foster a sense of ownership of the EU, and to enhance tolerance and mutual understanding. In order to achieve this, four distinct "actions" were conceived: 1) "Active citizens for Europe", 2) "Active civil society in Europe", 3) "Together for Europe", and 4) "Active European Remembrance".

Action 1 involves citizens directly by means of town-twinning activities and citizens' projects to debate European issues. Action 2 provides support for "think tanks", civil society organisations at European level, and projects initiated by civil society organisations at local, regional and national levels. Action 3 covers high-profile events (such as commemorations of historical events, awards, artistic events), as well as studies and opinion polls. Action 4 supports projects to preserve European remembrance (commemorating the victims of the crimes committed during Nazism and Stalinism regimes).

The current programme has a total budget of € 215 million. To date, it has supported more than 9.000 projects involving more than 1 million citizens per year in these activities (full list available at [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/results\\_compendia/results\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/results_compendia/results_en.php)). A rough breakdown per year indicates that Action 1 supports approx. 1.100 projects/year [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/results\\_compendia/results\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/citizenship/results_compendia/results_en.php), Action 2 approx. 190 projects/year, Action 3, implemented exclusively through service contracts, about 5 projects/year, and Action 4 roughly 50 projects per year. See Annex 1 “Europe for Citizens programme outputs (2007-2010)”.

## **1.2. Delivery mechanisms**

A. PROJECT GRANTS - projects are actions with a limited lifetime during which proposed specific activities are implemented. (Approximately 1 100 per year)

B. OPERATING GRANTS - operating grants are different from project grants in that they provide financial support for costs required for the proper conduct of the usual and permanent activities of an organisation, namely staff costs, the cost of internal meetings, publications, information and dissemination, travel costs arising from the implementation of the work programme, rental payments, depreciation and other costs directly linked to the organisation's work programme. (Approximately 50 per year)

C. SERVICE CONTRACTS – following open Calls for Tender. (Approximately 1-2 per year)

### *1.2.1. Eligibility*

Eligible organisations and eligibility criteria are detailed in the table below:

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	ACTION 1 - Active Citizens for Europe				ACTION 2 - Active Civil Society in Europe			ACTION 4
	Measure 1.1 Town Twinning Citizens' Meetings*	Measure 1.2 Networks of Twinned Towns	Measure 2.1 Citizens' Projects	Measure 2.2 Support Measures	Measure 1 Structural Support for EU Think Tanks	Measure 2 Structural Support for CSOs at EU level	Measure 3 Support for Projects Initiated by CSOs	Active European Remembrance
A. NATURE OF APPLICANT/PARTNERS								
A.1 LEGAL STATUS: ALL applicants/partners must be either PUBLIC BODIES or NON PROFIT ORGANISATIONS with legal personality depending on the measure you apply for								
A.2 ALL applicants/partners must be ESTABLISHED in one of the participating Programme country (EU Member states + Croatia, Albania, FYROM)								
A.3 TYPE of organisation								
PUBLIC BODIES or NON PROFIT ORGANISATION WITH LEGAL PERSONALITY	Towns/Municipalities	Towns/Municipalities	Local authorities	Federations/associations of local authorities	EU public policy research organisations (think tanks)	CSOs at EU level, promoting active European citizenship (see p.XXX)	CSOs (for definition see p.XXX)	Memorials/Museums  Survivor's associations  Entities managing remembrance  NGOs  Federations of general interests  Local/Regional authorities
	Twinning committees representing local authorities	Twinning committees representing local authorities	CSOs (for definition see p. XXX)	Bodies with specific knowledge/experience of citizenship				
	Non-profit organisations representing local authorities	Non-profit organisations representing local authorities						
		Local/Regional authorities						
		Federations/associations of local authorities						
A.4 MINIMUM NUMBER OF PARTNERS (i.e. countries) to be involved in a project including applicant, of which at least one is an EU Member State								
At least 2 participating countries	X			X	N/A	N/A	X	N/A
At least 4 participating countries		X			N/A	N/A		
At least 5 participating countries			X		N/A	N/A		
B. PROJECT/WORK PROGRAMME NATURE AND DIMENSION								
B.1 MINIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS per project								
	25	30	200	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
B.2 BUDGET								
MINIMUM grant eligible for a project/work programme (EUR)	5 000.00	10 000.00	100 000.00	30 000.00	N/A	N/A	10 000.00	10 000.00
MAXIMUM grant eligible for a project/work programme (EUR)	25 000.00	150 000.00	250 000.00	100 000.00	100 000.00	100 000.00	150 000.00	55 000.00
B.3 VENUES and Number of activities: The activities must take place in any of the eligible programme countries (see p.XXX)*								
Minimum Number of events per project	N/A	at least 3 events	N/A	at least 2 events	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
B.4 PROJECT DURATION - Maximum project duration within the relevant eligibility period								
	9 months per project/ 21 days (meeting duration)	24 months per project/ 21 days per event	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	18 months	12 months
C. APPLICATION								
C.1 Official application form : The project proposal is eligible if it is submitted using the currently available grant application electronic form (eForm)								
C.2 Deadline: Project proposals have to be submitted within the deadlines foreseen for each Programme measure and start within the relevant eligible period ( see p.XXX )								
C.3 Official language: The official application form (eFORM) has to be completed in full in one of the EU official languages								

### *1.2.2. Co-financing*

The EU grant cannot finance the entire costs of the project or operating costs of an organisation. Promoters must show their commitment to the project by finding financing sources other than the Union grant. This can be done, for example, by running fund-raising activities, by adding own resources, or by requesting grants from other organisations (e.g. local or regional authorities, foundations, etc.).

### **1.3. Current political context**

As stated by President Barroso in his State of the Union Address 2011, we are now faced with the greatest challenge that our Union has gone through in its whole history. It is a financial, economic and social crisis, but also a crisis of confidence. National plans or even intergovernmental co-operations are not sufficient to tackle such large scale economic and social problems. In this situation, it is even more important to make known to the citizens the Union's role and achievements. The Commission thus needs to find ways of increasing citizens' awareness and understanding about the EU project.

Despite the fact that European citizenship gives additional rights and opportunities to everyone, the sense of belonging and of European identity is not yet a reality. According to data from the Eurobarometer survey (August 2011), less than half (41%) of European citizens trust the EU or feel a sense of belonging to it. While only 47% of citizens say they know their rights, 73% of respondents would like to know more about these.

This gap between the EU and its citizens materialises in an increasing detachment, even euro-scepticism in some cases, and a reduced interest in EU matters (evidenced by the decline in voter turn-out in European elections: from almost 62% in 1979 to 45.47% in 2004 and 43% in 2009).

The Commission thus needs to take action to promote civic participation, transform citizens from spectators into actors willing to contribute to the European renewal, be it through participation in the political life or through engagement into their community at whatever level. This means also to give citizens and representative associations the opportunity to make known and exchange views in all areas of Union action, as called upon by the Treaty on European Union.

### **1.4. Financial framework**

On 29 June 2011, the European Commission presented its multi-annual financial framework (MFF) for the period 2014-2020. The indicative budget adopted for the future Europe for Citizens programme was €203 million with an estimated distribution of €29 million per year. These amounts do not take into account future correction by indexation.

## **2. PROCEDURAL ISSUES AND CONSULTATION OF INTERESTED PARTIES**

### **Lead Directorate-General:**

Directorate-General for Communication



**Other services involved:**

Secretariat General

Directorate-General for Justice

Directorate-General for Education and Culture

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Directorate-General for Budget

Directorate-General for Regional Policy

Legal Service

**Agenda planning or Work Programme reference:**

N/A

**2.1. Organisation and timing**

Chronology of the impact assessment:

- 22 June 2010: First consultation meeting with stakeholders
- 10 September 2010: First Impact Assessment Steering Group. The following DGs participated in the session: SG, JUST, EAC, EMPL and REGIO. Invited but not represented: SJ, BUDG, INFSO, MARKT, RTD.
- October 2010: Interim evaluation of the current programme, Final Report (external contractor)<sup>1</sup>
- 27 October 2010 – 5 January 2011: Open public online consultation
- 1 March 2011: Communication on the mid-term evaluation of the current programme<sup>2</sup>
- 21 June 2011: Second consultation meeting with stakeholders
- 5 July 2011: Second Impact Assessment Steering Group. The following DGs participated in this session: SG, SJ, JUST, EAC, EMPL. Invited but not represented: BUDG, INFSO, MARKT, REGIO, RTD.
- 21 September 2011: the Impact Assessment Board discussed the draft Impact Assessment report and asked for several improvements in the report, in particular to provide a more complete and focused problem analysis, to be more specific about the

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<sup>1</sup> Interim Evaluation of the European for Citizens Programme 2007-13, Final Report, ECORYS, October 2010 ([http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/news/news1293\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/news/news1293_en.htm))

<sup>2</sup> COM(2011) 83 final of 11.3.2011 Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions "Report on the mid-term evaluation of the Europe for Citizens Programme 2007-2013"

objectives, to design and assess substantive policy options, and to clarify evaluation arrangements and define more robust progress indicators. These elements have been included in the current report which has been submitted to the Board.

