



**CERV**

**CITIZENS, EQUALITY,  
RIGHTS AND VALUES**

**CIVIL**

**DIALOGUE**

**WEEK**



**25 – 28 MAY 2021**

*Justice  
and Consumers*

# 1

**DAY ONE: 25 MAY**

The European Commission's new Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme was formally launched with a public forum that gave policymakers and civil society representatives the opportunity to discuss how key policy priorities in the areas of democracy, rights, equality and values can be translated into projects within the programme's thematic strands.

Participants also explored the ways in which the CERV programme could contribute to policy development and to addressing challenges in the promotion of EU rights and values and enhanced participation of civil society.

CERV has been created to strengthen support to civil society organisations (CSOs) in the EU as they work to protect fundamental rights and promote shared Union values. Compared with its legacy programmes, the budget has been more than doubled to €1.55 billion over seven years.

## CERV is an 'essential instrument' for EU policy goals on rights and equality and values

Via this programme the Commission is stepping up efforts to promote and protect values and rights, based on: the **European rule of law mechanism**, the **European Democracy Action Plan**, and the 10-year strategy to strengthen the application of **the Charter of fundamental rights** in the EU. This work is complemented by strategies recently adopted such as the:

- EU Gender Equality Strategy
- EU Anti-Racism Action Plan
- Action plan to support Roma in the EU
- LGBTIQ Equality Strategy
- And the upcoming EU Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life

The four-day dialogue event, attended by around 1,000 organisations, was designed to help CSOs find out how they can be supported by the EU to access and utilise the boosted funding for their projects, in pursuit of these policy objectives.

In her opening remarks, **Salla Saastamoinen**, Acting Director-General, DG Justice and Consumers, said a sign of a successful programme is one that "reaches out to the people whilst implementing the EU's policy priorities on fundamental rights". As an example, the ongoing Daphne programme to combat violence – one of the earliest initiatives from the Europe for Citizens programme that preceded CERV – has often successfully achieved this combination.

The new CERV programme encompasses a range of different political priorities on which DG Justice is working: European values such as democracy and the rule of law, citizens and citizenship, fundamental rights, equality, anti-racism and non-discrimination, she said. The Commission wishes to use the programme to open a public debate on these topics that involves a greater number of citizens – by debating with civil society and other stakeholders, as well as reaching new target groups.

"We want to have an exchange... on how to make best use of the new CERV programme to promote EU rights and values," she said.

The dialogue is part of the Conference on the Future of Europe, she added: “It’s connected and brings the dialogue forward ... we want to create such an environment where we can cooperate with the civil society and other stakeholders, [discuss how] we can involve the greatest number of citizens through our debates here, and then throughout the Conference on the Future of Europe.”

## ‘No one should be left behind’

In his keynote speech, Justice Commissioner **Didier Reynders** highlighted that CERV has the support of the European Parliament, Council and Commission. It is therefore in a strong position to help many CSOs in their work to protect and promote EU collective values, and the new programme is an “essential instrument” in this endeavour.

He said the Covid-19 situation had added impetus to its work, with the crisis having been a “stress test” for the resilience of systems, not only in healthcare but also the rule of law and fundamental rights.

“As we emerge from the pandemic, we need to think about how to create an equal, more cohesive, democratic and fairer future for Europeans. And we will have to ensure that the founding values of the Union are a reality for all, without exceptions,” he said.

“Rethinking this future has to start now. And delivering for EU citizens where it matters requires us all, including citizens themselves, to work together.

“That is why we are here today. To support and promote further the European model of shared values of freedom, solidarity, fundamental rights, democracy and the rule of law.”

He added that a healthy democracy “requires the participation and representation of all citizens, and the respect of their fundamental rights”.

“No one should be left behind. Young people, women and other underrepresented groups, and vulnerable groups such as minorities and people with disabilities, must have equal chances to participate.”

## ‘No better return on an investment’

Closing the day, Commissioner for Equality **Helena Dalli** said that with the help and expertise of civil society, the funds will make a tangible difference to people’s lives.