## **2.2. Consultation and expertise**

### *2.2.1. Consultation within the Commission*

DGs and services consulted are stated above (2.1).

### *2.2.2. External expertise*

An external contractor, ECORYS UK Limited, was commissioned under the Framework Contract for Evaluation, Impact Assessment and Related Services (EAC/03/06) to carry out an interim evaluation of the EU's Europe for Citizens programme (2007-2013).

Besides providing an overview of the results obtained in the first three years of the current programme, the interim evaluation was also intended to feed into the reflections on the preparation of the post-2013 programme. The interim evaluation, final report was completed in October 2010 and provided the basis for the Commission Communication adopted on the 1 March 2011.

ECORYS UK Limited also supported the Commission in the final analysis of the responses received under the online consultation 27 October 2010 - 5 January 2011 on the next generation of the Programme.

### *2.2.3. Consultation of stakeholders*

#### *Stakeholder meetings*

Consultation with the main stakeholders of the "Citizens for Europe" programme has been substantial. Their views have been sought on the following occasions:

- On 20 June 2010, a consultation meeting was held in Brussels with the major stakeholders: the group members of the regular NGO consultation (for details, see below), the national contact points for European Citizenship (PECs), the Council for European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and the Town-Twinning Coordinators, and members of the Programme Committee. The proceedings were based on an open agenda with a highly participatory approach.
- On 27 October 2010, an open public online consultation was launched (see below)
- On 21 June 2011, a second stakeholder meeting took place in Brussels with 100 participants.
- May-June 2011, three focus group surveys held in Paris, Warsaw and Vienna on different aspects of the Programme (town-twinning, the impact on the development of civil society, remembrance) bringing stakeholders together with researchers, local and national governments, and journalists (see 2.3.4.).
- Regular NGO consultation: Comprises of regular meetings between the Commission and approximately 70 key European organisations actively involved in the Europe

for Citizens Programme. Participation in this group follows an expression of interest to do so by the different organisations. Many of these are beneficiaries of operating grants in the framework of the Programme. Discussions cover a range of issues associated with methodology, participation and the international or political context, designed to bolster the efficiency of the Programme and help the Commission to better tailor it to the needs of partners. The detailed consultations carried out for the mid-term evaluation of the Programme suggest that this was seen as a useful and constructive process, helping stakeholders to play a role in shaping the Programme.

### *Open public online consultation*

An open public online consultation on the future of the "Europe for Citizens" programme was launched on 27 October 2010 by means of the Commission's IPM (Interactive Policy Making) tool. The consultation was open until 5 January 2011 and invited contributions from all interested parties: individual citizens, civil society organisations, public authorities and administrations, research institutions, European and international organisations and others. 412 respondents participated, with 5 additional submissions received separately.

Wide publicity was given to this public consultation by placing it on the "Your Voice in Europe" website and by sending information about the consultation to:

- the Programme Committee members;
- the group members of the regular NGO consultation;
- the Europe for Citizens Contact Points;
- the CEMR's network of Town twinning coordinators;
- and other Europe for Citizens Programme stakeholders and beneficiaries;
- the networks of Europe Direct Information centres;
- several contact points and stakeholders within DG EAC and DG REGIO programmes.

The opinions expressed have been analysed by the Commission with the help of an external consultant (see section 2.2.2.). The results and a detailed analysis of the public consultation are available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship>

## **2.3. Main results and follow-up to the consultations and evaluations**

### *2.3.1. Results of the interim evaluation of the Europe for Citizens programme (2007-2013)*

The results of two studies (conducted in 2008 and 2009) and the interim evaluation of the current "Europe for Citizens" programme (conducted in 2009/2010) already provide an indication of the programme's achievements up to present. The interim evaluation looked at the impact of the programme on participating organisations, on individuals, and on policy development.

To address the concern of having a too positively biased midterm report, the interim evaluation also included a survey among ineligible and unsuccessful bids, which was able to explore some views from outside the circle of supported organisations.

As far as **the relevance** of the programme is concerned the evidence provided by the interim evaluation suggests that the objectives of the programme are valid to the overarching aim of "giving citizens the opportunity to interact and participate in constructing an ever-closer Europe, thus developing citizenship of the European Union"<sup>3</sup>.

On **efficiency**, the interim evaluation argues that "there is a case for concluding that the current programme strikes a good balance and achieves good cost-effectiveness, by combining actions which reach out to small scale operators and newcomers and those which support capacity building"<sup>4</sup>.

On **effectiveness**, the report concludes that "Programme spending to support projects is consistent with expectations at this stage and in general annual and medium-term targets related to activities (e.g. number of projects and participation rates) are being met"<sup>5</sup>.

#### 2.3.1.1. Impact on organisations

82% of the respondents (and 84% of those representing civil society) felt that the programme had helped to develop the capacity of their organisation. While most believed that the programme had served to extend the scale and the scope of activities, many others highlighted its impact in terms of innovation, knowledge-sharing, dissemination activity and mobility.

The interim evaluation also showed that the programme had a positive impact on the town twinning movement, which is one of the most significant beneficiaries of the current programme. The selection criteria induced potential beneficiaries to develop links with policy issues, such as remembrance or the environment, and to achieve greater thematic coverage. The persons participating in these twinning activities are also important multipliers at the local level, spreading a feeling of solidarity and mutual understanding among the participants.

#### 2.3.1.2. Impact on participants

The study on developing impact indicators for the Europe for Citizens programme and adapting them to the 2009 Annual Management Plan "Europe for Citizens Survey 2009" highlighted the changes in attitudes of those who participated in the activities financed by the programme either once or repeatedly. Results show that 83% of respondents in the survey feel more aware of aspects relating to European culture, identity and heritage as a result of participation in the programme's activities. 75% of respondents claim to feel more European and 71% claim to feel more part of the European Union. The proportion of respondents claiming to feel more solidarity with fellow Europeans was 82%.

#### 2.3.1.3. Impact on policy development

Less than half of the stakeholders taking part in the web survey believed that the programme supports institutional and process improvements at either EU or Member State level; although two-thirds felt that the programme helps to promote more coherent policy development in the

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<sup>3</sup> Interim Evaluation of the European for Citizens Programme 2007-13, Final Report, ECORYS, October 2010

COM(2011) 83 final of 11.3.2011 Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions "Report on the mid-term evaluation of the Europe for Citizens Programme 2007-2013"

<sup>4</sup> idem

<sup>5</sup> idem

area of citizenship. There are no clear patterns in responses by type of stakeholder. Europe for Citizens Contact Points in the MS (PECs) and European level civil society organisations are split relatively evenly between those who feel the programme has an influence on policy or practice and those who feel it does not.

### *2.3.2. Results of the public online consultation*

The consultation ran for 10 weeks between 27 October 2010 and 5 January 2011 and invited contributions from all interested parties: individual citizens, civil society organisations, public authorities and administrations, research institutions, European and international organisations and others. The largest single group of respondents is individual citizens with 160 responses (or 39% of the total), followed by representatives of regional or local government with 82 (20%), civil society organisations with 68 (17%) and third sector organisations or foundations with 31 (8%)<sup>6</sup>. The responses of individual citizens differ from the rest of the respondents, in that one third were provided by euro sceptics whose negative responses were directed towards the European Union and EU institutions in general rather than towards the Europe for Citizens programme itself, as explicated in their comments. In conclusion, it can be said that the consultation generated a good distribution of responses, by country of origin, type of respondent and size of organisation.

**69% of respondents have not benefitted from earlier rounds of the Europe for Citizens programme**, suggesting the consultation contains large numbers from outside the circle of supported organisations, potentially with less of a vested interest in the design of the future programme. (Page 2 of the final report on the online consultation)

The main observations resulting from this online consultation were the following:

- The majority of respondents (81%) agree that there is a need for an EU programme promoting and supporting civic participation, with civil society respondents more likely to agree than individual citizens.
- There is strong support for objectives around promoting tolerance and mutual understanding, enhancing the participation of citizens in EU decision-making and promoting a culture of civic participation.
- Respondents prioritise cooperation and networking between different types of organisations, dialogue between civil society and EU institutions and citizen-focused methods, such as citizens panels, helping them to get organised and promoting citizenship education.
- On balance there is strongest support for collaborative, transnational and thematic approaches, especially 'joint projects by local authorities, civil society organisations and other local actors', with lowest levels of support for EU-level events and one-off town twinning citizens' meetings.
- There appears to be some consensus around the value of networking and platforms for information exchange or sharing of knowledge and best practice, including

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<sup>6</sup> Online Consultation on the Future of the Europe for Citizens Programme, Final Analysis of responses, ECORYS, March 2011

specific methods such as extending the use of information technologies, databases and social media.

- Civil society organisations, "hard-to-reach" groups (e.g. ethnic minorities, underrepresented social groups), policymakers and local authorities are felt by respondents to be the most important target groups for the programme.
- The most significant themes for a future programme ought to embrace European values as enshrined in Articles 2 and 3 of the Treaty on the Union: "values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail".

### *2.3.3. Results of the stakeholder consultation meeting on 21 June 2011*

Based on the results of the first stakeholder consultation meeting held in June 2010, which focused on the general purpose of a possible future programme, a second stakeholder consultation meeting was held in June 2011. In this meeting a number of questions about opportunities and challenges for a next generation Programme were raised and the discussions provided ideas that will feed into the proposal for a new Programme structure. For the full report, see Annex II.

It should be noted that consultation with stakeholders has in most cases been dealt with in a 'consensus seeking manner' – that is, the focus has been on a particular issue or question to solve, not the identification of the organisation or the individual behind the stand-point. This was particularly true for the stakeholder meeting on 21 June 2011.

### **Setting of annual priorities**

The exercise focused on the link between participation and policy making. A more focused approach is needed to increase the impact of actions under a future programme. The group considered whether thematic priorities are needed, how detailed they should be and who should set them (should the approach be top-down, bottom-up or a mixture of the two?). All the groups consulted showed a clear preference for a bottom-up or hybrid approach which would not only bring in the views of NGOs to the Institutions, but also bring the local, regional and national level to the EU. The regular dialogues with stakeholders and with the Member States were identified as the best fora to achieve this. There was consensus that priorities should have a longer-term 'validity' and should not be completely abandoned after one year - even in the case of European Years.

### **Balance between operational & projects grants**

There was consensus in the discussion that both operating grants and project grants are needed. In the case of operating grants, there was a strong preference for the multi-annual grants. They provide a more medium-term perspective that allows for better forward planning. The group also strongly advocated flexibility with regard to the amounts available - for both types of grants: both small and large amounts being needed. The possibility of introducing start-up grants was welcomed, but with a caveat against too many very small grants. One issue that remained unresolved was whether the proportion of operating grants should be increased at the expense of project grants. Opinions were divided on this. Nor was there any

clear consensus on whether it should be possible to combine an operating grant with project funding.

### **Capacity-building**

The result of the discussions underlined the need to keep capacity building as a transversal element of all actions, combining it with the review of the current 'support measures', strengthening and re-focusing it and renaming it to 'Capacity Building'. Potential activities under these measures would include peer-to-peer exchange, training for trainers and the development of a database on the organisations/projects funded by the Programme.

### **Dialogue with stakeholders**

There was clear support for maintaining a regular dialogue with the programme stakeholders and making this action an integral part of the programme. The current approach, regular dialogue with civil society organisations and think tanks, should be enhanced, building capacity to create a community of practice, which would become both a 'collective brain' for the programme, able to impact policy developments. Concrete suggestions included having it more content-oriented and focused on policy issues (as opposed to administrative, financial and logistical matters), making it more open, finding ways to dialogue at national level (PECs, Presidencies), organising joint meetings with EfC Contact Points, Programme Committee, to foster more interaction, and invite the participation also of "non beneficiaries" (academics, experts, foundations, national funds, private companies).

### **Measurement of impact**

This group was created and led by stakeholder initiative. The discussion focused on what kind of impact the EU is looking for, and how this could be measured. The group concluded that there are areas where impact is difficult to measure – e.g. when it comes to awareness-raising, tolerance and open-mindedness – and where change does not happen over night. Still it was considered important that impact indicators are defined and that the EU sets the benchmarks. Measuring tools/methods are needed - these should also include methods for self-evaluation.

### **Better exploitation of results**

Optimising results has to be done both at programme and project levels. There was consensus that the keys to better use and dissemination of results are well-defined themes, a good match between the needs of the citizens and the priorities of the Programme, identifying concrete results, improving quality and sustainability and developing evaluation processes. It emerged from the discussion that the value of high-visibility events is questionable, but that decision-makers (particularly high-level ones) should participate more in projects. The importance of traditional media (TV, radio, newspaper) should not be neglected and presence in the new social media should be ensured. Databases of existing projects, tools for identifying potential partners and for capitalising on collective learning (e.g. exchange of best practices) can increase impact.

## Scope of Memory & Remembrance

There was an overwhelming consensus that the scope of Action 4 (Active European Remembrance) should be broadened. Where there was no particular indication as to what new specific events or periods (other than those related to Nazism and Stalinism) should be covered, there was a strong indication that there should be a greater emphasis on 'defining moments of modern European history' relevant to the greatest extent possible, to all EU countries. It was suggested that the "European Memory" part of a future programme ought to encourage and promote critical reflections on history and contribute to a grass-roots construction of a broader view of European history and its juxtapositioning vis-à-vis a forward-looking, modern Union. A new programme would thus, on one hand, continue to preserve the memory of the past horrors of all totalitarian regimes but also, on the other hand, highlight the Union's reconciliation process – founded on the respect for, and inviolability of, fundamental rights and the positive dynamic that it should continue to develop.

### 2.3.4. *Focus group survey*

In May-June 2011, three focus group surveys were held in Paris, Warsaw and Vienna. They brought stakeholders together with researchers, local and national governments, and journalists to focus on areas of the current Programme. The participation was broad and involved both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

The findings of these groups<sup>7</sup> were very much in line with what emerged from the stakeholder consultation meeting in June 2010 and the online consultation (October 2010-January 2011):

- The importance of reaching out to people and organisations that have not yet participated in activities financed through the Europe for Citizens programme itself, nor through other EU programmes and initiatives;
- The need for greater impact through capacity-building, a longer-term horizon, follow-up and experimentation;
- The need for greater programme flexibility to attract relevant and interesting projects and initiatives;
- The need for inviting a broad discussion as regards the potential scope of the "memory" strand;
- The importance of strategic networking and multipliers to bring target groups together and to establish contacts with policy-makers;
- The need for connecting the EU/transnational and local level through involvement of national civil society organisations;
- The need for better dissemination of results through for instance, social media tools.

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<sup>7</sup> Europe for Citizens Programme – Focus Groups and Support for Impact Assessment, Progress Report, ECORYS, 13 June 2011



### 2.3.5. Eurobarometer survey

Regarding consultation and dialogue with civil society (Eurobarometer of September 2011 on "Local Authorities and the governance of the Single Market"), just over half of the Member States considered this important<sup>8</sup>. Those who did support such dialogue, considered it indispensable: "The knowledge and expertise of these groups when a specific topic is being debated is extremely valuable in order to ensure that proposals are not only appropriate, but also relevant and adequate and will lessen the perceived gap between the EU and citizens".

## 2.4. Conclusions

From the above consultations and reports, it can be concluded that on:

Participation & target groups: The programme scope is wide enough to cover in principle any citizen or organisation, but there is still a need for reaching out to new groups outside the circle of the already converted. In particular, there is a need to include "hard-to-reach" groups, e.g. ethnic minorities or underrepresented social groups.

Relevance: The programme is considered relevant both to civil society organisations and participating individuals.

Impact: The programme is considered to have an impact at an organisational level when it comes to building capacity, as well on the personal level in terms of increased interest in European matters – particularly regarding culture, languages, other peoples.

Dissemination: there is a strong need – and consensus between the Commission and the consulted entities/individuals - for better "valorisation" and dissemination of project results.

## 3. PROBLEM DEFINITION – WHAT ISSUE / PROBLEM IS THE PROPOSAL EXPECTED TO TACKLE?

### 3.1. Context

Encouraging and facilitating citizens' wider involvement in the European Union and what it stands for is of great significance and importance. This ranges from the need to increase their involvement in current affairs right back to the need of ensuring a broader understanding of the history of the Union and its origins in the aftermath of two horrific world wars. Previous citizens' programmes have tackled these challenges with success and there is a substantial need for the continuation of this work at EU-level to address these issues.