She said Civil Dialogue Week was an opportunity for an exchange on “the core principles of what makes us who we are as Europeans, our fundamental rights, democracy, the rule of law and, of course, equality”.

“So, the funding we are discussing today is not just any old pot of money – it will go to actions that protect these principles. It will directly improve the lives of people living in the European Union, and it will improve our shared society. There is no better return on an investment than this.”

## High-level panel: Promoting values and rights in the EU – challenges and opportunities

The panel discussion asked how the wide-ranging CERV programme can contribute to the promotion of EU rights and values and enhance the participation of civil society. Representatives of the Commission, European Parliament and civil society discussed key priorities, challenges and opportunities.



**Didier Reynders** (Commissioner for Justice):

*"I want to say to all the organisations attending this first dialogue that it's very important to see how we have the possibility to be present on the ground, and to be very close to the citizens... when we are speaking about values, fundamental rights, democracy and the rule of law."*

**Alice Kuhnke** MEP (LIBE Committee and rapporteur for CERV programme):

*"This programme is essential because it supports the most important partners to public administration – the civil society – in their opportunities to defend, protect and develop those very core values. This funding was so fundamental, and was a big fight for the Parliament, because we know that the EU and the values that we have are dependent on civil society having this kind of muscle."*



**Francisca Van Dunem** (Minister of Justice, Portuguese Presidency):

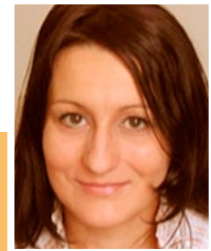
*"The fund will enable the creation of a new culture, a more engaged society that is better informed and more aware of the values and rights of European Union. It will also enable a society of citizens more identified with the values of democracy and human rights."*





**Debbie Kohner** (European Network of National Human Rights Institutions):

*"This fund will make a massive difference to our organisation. Funding is so scarce in Europe for work on human rights, democracy, rule of law and equality, yet at the same time we've seen such backsliding, risking the very culture and values that Europe is based upon. It is essential that there is some funding to support civil society and human rights institutions to work on this, as the EU cannot do it alone."*



**Alexandrina Najmowicz** (Civil Society Europe; Civil Society Convention on the Future of Europe):

*"[The programme] comes at a very timely moment when there's a huge need for the action of civil society... And at the same time, we see that civil society is often in the front line, not only to help those in need but also in the front line of attacks and different kinds of pressure, by governments and by policies that shrink their space to act."*



**Joanna Maycock** (European Women Lobby):

*"While a lot has been achieved... equality between women and men has stalled, and at the same time we've been facing a shocking backlash on women's rights. One of the most important factors for advancing equality between women and men is the existence of a strong and vibrant women's movement. This depends on sustainably-resourced women's organisations that are able to mobilise public opinion, bring perspectives of women and policy solutions to dialogue with decisionmakers, and provide essential services such as those for survivors of male violence."*

**Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca** (Eurochild):

*"To ensure that this funding can be of benefit to children, children must be listened to and heard. More than half of children in the European Union feel that they are never consulted by local authorities, the national government and the EU. Funds must be invested to ensure that child participation becomes part of the ongoing processes in the development of policies."*



**Watch the video of this session:** [Civil Dialogue Week presentations and Q&As](#)

## POLICY DEBATES

Four separate policy debates covered each of the strands within CERV:

1. Union values
2. Equality and rights
3. Daphne (combating violence)
4. Citizens' engagement

### Group 1: Fundamental rights, democracy and rule of law ('Union values')

Civil society organisations and rights defenders play a vital role in promoting the rule of law, democracy and citizens' rights. What challenges do they face in carrying out their important mission and how can the CERV programme support them?