The problem which the programme addresses is the lack of capacity of citizens' organisations - general interest organisations, different types of NGOs, stakeholder organisations, different groups of intermediaries - to launch and/or influence genuine debates on EU related issues at the local, regional and national levels, which can be translated into a pan-European perspective. As long as this problem persists, citizens are not encouraged to link and to upscale their commitment for their community and their engagement for democratic principles to the European level. Increased understanding about the EU, the acquaintance with the historical foundations and values on which the Union is built, and the knowledge about

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<sup>8</sup> NL, EL, LV, BG, EE, FI, LU, DK, UK, SI, IT, CY, HU, ES, DE, IT

the impact of EU policies on people's daily lives allows citizens to fully benefit from the advantages of European citizenship and to connect with the mission of the EU.

The challenge is to reach out through intermediaries to large groups of citizens who would normally not seek to influence or take part in EU affairs and to facilitate the first steps towards involvement into EU related topics or format across national borders or with a European dimension. There is a need for a horizontal approach that does not aim to replace specific dialogues or consultation processes at the EU level, but to mobilise citizens at local level to debate on concrete issues of European interest.

The current Europe for Citizens programme 2007-2013 is an important instrument which provides a framework for greater citizens' participation in EU affairs. However, it needs to be built upon by further intervention so as to provide the incentive for civic participation in EU affairs, an a real catalyst for European citizens' associations to become more involved in such matters.

#### *3.1.1. Main issues at stake*

The ambitious challenge that the new Programme sets out to tackle is three-fold:

- (1) develop civil society capacity to participate in the EU policy making process;
- (2) develop supportive structures to channel the results of such debates to policy-makers at the relevant levels; and
- (3) offer additional opportunities for individual citizens to participate in debates and discussions on EU-related issues.

### **3.2. What are the underlying drivers of the problem?**

The underlying driver of this problem is the need for more genuine debates on EU related issues at the local, regional and national levels, which can be translated into a pan-European perspective.

#### *3.2.1. Complementing existing sectoral programmes for civil society*

While there are a number of different instruments that cater for civic participation in sectoral policies in quite elaborate forms, the Europe for Citizens programme focuses on seeding interest in the EU integration and stimulating civic participation. It seeks to encourage and invite the large group of "non-converted" – those who would normally not seek to influence or take part in EU affairs - to take a first step towards involvement by going from being "spectators" to being "actors" – whatever the (EU related) topic or format, as long as it is trans-national or has a European dimension. The aim is not to replace the thematic programmes, or to duplicate their consultation process, but to mobilise citizens at local level to debate on concrete issues of European interest. By doing this, they become aware of the impact of EU policies in their daily lives. They can influence and experience the benefits of Europe and connect with the mission of the EU.

The programme coherence and the extent to which it is complementary to other Community programmes has been addressed in the interim evaluation led by ECORYS, which found no evidence of any contradiction with other programmes and even indicated that the apparent duplication could be beneficial in terms of achieving synergies (pp. 30-31).

The "Fundamental Rights and Citizenship" programme, managed by DG JUST with a budget of 97.25 million euro (2007-2013), addresses citizenship issues from the perspective of developing a European society based on the respect of fundamental rights recognised in Article 6(2) TEU and on the rights deriving from Union citizenship in Articles 20 - 25 TFEU.

The Youth in Action and volunteering programmes managed by DG EAC also contribute to citizenship and the development of mutual trust and solidarity with others, but their main emphasis is on young people. The Europe for Citizens programme is complementary in the way that it provides support for organisations and networks of all age groups.

Under the PROGRESS programme, the Commission supports EU-wide NGOs that work on raising awareness and defending citizens' rights in specific areas, such as *e.g.* non-discrimination or the fight against poverty.

In 2010, DG COMM carried out a "Mapping of Civil Society Dialogue in the European Commission". It was designed to give an overview on the means and methods used by Directorates-General from the European Commission to relate and dialogue with civil society organisations in their field of interest. The rationale for this internal exercise was to ensure visibility to practices already in place, but also to identify possible weaknesses, in order to enhance dialogue and consultation with civil society organisations in a coherent way, up to the level expected by the Lisbon Treaty, while keeping a flexible approach. This initial mapping was done through online research in October - November 2010, thus giving an overview of what information could be found by an ordinary citizen. Results were shared within the inter-service group on relations with the stakeholders managed by the SG.

From the above-mentioned evaluation and mapping exercise it stands clear, that the Europe for Citizens programme is specific in the sense that it pursues a **horizontal** approach. It seeks to engage people and to give rise to broader participation on EU matters – a programme that, potentially, could be a "door opener" for a more profound interest and identification with the EU.

While the main objectives of the current Europe for Citizens Programme - to give citizens the opportunity to participate in the construction of an ever closer Europe, to develop a European identity, to foster a sense of ownership of the EU, and to enhance tolerance and mutual understanding - have been found globally valid, they have – due to their wide scope and the lack of more precise operational objectives – made it difficult to establish evidence of progress and impact.

### *3.2.2. Weaknesses and strengths of the current Europe for Citizens Programme*

#### *3.2.2.1. Weaknesses*

The current programme has been thoroughly evaluated. The following weaknesses have been identified, which should be addressed in the new programme:

Programme design: The current Programme has been hampered by the 4-action structure. Actors have been "locked up" in their compartments, with little cross-fertilisation between the different actors and actions – although this has actively been encouraged.

Targeting: The current programme has a wide scope for participation and is delivering well in terms of ensuring a balanced representation of women and men, and all age groups. Moreover, it attracts some 30% of first-time applicants every year. This notwithstanding,

more must be done when it comes to attracting "hard-to-reach" groups, such as e.g. ethnic minorities and underrepresented social groups.

Visibility: The current programme can virtually reach out to all citizens, in any context. It reaches around 1 million citizens/per year. Despite this, it is not particularly well-known outside the circle of the "converted". The new Programme needs to make better use of multipliers for further reach-out and effectiveness.

Geographical distribution: The current Programme has had a limited attractiveness on organisations and individuals from some countries in northern Europe (UK, Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden) as well as in southern Europe (Spain, Portugal, Greece) and in the Balkans (Romania, Bulgaria and Slovenia). From a content side, the new Programme needs a better thematic focus to reach new members that would probably be more interested by projects dealing with specific issues that are considered as problems in their daily life. From a financial management side, the new programme will also seek to develop a formula in dealing with flat-rates and unit-pricing taking into account costs for travels from more "far away" countries. This has already started under the current Programme.

Lack of systemic impact analysis: The interim evaluation listed a number of weaknesses in the Commission's capacity to measure the impact of the programme (page 23): The shortage of objective, aggregate data on the outputs, results and impacts associated with the supported activities; there is no longitudinal (before and after) approach that would be the best way of measuring the impact of participation; and no way of objectively assessing the programme's influence on wider society because many other factors influence trends in terms of civic participation.

Valorisation and dissemination: The current Programme lacks a good strategy for identifying and disseminating best practices; the results are not enough "capitalised" on. They need to be further exploited, "ploughed" back into the programme and, even better, mainstreamed into the EU policy fields that they are dealing with. The emergence of new forms of communication and community-building in the internet could provide new opportunities to overcome the gap between the EU and its citizens. Citizens' panels, electronic town-hall meetings, discussions and opinion-making via social media and the organisation of meaningful feedback channels are some of the possible innovative forms which need stronger support under the next generation of the programme.

### 3.2.2.2. Strengths

Elements of the current Programme that have added most "EU value":

Globally:

- responses from the survey conducted as a part of the interim evaluation showed, that citizens and civil society organizations which took part in the "Europe for Citizens programme" relate especially to the objective of enhancing tolerance, mutual understanding as well as bringing citizens together and that there is a further potential role for "Europe for Citizens" programme in getting citizens interested in the shaping of new policies and strategies such as Europe 2020. The interim evaluation also underlined the added value of "Europe for Citizens" programme manifested mainly in terms of the scale and scope of activities and in helping beneficiaries to develop innovation, knowledge sharing and dissemination activities.

#### On the actions:

- The midterm evaluation (p. 52) highlights that project promoters under Action 4 – Remembrance have made strong contributions in developing a sense of European identity based on common values, history and culture; action 2 – Civil society is making most contribution against the objective of fostering action, debate and reflection; and action 1 – town-twinning - is strongly linked to the objective of bringing people together from local communities.

#### Within each action, the following elements have been deemed more effective:

- the networking of twin-towns has been deemed efficient and given longer-term effects, while bilateral 'ad hoc' exchanges - normally based on project grants - have not at all achieved the same.
- the longer duration of projects and higher EU grants for civil society projects have led to more structured work programmes and more meaningful results.
- The network on remembrance established in 2011 has linked local projects with the academic debates on Nazism and Stalinism.

### **3.3. How would the problem evolve, all things being equal?**

A "Citizens for Europe" programme which would be continued in its present form, with the same or similar focus, objectives, structure and framework, would not fully exploit the potential scope for citizens' participation and engagement. The new democratic principles, and opportunities, and the Commission's commitment to put citizens at the centre of the European process reinforce the need to encourage citizens to have their voices heard, including by means of their political and community participation.

### **3.4. Legal basis, subsidiarity and proportionality**

Article 11 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) stipulates the EU institutions' tasks of giving citizens and representative organisations the opportunity to make known and publicly exchange their views in all areas of Union action. The same article refers to the institutions' duty to have an open, transparent and regular dialogue with civil society, the Commission's obligation of carrying out broad consultations with stakeholders, and introduces the Citizen's Initiative. Moreover, Article 20 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) describes the rights deriving from Union citizenship. In order to empower citizens to fully enjoy these rights a better understanding of the EU is an important precondition.

Appropriate means to ensure the achievement of these Treaty provisions require to be provided. The "Europe for Citizens" programme represents one of these means, just as, Regulation 211/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the citizens' initiative, represents another.

The Treaties call upon the EU "to give citizens and representative associations the opportunity to make known their views in all areas of Union action" and to "maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society". While a broad range of programmes and EU practice ensure dialogues in sectoral policy areas, the Europe for Citizens programme provides this opportunity at a horizontal level. By this, the Programme

respects the subsidiarity principle. These tasks can only be met by the EU, and not at the Member State level.

The EU added value of the individual actions of the new Programme is foreseen as follows:

- In the case of "**Remembrance and European citizenship**", the programme seeks to support organisations to promote debate and activities on European integration and history. Similar logics apply – although in the case of certain actions under "history", a European dimension suffices. Historical archives, sites of remembrance are, per se, bound by their location but not without any EU-wide significance.
- In the case of "**Democratic engagement and civic participation**", the programme seeks to develop citizens' understanding and capacity to participate in the EU policy making process and to develop opportunities for solidarity, societal engagement & volunteering at EU level. Such a wide scope and ambition could only be addressed at a Union level.
- In the case of "**valorisation**", this is a horizontal dimension of the programme as a whole. It will focus on the analysis, dissemination and valorisation of the project results from the above-mentioned strands. National and regional platforms would help collecting best practices and ideas about how to strengthen civic participation but pan-European platforms and common tools are also needed to broaden the perspective and facilitate the transnational exchange.

It should be highlighted that the activities carried out under the programme are not meant to replace the consultations and dialogues which most Commission services have with citizens, stakeholders and interest groups. Ideally, the Europe for Citizens programme would prepare the ground for citizens and their associations to be able to participate in an informed way, in a broad range of "sectoral" dialogues maintained by the majority of Commission services and by the other EU institutions.

The Programme also respects the proportionality principle. A programme (as opposed to a recommendation) provides a flexible instrument, is open to all actors on equal terms, delivers on capacity building and addresses a changing political situation.

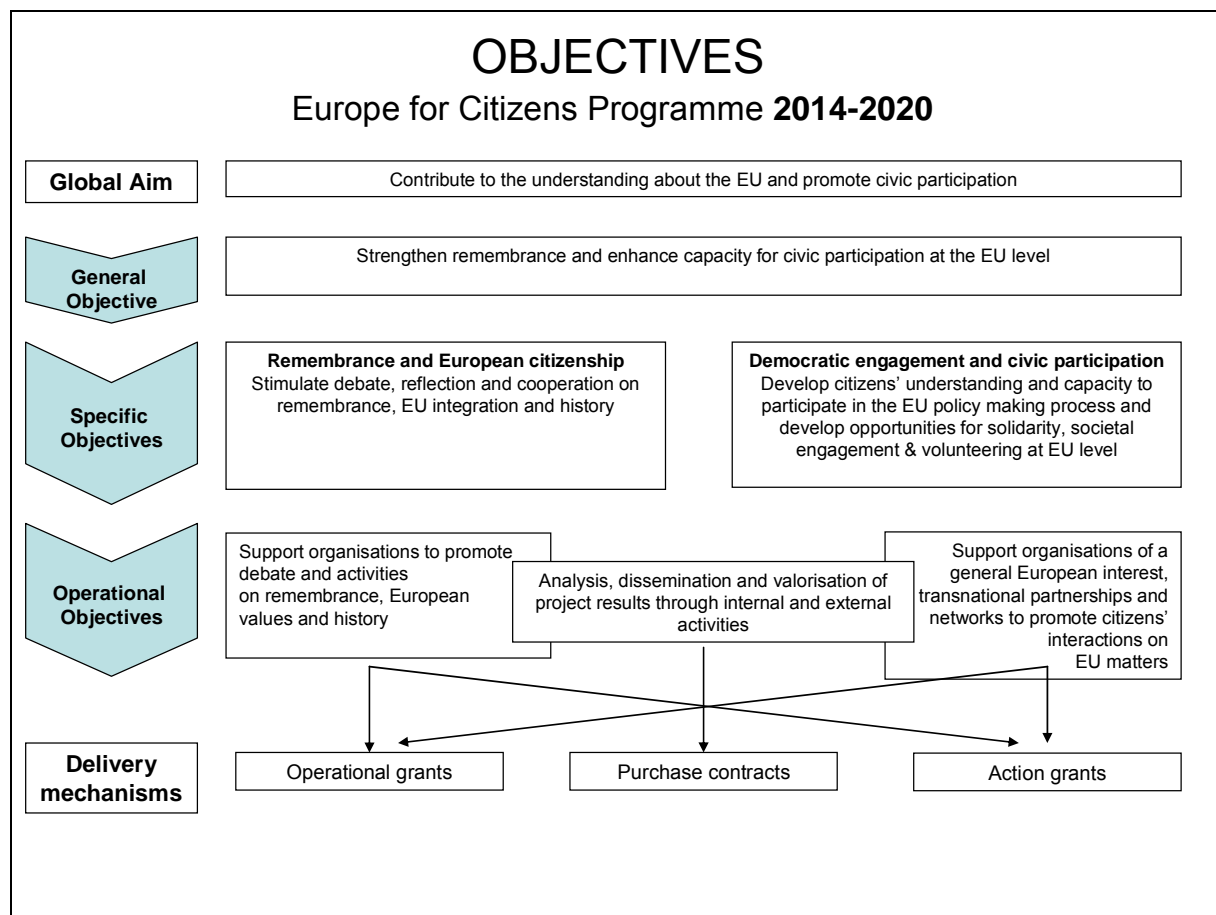
There is no single solution with a view to bridge the gap between the EU and its citizens, to the lack of participation and to the limited development of a sense of belonging and of European identity. They require a variety of actions and co-ordinated efforts through transnational and European level activities.

Europe societal engagement can only be strengthened by enabling individual citizens and citizens' associations to interact, build capacity and exchange experiences at a transnational level. Action at national and local levels alone would thus be insufficient and ineffective.

As the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union does not provide an article which can serve as legal base for the Programme, the Commission will use Article 352 TFEU and the special legislative procedure for this purpose. The involvement of national parliaments and the European Parliament would enhance the democratic nature of the proposal.

## 4. OBJECTIVES

Following on the problem definition, and the evaluation of the current Programme, changes to the current objectives will be needed. The objectives of the proposed programme are presented in the table below, addressing the short-comings of the current programme in terms of concrete targets to be achieved.



### 4.1. Policy objectives

The general objective of a future programme will be to "strengthen remembrance and enhance capacity for civic participation at the EU level". It will answer to the need for a genuine debate on EU related issues at the local, regional and national levels that can be translated into a pan-European context, and the related need for supportive structures to channel the results of such debates to policy-makers at the relevant levels. To this, the programme would contribute by developing citizens' organisations' capacity to engage citizens in the democratic life of the EU. The specific objectives will comprise:

- (1) Stimulate debate, reflection and cooperation on remembrance, EU integration and history;
- (2) Develop citizens' understanding and capacity to participate in the EU policy making process and develop opportunities for solidarity, societal engagement & volunteering at EU level.

#### *4.1.1. Operational objectives*

Following the narrowed down specific objectives proposed for the new Programme (above), a new set of operational objectives will logically be applied. The latter will increase the capacity of the Commission to set more firm indicators and subsequently be able to objectively, and more in detail, establish progress and impact.

- (1) Support organisations to promote debate and activities on remembrance, European values and history;
- (2) Support organisations of a general European interest, transnational partnerships and networks to promote citizens' interactions on EU matters;
- (3) Horizontal dimension: Analysis, dissemination & valorisation of project results through internal and external activities.

#### **4.2. Consistency with other policies and objectives of the Union**

Article 20 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) describes the rights deriving from Union citizenship. In order to empower citizens to fully enjoy these rights, the understanding of the EU is an important precondition.