#### Key points:

- ▶ CSOs are facing challenges in several Member States (MS) e.g. laws and government actions that **hamper their work**. Smaller grassroots organisations struggle the most; the Covid-19 crisis has exacerbated this.
- ▶ On the defence both for their own rights and freedoms and those of the individuals they represent, **threats to CSOs include**:
  - creating a 'non-enabling' regulatory environment e.g. unnecessarily and arbitrarily restricting rights to freedom of assembly, association or expression;
  - tightening rules for registering an organisation, placing disproportionate requirements on CSOs or attempting to influence or control their work;
  - criminalising the work of human rights defenders or NGOs, e.g. those working on migration or asylum seekers' rights;
  - directly harassing and attacking human rights defenders, as well as stigmatisation and smear campaigns;
  - restricting access to resources; granting funding in a politically-biased way. Governments co-opting NGOs as project partners also presents challenges.
- ▶ Aim of 'Union values' strand is to counter this phenomenon and the shrinking civic space, by **empowering CSOs**.



- ▶ Autumn 2021:
  - The call on protecting and promoting Union values will focus on funding organisations active at local/ regional level, with a re-granting mechanism via intermediaries.
  - Another call for proposals will focus on: (i) reinforcing the capacity of actors to defend people's rights by raising awareness of the **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights**; (ii) strengthening the knowledge and ability of practitioners, legal professionals, CSOs and independent human rights bodies to engage effectively in **litigation practices** at national and European level, to improve access to justice and enforcement of rights under EU law.
- ▶ While some countries have more pressing needs, nurturing democracy is a **Europe-wide issue**. Civic space should be strengthened, enabled, protected and integrated into EU policymaking – also to ensure policies don't inadvertently threaten the civic space (e.g anti-money laundering directive).
- ▶ CERV programme “*cannot be a fair-weather instrument*”. It needs to better equip civil society to react, prevent, monitor, advocate and litigate. **Flexibility and adaptability** should be built into projects.

## Group 2: Equality and rights

What are the main challenges the EU is facing in the area of protecting rights and equality and how funding can help addressing these challenges?

### Priorities:

- ▶ Focusing on **intersectional concerns**.
- ▶ Tackling **gender-specific discrimination** – 15% of the budget within CERV's equality and rights and Daphne strands earmarked for promoting gender equality. Legislators felt integrated funding not adequate to address issues such as reproductive rights, and unabating levels of violence against women.
- ▶ Helping CSOs equip themselves to **resist anti-human rights voices**. Funding should be more manageable and flexible.
- ▶ Addressing **complex and particularly harmful forms of inequality** – e.g. intersectionality, structural/ institutional discrimination, hate speech.
- ▶ Adapting to a **rapidly-evolving society** – e.g. the Covid crisis, increasing use of AI, effects of climate change.
- ▶ **Aligning funding to realities** on the ground.

### Challenges the funds should address include:

- ▶ Growing **extremist, far-right, populist movements**.
- ▶ **Structural and institutional racism**.
- ▶ Lack of recognition of **family diversity**.
- ▶ **Gender inequalities in pay and care**, now magnified by the Covid crisis.



- ▶ **Lack of diverse and inclusive communications.** Help tackle stereotypes; build partnerships with advertisers and key players who influence them.
- ▶ Need for concrete programmes to **ensure EU laws/policies put into action.**

## What objectives should CERV achieve?

- ▶ Ensure people **internalise the value of equality** as something fundamental. **Empower pan-European CSOs** to contribute to EU policy-shaping and implementation.
- ▶ Deepen knowledge of forms of discrimination and create culture of tackling them on a more **intersectional basis.**
- ▶ Boost equality and rights in the **online world.**
- ▶ Take into account the impact of **demographic changes** on equality/rights.
- ▶ Support **employers/businesses** to genuinely promote equality and rights.
- ▶ Focus on equality issues that **might not otherwise be addressed** without the funding e.g. trans and intersex equality, desegregation, de-institutionalisation.
- ▶ Promote and exchange – and build an inventory of – **good practices that can be adapted** to national and local contexts.
- ▶ **Learn from the Covid-19 crisis** – a moment of **learning and reckoning** regarding structural, social and economic inequalities. Some groups have been disproportionately impacted, e.g. Roma communities, and women. Opportunity to deepen understanding of intersecting identities. Also demonstrates the need for **flexibility with funding** and the **importance of alliance-building** to help societies better cope with crises.

## Group 3: Daphne – combating violence

What are the main challenges the CERV programme should address, and how can interventions have a long-term impact and increase public awareness of the issue of violence against women and girls and other at-risk groups?

### Key points:

- ▶ The scale of gender-based violence remains alarming. One in three women in Europe have experienced physical or sexual violence. It persists in all economic and social contexts.
- ▶ **Strong political leadership** is necessary at national and European level. The **anti-gender movement** is a challenge that needs to be met. Shrinking resources, funds and spaces for women's NGOs are contributing to a **backlash against women's rights.** CERV funding, and the values contained within it, should be robustly protected.
- ▶ Lessons should be learned from the Covid-19 pandemic, which is having a differential impact on women, including a significant rise in domestic abuse. Trans communities – especially trans women and girls – and other marginalised groups have also been more severely impacted.

- ▶ **Smaller CSOs should be supported** to access funding, which often goes to larger groups that are equipped to adapt and “cherry pick” concepts needed to successfully win grants. Funding should have clear standards to define which organisations are genuinely competent, committed and active in the field.
- ▶ **Early awareness-raising is vital** in order to be effective – going into schools and universities, talking about roles, stereotypes, prejudices, relationship without violence; creating a common culture that is not gender-neutral. Programmes should get to the true root of violence.
- ▶ **Partnerships** with those on the front line is crucial – taps into expertise and helps provide quality data to enables a variety of initiatives.
- ▶ **Programmes should be intersectional** – *“We can’t address someone’s needs around one axis and expect that they are going to be safe and well”.*
- ▶ **Tackling FGM** would benefit from a more cross-continental approach, to take into account migrant flows and strong interconnections between diaspora communities and their counterparts in countries of origin.
- ▶ Some MS, e.g. in Eastern Europe, suffer from an **alarming lack of specialist services**. Via Daphne, the Commission should provide special programmes for specific regions to start up services, with a longer-term perspective.
- ▶ Focus should be put on **capacity-building of CSOs**. Where civil is strongly present, it’s more difficult for a state to ignore its international obligation.
- ▶ The Istanbul Convention is clear on the need to involve NGOs/CSOs. Need to ensure MS are **allocating enough money to gender**.
- ▶ A **long-term strategic approach** is needed: *“Women’s NGOs are tired of having to be resilient. We think that we deserve, and it is in the interests of all women in society, a condition of serene stability and the possibility of future planning, which should be characterised by programmatic and long-term funding in order to be allowed to continue our precious work.”*

## Group 4: Citizens’ engagement

Engaged, informed and empowered citizens are crucial for the resilience of our democracies. The objective of this strand is to promote citizen engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union and exchanges between citizens of different MS, and to raise awareness of their common European history.

### Key challenges and opportunities:

- ▶ Address the **lack of understanding that the European project is a common endeavour**, especially in MS seeing a rise in populism and nationalism.
- ▶ **Challenge mis- and disinformation** and promote engagement through civic education at all levels; populism and xenophobia feed on ‘fake news’.
- ▶ Raise awareness of **citizens’ rights**, which can be lacking.

- ▶ Promote **inclusive democracy**, to ensure citizens are fully empowered to take part in democratic debate – e.g. address barriers to participation faced by women, people with disabilities and those with migrant backgrounds. Use CERV to connect disparate groups of citizens who wish to engage.
- ▶ Improve awareness of the **meaning of the EU**, as not being primarily about buildings in Brussels, procedures or jargon. Use CERV to create a truer reflection of what the EU means on a day-to-day basis, e.g. via volunteering and solidarity. Town twinning is also a powerful way to allow Europeans to know and appreciate each other.
- ▶ Inform citizens about the **solutions that the EU provides** to global issues – such as the Covid-19 crisis, climate change, digitalisation – and invite them to participate in the solutions that they create at local level.
- ▶ **Help local governments to connect** to other territories of similar size, in solving similar challenges and transitions, and to learn about the history of Europe and its shared values.