Article 11 of the Treaty on the European Union recognises the right of every citizen to participate in the democratic life of the Union, and that decisions have to be taken as openly and as closely as possible to citizens. Moreover, it requests that citizens and representative associations are given the opportunity to exchange their views in all areas of Union action, and that institutions maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society.

As a meaningful and fully expressive manifestation of the Lisbon Treaty's provisions, President Barroso, enunciated, especially in his "Political Guidelines" a much stronger focus on citizens being at the very centre of European policies. As outlined below, it is planned to link the activities carried out under the next generation of the "Europe for Citizens" programme much more closely with concrete policy making. Consequently, there will be a strong cooperation between Commission services which implement respective policies and programmes.

The programme is one of the instruments to link the democratic principles of Art 10-11 TEU with a broad range of sectoral EU policies. It encourages citizens to exchange views on all areas of EU action and at all stages of the formal decision making process. With regard to the themes of projects, their embedding in the local and regional context, and to the composition of stakeholders there are important synergies with other EU programmes, namely in the areas of employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, education, youth and culture, justice, and regional policy.

The new programme is thus not to replace dialogues with citizens, stakeholders and interest groups on specific policy areas.

#### **4.3. Simplification**

Simplification is already of key importance in the current programme and will be further developed in the new one. The use of an executive agency for the running of the full



programme cycle already saves considerably in terms of administration and human resources. In addition, the recourse to lump sums, flat rates and unit costs, e-applications, and efficient on-the-spot checks by grouping visits to organisations in the same region, further reduces the administrative burden as well as saves in real budgetary terms. The ECORYS midterm evaluation indicates (p. 39) that "there is some evidence from beneficiary and stakeholder interviews that the Executive Agency is efficiently administering the programme, making significant procedural improvements about finance, eligibility criteria, harmonisation of processes and the development of e-forms for applications". It also highlights the synergy effects with other programmes managed by the Executive Agency.

## **5. WHAT ARE THE MAIN POLICY OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO REACH THE OBJECTIVES?**

Following the first stakeholder meeting of 22 June 2010 and in the period leading up to the Impact Assessment report, a number of different responses to the problem defined in Section 3 have been analysed.

Three basic policy options with their respective sub-options have been retained and considered in relation to the future of the "Europe for Citizens" programme (2014-2020):

### **5.1. Option 1: Continue the Programme in its current form**

To adopt a "no policy change" approach – a new programme will be adopted with the same programme architecture of 4 "actions" as under the current Programme (see 1.1.) but with a slightly reduced budget following the MFF indicative amount for the Programme.

### **5.2. Option 2: Adopt a re-vamped Programme**

To adopt a re-vamped programme with a slightly reduced budget implemented through a more effective programme architecture and strengthened valorisation of results. This new architecture would consist of two "strands" that would provide for more flexibility for applicants in terms of finding a 'niche' for their project or initiative (abandoning the 4-action-approach) and adding a third cross-cutting feature – the overarching concern for optimising results (see 6.2.).

Several sub-options have been considered under this approach.

#### *5.2.1. Sub-option 1: Mixed approach*

The re-vamped programme would put overall priority on outputs by:

- (1) reducing pure one-off town-twinning projects to a minimum and transforming town-twinning projects into multi-partner projects which have a clear thematic orientation, some policy impact and a longer term validity;
- (2) mainstreaming innovative citizens' projects and support measures into the general multi-partner project part of the programme;
- (3) striking an adequate balance of the operating grants provided to think tanks and EU civil society organisations as regards the number and level of subventions given;

- (4) increasing the strategic focus of civil society projects by selecting bigger and longer-term projects which foresee a concrete contribution and ensure the feeding in of concrete ideas to the decision-making process;
- (5) increasing available resources for remembrance projects and broadening the scope of actions carried out in this area.
- (6) developing visibility/valorisation actions as a cross-cutting programme feature.

#### 5.2.2. *Sub-option 2: Support for larger grants only*

A new balance between operating grants and action grants would be introduced. Action grants would be provided only for big projects with a financial volume of 300 000-500 000 euro and a maximum duration of 3 years.

This would mean economies of scale and chance for more structured work programmes, but with a considerable draw-back: there are only a limited number of organisations which have the necessary technical and organisational capacity to run big-scale projects.

#### 5.2.3. *Sub-option 3: Wider geographical coverage*

This would entail an extended scope of the discussion on values: the focus would be on “international” values rather than “European” values. The programme would be extended to include also the neighbouring countries.

This would respond well to the request from part of the stakeholders and probable support from some Member States.

Sub-option 3 would require a substantially boosted programme budget. Furthermore, "international values" are not defined and "universal values/human rights" might require such a wide scope that specific objectives no longer could be defined.

#### 5.2.4. *Sub-option 4: Consultation tool*

Sub-option 4 would use the programme as a testing board for main EU policies and/or challenges, for example by setting up and funding citizens’ panels that would comment on given issues.

Through such an approach, the EU institutions would gain a better understanding of the issues at stake, and how to communicate more efficiently its intentions to citizens. It would also provide a concrete link between the programme and policy making.

This option would require a substantially boosted programme budget or pump out resources out of other channels of participation (CSO, networks).

### 5.3. **Option 3: Decentralisation of the Programme**

This option would mean that no EU-wide programme would follow the current "Europe for Citizens" programme when it comes to an end on 31 December 2013.

Several alternative, decentralised approaches have been considered:

#### *5.3.1. Sub-option 1: Member State based approach*

This approach would leave it up to the Member States to develop political participation and civic engagement around common EU values.

This would mean total decentralisation, and simplification in terms of EU administration. It would also mean an opportunity to fully tailor the EU debate to national concerns and perspectives.

Sub-option 1 would mean a serious risk of limiting the scope to issues which are of purely national interest. There would be no policy input for the EU institutions from EU-wide umbrella organisations and think tanks organised at EU level. Neither would there be a possibility to stimulate EU-wide debates.

#### *5.3.2. Sub-option 2: Communication approach only*

This option would mean to limit the general objective to communication only - to provide information on EU mission and policies, and leave the participation dimension to local levels.

It would have limited implications on the EU budget.

At the same time, this approach would risk leading to a “nationalisation” of the policy issues. Neither would it respond to the need for a more participatory approach with bottom-up input to better respond to citizens' needs.

#### *5.3.3. Sub-option 3: Sectoral approach*

The debate would be focused on the sectoral issues within each policy field. In the absence of a horizontal instrument, this option would limit policy input for the EU institutions from EU-wide umbrella organisations and think tanks organised at the EU level. There would also be limited scope for supporting capacity building for civic participation, and no possibility to support EU-wide debate on reference points in European history.

It should be noted that the Europe for Citizens programme is a horizontal instrument that does not seek to replace existing forms of dialogues or consultation, but to complement them.

#### *5.3.4. Sub-option 4: Merger with other programme*

A merger with the future programme of DG JUST covering justice and citizenship has been explored but was discarded after careful examination by the two DGs as there was no evidence of possible synergies due to their different objectives and target groups.

## **6. ANALYSIS OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF THE THREE OPTIONS**

### **6.1. Option 1: Continue the Programme in its current form**

This option is likely to be considered insufficient in the context of the Commission's commitment to put citizens in the centre of the European process, the new democratic principles introduced by the Lisbon Treaty and in light of the existing criticism on the too limited means of the current programme.

Table 6.1 presents a summary of the main strengths and weaknesses of the "Europe for Citizens" programme in its current form, by type of Action.

**Table 6.1: Option 1: Strengths and Weaknesses**

Main strengths	Main weaknesses
Action 1: "Active citizens for Europe"	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- well-known to the beneficiaries</li> <li>- successful introduction of "support measures" (under action 1.2.) which has improved the overall quality of the projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no strong incentives for innovation in terms of working methods and contents</li> <li>- only limited cross-fertilisation of different strands of the programme</li> </ul>
Action 2: "Active civil society in Europe"	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a unique entry point for citizens organisations working on horizontal/"non-specific" issues (as opposed to sectoral policies)</li> <li>- operating grants have allowed the development of strategic dialogue with key organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the demands largely exceed available funds – risking frustration and counter-productive impact</li> <li>- project grants – dispersed in content and lacking a thematic framework</li> </ul>
Action 3: "Together for Europe"	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- presidency events create strong ownership of Member States for European citizenship issues</li> <li>- studies helped to better understand the political context/area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- relatively narrow impact of the high visibility events</li> <li>- limited resources available for studies restrict their scope, depth and value</li> </ul>
Action 4: "Active European Remembrance"	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- continuation of a relevant and effective action;</li> <li>- continuation of existing networks and partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- limited resources dedicated to this action result in a significant unfulfilled demand and therefore loss of potential greater impacts in this field</li> </ul>

**Table 6.2: Option 1: Summary of likely effectiveness**

Proposed General Objective	Likely effectiveness
Strengthen remembrance and enhance capacity for civic participation at the EU level	Moderate to high

## 6.2. Option 2: Adopt a re-vamped Programme

With a view to make the programme more meaningful and to enhance its impact, it is planned to link its activities better with the Commission's priorities and the European political agenda.