Watch the video of all sessions: [Civil Dialogue Week presentations and Q&As](#)



# 2

**DAY TWO: 26 MAY**

## Information day: promoting rights and values through actions – why and how to apply for CERV programme funding

Details of calls for proposals within the programme's strands:

1. Union values
2. Equality and rights
3. Citizens' engagement
4. Daphne (combating violence)

### What is CERV?

- ▶ Funding programme that seeks to protect and promote rights and values as enshrined in EU Treaties and EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, in order to sustain open, rights-based, democratic, equal and inclusive societies based on the rule of law.
- ▶ Raises awareness of values and rights – e.g. equality and non-discrimination, rights of the child, data protection, EU citizenship rights. Works to advance gender and non-discrimination mainstreaming, and to prevent and combat gender-based violence against women and all forms of violence against children and other at-risk groups. Supports citizens' participation in EU democratic life; raises awareness of common history.
- ▶ Provides funding to Civil Society Organisations at local, regional, national and trans-national level, public authorities and other stakeholders active in these areas.

### Overview: CERV work programme for 2021-2022

- ▶ Now the main instrument at EU level for promoting rights and values (formerly via 'Rights, Equality and Citizenship' and 'Europe for Citizens' programmes).
- ▶ **Budget of €1.55bn** is more than double that of legacy programmes.
- ▶ Three strands are similar to legacy programmes. The new '**union values**' strand aims to promote values at EU level, supporting grassroots Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).
- ▶ The programme is implemented by the Commission and the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).
- ▶ Programme Contact Points can be established in each Member State to promote the programme and support potential beneficiaries.
- ▶ Types of activities supported include training and capacity-building, mutual learning, exchanges of good practices, awareness-raising, media campaigns (online and offline), data collection and recording.

## Calls for proposals

### What makes a good project

- ✓ Relevant, in line with policy priorities
- ✓ Addresses a real need in the field
- ✓ Well established methodology
- ✓ Strong partnership (established in advance)
- ✓ Strong EU dimension, EU added value
- ✓ Realistic and sustainable results



**What is 'EU added value?':** activity contributes to the implementation of Union law; practical tools and/or other outputs could be replicated in other Member States.

## 1. Union values

*"Full respect and promotion of fundamental rights, the rule of law and democracy are key to building people's trust in the EU and ensuring mutual trust among Member States."*

- ▶ Call for proposals, to be published in autumn 2021, on protecting and promoting Union values will support **grassroots CSOs** through a limited number of national/regional actors that act as **intermediaries**. They will **re-grant funds** to those organisations active at national, regional or local level.
- ▶ Potential funded activities are broad-ranging, including awareness-raising and outreach, organisation of platforms and civil dialogues, cooperation between CSOs and other stakeholders, monitoring, advocacy and lobbying on policies and regulations, research and analysis.

## 2. Equality, rights and gender equality

*“The work programme aims to support a comprehensive and intersectional approach and specific actions to promote equality, non-discrimination, children’s rights, rights of people with disabilities, and raising awareness on data protection.”*

### 2.1. Equality & rights: anti-racism and non-discrimination

- ▶ Aim is to support quality actions aimed at preventing and fighting against intolerance, racism, xenophobia, discrimination, on the grounds of racial and ethnic origin, colour, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.
- ▶ Two core principles – applicants are encouraged to:
  1. adopt an **intersectional approach** in their proposals;
  2. address the **impact of Covid-19 crisis**, which affects vulnerable groups and minorities disproportionately.
- ▶ Priorities include:
  - fighting **intolerance, racism, xenophobia, discrimination**;
  - promoting **diversity management and inclusion at the workplace**;
  - promoting **LGBTIQ equality**;
  - **countering hate speech online**.
- ✕ **Restricted to public authorities.**

#### More on this call:

**Call for proposals:** [equality and non-discrimination](#)

**How to apply:** [slide presentation](#)

### 2.2. Equality & rights: rights of the child, gender equality, data protection

#### Rights of the child

*“Children are the most photographed and the least listened to” (Roger Hart)*

- ▶ In developing the priorities, children were listened to. A key focus of the call is that children should be involved in the decision-making.
- ▶ Priorities:
  - Respond to the impact of Covid-19 crisis.
  - Mainstream and embed children’s rights in responses.
  - Implementation of the [EU Strategy on the rights of the child](#).



## Gender equality

- ▶ The words 'free', 'thrive' and 'lead' encapsulate the strategy and main goals: freedom from violence and stereotypes; women and men have equal opportunities to thrive; women and men have equal chances to lead society. Call for proposals to be published autumn 2021.

Women are under-represented in political and corporate life – for example...

Only **7.5%** of board chairs and **7.7%** of CEOs are women.

Only **22%** of AI programmers are women.

**39%** of Members of the European Parliament are women.

- ▶ Priorities:
  - Equal participation and representation of women and men in **political and economic decision-making**.
  - Tackling **gender stereotypes**, including a focus on youth and in advertising and the media. Will run in parallel with EU-wide campaign on tackling gender stereotypes – one of the root causes of gender inequality.

## Data protection

- ▶ Actions should aim to support activities carried out by national data protection authorities i.e. enforcers of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- ▶ **Priorities:**
  - Facilitate implementation of **GDPR obligations** by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
  - Raise awareness about the GDPR among **general public**.

### More on these calls:

**Calls for proposals:** [rights of the child](#); [data protection](#); gender equality due to be published autumn 2021

**Slide presentations:** [rights of the child](#); [data protection](#); [gender equality](#)

**How to apply:** [slide presentation](#)

## 3. Citizens' engagement

*"The work programme will help people make their voices heard and increase inclusion and democratic and civic participation. Includes promoting cultural diversity and European history, and supporting exchanges between people of different countries to reinforce a sense of European belonging and identity."*

- ▶ Three calls for proposals launched: Remembrance; Town-Twinning; Networks of Towns (Town-Twinning and Networks of Towns now covered in [one call document](#). It is possible to apply for both, via separate applications).
- ▶ Call for proposals on citizens' engagement and participation due to be launched in autumn 2021.

### Remembrance

- ▶ Priorities:
  - Commemoration of, and research and education about, crimes committed under **totalitarian regimes**, with a priority on the Holocaust but also including others.
  - Focus on **key role of resistance** in fighting occupation, overthrowing totalitarian regimes and paving the way for democratic transition and democratic consolidation. Also, on how **EU accession** influences democratic standards and practices.

### Town-Twinning

- ▶ Priorities:
  - Raising awareness of the **richness** of Europe's cultural and linguistic heritage.
  - Raising awareness of the importance of reinforcing the European integration process, based on **solidarity**.
  - Promoting a debate on the **future of Europe**.
  - Reflecting on the **impact of the Covid-19 crisis** on local communities.

### Networks of Towns

- ▶ Priorities:
  - Raising awareness and building knowledge of **EU citizenship rights** and associated European common values and common democratic standards.
  - Raising awareness and sharing best practices on: **benefits of diversity**; measures on **tackling discrimination and racism**.
  - Raising awareness on inclusion of **minorities** and their contribution to Europe's cultural development.
  - Exchanging best practice on the application at local level of the EU Charter on **Fundamental Rights**.
  - Reflecting on the **impact of the Covid-19 crisis** on local communities.