Furthermore, these activities will be better structured for **exploitation** of results. One of the key concerns is how programme results could be better "valorised" or "capitalised" and ploughed back into the programme. The delivery mechanisms may entail actions grants, operational grants, or service contracts following a Call for Tender.

Based on consultation results and experience in running the Programme, the Commission proposes to abandon the 4-action-model in favour of a model based on 2 "strands" of activities – "Remembrance and European citizenship" and "**Democratic engagement and civic participation**". This would break up the "compartmentalisation" of the current programme and invite applicants to venture for new structures of cooperation and potentially new and innovative themes.

The "Participation" dimension would regroup the citizens' meetings and the support for civil society organisations and thinks tanks. It would put a stronger focus on structuring methods (and thus promote more long-term sustainability). The "European citizenship" dimension would build on the current Action 4 (preserving the memory of the Nazi and Stalinist crimes) and make it broader in scope, and provide support for initiatives that would pursue a self-critical historical understanding of past and current European issues.

The new model will confirm the current practice of offering the possibility to bid for multiannual operating grants, which gives applicants longer-term sustainability and simplify unnecessary administrative procedures.

Action grants will nevertheless remain an important delivery mechanism, particularly for first time applicants or to test new, innovative projects.

Overall, programme governance considerations will fundamentally revolve around value-for-money, efficiency and impact considerations.

**Table 6.3: Option 2: Strengths and Weaknesses**

Main strengths	Main weaknesses
<b>Strand 1: "Remembrance and European citizenship"</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emphasis of the importance of common values for participation</li> <li>- Will invite reflection on common values in the broadest sense, taking into account diversity</li> <li>- Development of a self-critical historical understanding of past and current EU milestones and processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- risk of "nationalisation" of the issues addressed, if the action is widened beyond Nazism/Stalinism</li> <li>- challenge to select initiatives that are 'defining moments' of modern European history relevant to all EU countries</li> </ul>
<b>Strand 2: "Democratic engagement and civic participation"</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- will focus on the core elements of participatory citizenship</li> <li>- will better link the initiatives to the EU's political agenda</li> <li>- a new structure will facilitate a better feeding in of results of the initiatives launched into policy-making – thus leading to more concrete and lasting outputs</li> <li>- will provide more opportunities for cross-fertilisation between different initiatives and organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- risk of "saupoudrage" (dilution) unless more firm focus on political priorities can be introduced</li> </ul>
<b>Horizontal dimension: "Valorisation"</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transferability of results</li> <li>- better return on investment</li> <li>- better learning from experience</li> <li>- better political legitimacy for expenditure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- none</li> </ul>

**Table 6.4: Option 2: Summary of likely effectiveness**

Proposed General Objective	Likely effectiveness
Strengthen remembrance and enhance capacity for civic participation at the EU level	High

### 6.3. Option 3: Decentralisation of the Programme

The option of discontinuing the programme after 31 December 2013 in favour of decentralisation (see 5.3), would be likely to have the main strengths and weaknesses presented in Table 6.5.

**Table 6.5: Option 3: Strengths and Weaknesses**

Main strengths	Main weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Saving in public expenditure and/or possible diversion of funds to other EU objectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- loss of the only instrument for fostering civic participation at the European level</li> <li>- significant reduction of the number of transnational projects on the promotion of civic participation with an European dimension</li> <li>- citizens would feel less ownership for the decisions made by the EU institutions</li> <li>- the gap between the EU and its citizens would potentially widen</li> <li>- strong political opposition from the European Parliament and virtually all stakeholders – in particular civil society organisations – and potential beneficiaries</li> <li>- risk of putting an end to the operations of many stakeholder organisations that provide a valuable input to EU debates</li> <li>- indirect costs for the EU budget, if intellectual input from think tanks has to be bought as service</li> </ul>

**Table 6.6: Option 3: Summary of likely effectiveness**

Proposed General Objective	Likely effectiveness
Strengthen remembrance and enhance capacity for civic participation at the EU level	Low

Although this option is not automatically discarded, it must be underlined that discontinuing the Programme would come at a political price – and would be in contradiction to the

Commission decision on the MFF 2014-2020<sup>9</sup> - facing not only strong opposition from different sectors but also leaving a vacuum in the promotion of civic participation and participatory citizenship at a European level. It would mean the loss of an important instrument for the fostering of civic participation, where no similar, existing instrument can cater for these needs.

Preliminary results of the study on "Active Citizenship in Europe"<sup>10</sup> show that the concept of a European dimension in citizenship policies and activities is almost exclusively related to EU funded projects/activities. This means that if the Programme would be discontinued the promotion of this European dimension would also wither away.

Several other instruments aim at enabling dialogue between the EU institutions and citizens, but within the limits of their respective sectoral policies.

If the Europe for Citizens Programme would run out without a successor in line, the main problems outlined under chapter 3 would persist and possibly become bigger.

In conclusion, the preferred option is the re-vamped programme (Option 2) with a "mixed approach" (sub-option 1).

## 7. COMPARING THE OPTIONS

Equal weight has been allocated to each of the positive and negative impacts identified. The results of the analysis of the different options in terms of their likely effectiveness in relation to the Objectives suggested for the programme are summarised in Table 7.1.

**Table 7.1: Likely effectiveness of the different options in relation to the suggested programme objectives**

Proposed General Objective	Option 1: No change	Option 2: Modify	Option 3: Decentralised programme
Strengthen remembrance and enhance capacity for civic participation at the EU level	Moderate	High	None

## 8. RISK AND ASSUMPTIONS

The risks inherent in the current situation if nothing is done ("no-policy" option) are outlined in the assessment of option 3 under section 6.3 above.

The proposed expenditure programme is based on the following assumptions:

<sup>9</sup> COM(2011)500 I A Budget For Europe 2020 - Part I - Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions; COM(2011)500 II A Budget For Europe 2020 - Part II - Policy Fiches - Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

<sup>10</sup> Contextual Analysis Report, "Active Citizenship in Europe Project 2011", Institute of Education, 8 August 2011



- The needs analysis and problem description as outlined in section 3 will remain valid over the next seven years.
- There exists a distinct added value to tackling the underlying problems from the European angle.
- The design of the programme corresponds to the identified needs, is logic, clear, user-friendly and foresees the necessary actions and funds to achieve its aims.
- The continuation of sound management structures in place at European level (EACEA) to manage the programme according to high standards.
- All relevant programme data will be collected in order to allow for an in-depth evaluation of the programme.

## 9. COST-EFFECTIVENESS

### 9.1. Cost implications of the programme: €203 million

On 29 June 2011, the European Commission presented its multi-annual financial framework (MFF) for the period 2014-2020. The indicative budget adopted for the future Europe for Citizens programme was €203 million with an estimated €29 million per year. These amounts do not take into account future correction by indexation.

#### 9.1.1. Total financial impact (including subsidy to the executive agency and expenditure on administrative management)

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Mio €	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	203

#### 9.1.2. Expenditure-related outputs

Main expenditure-related outputs	2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Output (no.)	EUR million	Output (no.)	EUR million	Output (no.)	EUR million	Output (no.)	EUR million
Project grants	551	15	551	15	561	15	565	15
Operational grants	86	10	86	10	87	10	92	10
Service contracts	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1
Administrative costs (EACEA)		3		3		3		3
	637	29	637	29	648	29	657	29

Main expenditure-related outputs	2018		2019		2020	
	Output (no.)	EUR million	Output (no.)	EUR million	Output (no.)	EUR million
Project grants	565	15	577	15	584	15
Operational grants	92	10	92	10	125	10
Service contracts	5	1	5	1	5	1
Administrative costs (EACEA)		3		3		3
	657	29	669	29	709	29

9.1.3. *Impact on staff and administrative expenditure not included in the reference amount*

Type of post	Staff to be assigned to the management of the action using existing and/or additional resources		<b>Total</b>	Description of tasks deriving from the action
	Number of permanent posts	Number of temporary posts		
Officials or temporary staff	4 Administrators 5 Assistants		9	<i>Programme implementation</i>
Other human resources		1 Seconded National Expert	1	<i>Programme implementation</i>
<b>Total human resources</b>	9 permanent posts	1 temporary post	10	

## Overall financial impact on human resources – 2011 prices

*The amounts are total expenditure for twelve months*

Type of human resources	Amount (€million)	Method of calculation
Officials	1,143 (1,143)	€ 127,000 * 9 (9) officials
Temporary staff	N/A	N/A
Other human resources	0,073 (0,073)	€ 73,000 * 1 (1) SNE
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,216 (1,216)</b>	

## Other administrative expenditure deriving from the action – 2011 prices

*The amounts are total expenditure for twelve months*

Budget line (number and heading)	Amount (€million)	Method of calculation
16.01.02.11.01 – Missions	0,042	5 persons * 10 missions * 825 € (average)
16.01.02.11.02 – Meetings and conferences	0,174	3 meetings * 50 persons * (860 € travel + (2*150 € per diem))
16.01.02.11.03 – Compulsory Committees	0,057	2 meetings * 33 persons * 860 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>0,273</b>	

### 9.2. Could the same results be achieved at lower costs?

The adoption of the indicative budget for the new Programme at €203 million (MFF 2014-2020) already represents a reduction compared to the current instrument (total amount €215 million). As studies show (see section 2), the current programme envelope cannot fully match the demand. Any reduction, including the one foreseen by MFF, will aggravate the situation of unmet demand – unless there is structural change to the programme leading to increased efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. This narrows down the options outlined under section 6.