### More on these calls:

**Calls for proposals:** [European Remembrance](#); [Network of Towns](#); [Town-Twinning](#)

**Citizens' engagement:** [slide presentation](#)

## 4. Combating violence (Daphne)

*“The work programme will finance activities on preventing and combating gender-based violence, including online violence. Will also address preventing and combating all forms of violence against children, young people and other groups at risk.”*

**33%** of women in the EU have experienced **physical or sexual violence** in their lifetime.

- ▶ Funding aimed at supporting actions that will have a long-term impact on society – changing the attitudes and behaviours of people towards gender-based violence and violence against children, and its ultimate elimination.
- ▶ Priorities:
  1. Detection, prevention, protection and support to victims or potential victims of violence, with a specific focus on the consequences and **impact of the Covid-19 crisis** (e.g. the increase in domestic violence).
  2. Prevention of gender-based violence by **addressing masculinities** and the engagement of men and boys.
- ▶ Priorities for 2022:
  1. **Large-scale and long-term transnational actions** to tackle gender-based violence – focusing on different priorities such as domestic violence, harmful practices, online violence, harassment, and stereotypes.
  2. Combating and preventing violence linked to **harmful practices**, such as female genital mutilation, forced early marriage, so-called honour crimes.
  3. **Prevention** of gender-based violence by addressing the root causes.
  4. Supporting and improving **national data collection** on **violence against children**.
  5. Strengthening responses that prevent and support child victims of violence by **reinforcing child protection systems** at national and local level.

### More on this call:

Call for proposals: [Daphne](#)

Violence against children: [slide presentation](#)

How to apply: [slide presentation](#)

## FURTHER INFORMATION ON CERV CALLS:

- ▶ CERV Civil Dialogue Week – watch all the sessions and Q&As [here](#).
- ▶ **Questions?:** Go to ‘call for proposals’ page and see FAQs and ‘get support’.
- ▶ CERV [Funding & Tender opportunities](#) portal
- ▶ CERV [Work Programme](#)

# 3

**DAY THREE: 27 MAY**

## Strategic support and partnerships with CSOs in CERV programme

- ▶ The EU will support a vibrant and independent civil society by financing operating grants and kick-starting a strategic dialogue in the years ahead.
- ▶ Will sign framework agreements with CSOs, networks and think tanks to support their **annual activities** via **operating grants** (managed by EACEA).
- ▶ **Action grants** will support CSOs' individual **projects**.
- ▶ **Diversity of applicants** sought for operating grants, including newcomers and organisations based in different Member States (MS) to engage as many citizens as possible.
- ▶ The three main branches of the EU support CERV and have increased the size of the programme:
- ▶ "This reflects the idea of the whole participatory Europe... it shows that Europe needs the citizens; we need the civil society organisations to bring our values to those on the ground" – **Salla Saastamoinen**, Acting Director-General, DG JUST

## Sharing successful partnerships

CSOs discussed their experiences of operating grants under legacy programmes, and their expectations for the CERV programme:

### On funding:

Drazen Hoffmann, Deputy Executive Director, **Gong**, Croatia (democracy watchdog):

*"The breadth and the flexibility of the Europe for Citizens funding has helped us immensely in our work. It's crucial that the CERV program is developing as a successor to this good practice, with political backing from the Parliament and the Council because it's going to need to be politically savvy; it cannot be naive to the perils to democracy stemming from various political changes and technological advancements. It's going to help actors from civil society to keep pace and to design their activities to really usher in a new era of resilient democracy in Europe."*



Jordi Guixé, Director, **European Observatory on Memories**, University of Barcelona Solidarity Foundation, Spain:

*"The operating grant allowed us to consolidate our own network, and to promote this democratic remembrance by calling for citizens' participation across Europe. It's very important in the 21st century, this new way of transmission of remembrance and memory in Europe and across the countries, with the citizens' participation in programmes and projects, from the local to the global."*



Catherine Naughton, Director, **European Disability Forum**, Belgium:

*"EDF has been a recipient of European public funding for some years, most recently in the Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme. We believe that this has brought enormous value to the disability movement, and also to European policy and legislation making... One of the major challenges for our members is lack of public funding. So the EU increasing funding in this field shows a very good example, not only making funding available... but also showing Member States the importance of public funding to civil society."*

## On cooperation:

Drazen Hoffmann:

*"At the national level... the notion of shadow reporting [from] Member States is a really important forum for non-formal actors to provide the Commission with a clearer picture of the state of play in various areas, and the CERV programme is one that's well suited to contributing to improvements in the area of rule of law."*