### 9.3. Could the same or better results be achieved with the same cost by using other instruments?

No. There is no similar, existing instrument that could cater for the needs of fostering civic participation at the European or transnational level. A possible merger with the "Fundamental Rights and Citizenship" programme run by DG JUST has been duly considered but was discarded after careful analysis due to the different objectives of the programmes. Other, existing instruments supporting civil society participation are limited to sectoral policies.

## 10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### 10.1. Direct and indirect impact indicators

GENERAL OBJECTIVE	Enhance capacity for civic participation at the EU level	
Impact indicator	Current situation	Long term target and milestone
Number and quality of initiatives promoted by citizens' organisations with a view to:  - have an impact on the EU policy making process  - strengthen cohesion in society  - enhance the understanding of the role of the EU.	A baseline should be established as it is a new objective.	Enhanced capacity of civil society to influence the European project  Contributions to the European Years in the form of intellectual input or activities to link the Years with the local and regional realities  Contributions to political platforms in the run-up to European elections 2014-2019.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	Stimulate debate, reflection and cooperation on remembrance, EU integration and history	
Result indicators	Latest known result	Medium term target (result)
Number of projects and quality of results	The indicators currently used do not provide this data.  The new programme will establish a baseline for this indicator.	Increase of projects by 80%

Percentage of first time beneficiaries	Average figure approx. 33% (depending on action and year)	Minimum 15% across the board.
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<b>SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE</b>	Develop citizens' understanding and capacity to participate in the EU policy making process and develop opportunities for solidarity, societal engagement and volunteering at EU level	
<b>Result indicators</b>	<b>Latest known result</b>	<b>Medium term target (result)</b>
Number of directly involved participants	1.100.000 citizens (2010)  The new programme will establish a baseline for this indicator.	Minimum 600 000 persons per year.
Number of persons indirectly reached by the Programme	The indicators currently used do not provide this data.  The new programme will establish a baseline for this indicator.	Aggregation of information and results provided in the final reports.  Medium term target: 5 million persons.
Number of participating organisations	The indicators currently used do not provide this data.  The new programme will establish a baseline for this indicator.	2000 organisations per year.
Percentage of first time beneficiaries	Average figure approx. 33% (depending on action and year)	Minimum 15% across the board.
Number of transnational and multi-partner partnerships and networks	656 (data from 2009. Excludes operating grants and remembrance).  The new programme will establish a baseline for this indicator.	Increase by 5% (transnational partnerships and networks)  Increase by 50% (multi-partner partnerships and networks)
Number and quality of policy initiatives following-up on activities supported by the programme at the local or European level	The indicators currently used do not provide this data.  The new programme will establish a baseline for this indicator.	Aggregation of information and results provided in the final reports.

Geographical coverage of the activities –	The indicators currently used do not provide this data.	At least one project per country.
Correlation between number of participants in the Programme and total population per country.	The new programme will establish a baseline for this indicator.	

## **10.2. Evaluation procedures**

### *10.2.1. Mid-term report*

The first report will be drawn up three years after the start of the programme (31 December 2016 at the latest). The objective of this report will be to provide an initial assessment of the results obtained at the half-way stage so that any changes or adjustments that are deemed necessary may be made for the second half of the programme (31 December 2017 at the latest).

### *10.2.2. Ex-post evaluation*

The ex-post report on the impact of the action in question will be drawn up at the end of the 7-year-programme (1st July 2023). The objective of this report will be to assess the comparative results of the support mechanisms in light of the programme objectives.

Evaluation measures will be carried out by means of external and internal studies and surveys, missions and meetings. The costs relating to these measures are standard expenditure under a Community programme and will be covered out of the administrative budget of the future programme.

**ANNEX I**  
**MONITORING DATA OF THE CURRENT PROGRAMME**

Europe for Citizens programme budget (2007-2010) in Mio of European Commission

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Action 1	11.66	13.94	16.17	16.24
Action 2	7.38	9.05	9.91	11.79
Action 3	1.30	2.03	2.58	2.29
Action 4	1.00	1.40	1.80	1.94
Total	21.34	26.42	30.46	32.26

### Europe for Citizens programme outputs (2007-2010)

			2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Town twinning citizens meetings (1.1)</b>	N° of projects	904	1.111	820	648
		Funding allocated (in Millions of Euros)	€ 7.98	€ 10.24	€ 8.37	€ 7.30
		N° of participants	668.387	984.567	799.500	751.002
	<b>Networks of twinned towns (1.2)</b>	N° of projects	52	68	96	69
		Funding allocated (in Millions of Euros)	€ 0.96	€ 2.13	€ 3.90	€ 6.40
		N° of participants	6.042	53.910	145.000	151.941
	<b>Mobility measures (1.6 - from 2009)*</b>  <b>* - one-off pilot action</b>	N° of projects	-	-	9	-
		Funding allocated	-	-	€ 1,156,595	-
		N° of participants	-	-	6.300	-
	<b>Citizens projects (2.1 – from 2008)</b>	N° of projects	-	18	11 (1 project cancelled)	12
		Funding allocated (in Millions of Euros)	-	€ 2,10	€ 1,86	€ 1,65
		N° of participants	-	9.500	13.300	33.628
	<b>Support measures (2.2 – from 2008)</b>	N° of projects	-	16	14	20
		Funding allocated (in Millions of Euros)	-	€ 0,70	€ 1.56	€ 1.54
		N° of participants	-	41.291	39.732	37.249
<b>Action 1</b>	<b>Designated Organisations</b>	N° of Operating Grants	1	1	1	
		Funding allocated	€ 0,21	€ 0,23	€ 0,23	



			2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Action 2</b>	<b>Structural support for policy research and civil society organisations</b>	N° of operating grants - policy research	13	11	17	18
		N° of operating grants - civil society	14	28	28	38
		Funding allocated (in Millions of Euros)	€ 2,55	€ 3,89	€ 4,40	€ 8,26
	<b>Projects initiated by civil society organisations</b>	N° of projects	108	131	127	108
		Funding allocated (in Millions of Euros)	€ 3,36	€ 4,08	€ 4,20	€ 3,79
		N° of participants	n/a	n/a	27,305	92.250
<b>Action 2</b>	<b>Designated Organisations</b>	N° of Operating Grants	4	4	4	
		Funding allocated	€ 1,519	€ 1,175	€ 1,175	

			2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Action 3</b>	<b>High-visibility events</b>	Number of events	2	3	3	3
		Funding allocated	n/a	€ 851,512	€ 776,880	€ 750.000
	<b>Studies</b>	Number of studies	1	1	0	1
		Funding allocated	€ 300.000	€ 167.756	n/a	€160.245
	<b>Information and dissemination tools/ packages</b>	Number of tools/ packages	5	3	3	
		Funding allocated	n/a	€ 24,935	€ 66,514	
	<b>Support to Europe for Citizens Points</b>	N° of Europe for Citizens Points supported		17	17	17
		Funding allocated		€ 417.467,64	€ 417.467,64	€ 417.467,64
<b>Action 3</b>	<b>Designated Organisations</b>	N° of Operating Grants	3	3	3	
		Funding allocated	€ 0,455	€ 0,495	€ 0,495	

			<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Action 4</b>	<b>Active European Remembrance</b>	No. of projects	36	49	56	64
		Funding allocated (in Millions of Euros)	€ 1,10	€ 1,71	€ 2,10	€ 2,29
		No. of participants	n/a	n/a	12,040	80.473

## **ANNEX II**

### **SECOND CONSULTATION MEETING WITH STAKEHOLDERS (SEE LINK)**

[http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1301\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1301_en.pdf)