Jordi Guixé:

*"It's not only about funding, it's also important to communicate with an receive feedback from the Commissio experts, to jointly promote projects an.. activities... and to share our point of view on developing programmes. It's a kind of win-win for everyone."*



Catherine Naughton:

*"The funding enables us to be able to engage in conversations [in order] to mainstream disability across the different portfolios of work of the European Commission, and that's also very helpful... our board members have a chance to discuss things directly with European policymakers... and this does help bring the policymaking much closer to European citizens. We really appreciate this cooperation."*





## OPERATING GRANTS: info session on CERV call for proposals

### ▶ Two separate calls:

#### 1. **Step one: 'umbrella for funding'**

Call for 4-year framework partnership agreements (FPAs) to support European **networks, civil society organisations** active at EU level, and European **think tanks**, in the areas of Union values.

- ☒ Organisations need to be awarded an FPA before they can be awarded an operating grant within the framework.

#### 2. **Step two: operating grants**

Operating grants awarded to framework partners active in the areas of Union values.

- ☒ Grants aim to support the annual work programme of framework partners.

### ▶ Eligibility criteria depends on priority area selected, as corresponds best to the mission of the organisation and to the activities.

### ▶ **Priorities and available funds** in 2021 call:

- Promoting and protecting Union values [€1.1m]
- Promoting equality, preventing and combat discrimination [€4.1m]
- Promoting gender equality [€1.6m]
- Combating racism, xenophobia and all forms of intolerance [€2.6m]
- Protecting and promoting the rights of the child [€1.2m]
- Promoting European remembrance [€1.7m]
- Promoting citizen engagement [€6m]
- Preventing and combating gender-based violence [€1.6m]
- Preventing and combating violence against children [€1m]

## Defining a European think tank

- ▶ An organisation which through its activities can contribute to achieving at least one of the objectives included in the call.
- ▶ Providing a link between research and policymaking at European level, which helps to find solutions to problems.
- ▶ Facilitating interaction between scientists, academia and decision-makers.

## What makes a good proposal

- ✓ Relevant, in line with policy priorities
- ✓ Addresses a real need in the field
- ✓ Well established methodology
- ✓ Strong partnership
- ✓ Strong EU dimension, EU added value
- ✓ Realistic and sustainable results



### More information:

#### Calls for proposals:

- 1. Framework Partnership Agreements:** Call for proposals for 4-year framework partnership agreements to support European networks, civil society organisations active at EU level and European think tanks in the areas of Union values (CERV-2021-OG-FPA)
- 2. Operating grants:** Operating grants to framework partners active in the area of Union values (CERV-2021-OG-SGA)

For more details, see the [slide presentation](#)

Watch the video of this session: [Civil Dialogue Week presentations and Q&As](#)

#### Get support:

[Funding & Tender Opportunities](#) portal

EU Funding & Tenders: [online manual](#)

Questions: [EACEA-CERV@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EACEA-CERV@ec.europa.eu)

[IT-related questions](#)

# 4

**DAY FOUR: 28 MAY**

## Information day for current beneficiaries of action grants (REC and Justice calls for proposals 2019 and 2020)

### Content of the day: reporting and amendment how to?

- ▶ The Commission funds organisations to help implement its policies. This use of **public money** means **accountability and transparency** are crucial.
- ▶ System is **centralised** – the initial effort required to navigate the IT tools and identification process is worthwhile because thereafter it can be used to apply for the majority of funds available from the Commission. The process has been simplified to make it easier to apply.
- ▶ To justify the funding, meeting the conditions of **cost eligibility** is equally important; solely achieving the objectives of the project is not sufficient.
- ▶ Continuous and periodic reporting requirements are necessary tools for the Commission to check the project is working well, therefore it is important to **respect the schedule**.
- ▶ Project officers are available in their daily work to **support beneficiaries** with additional guidance.

### Information session for beneficiaries of action grants: slide presentations

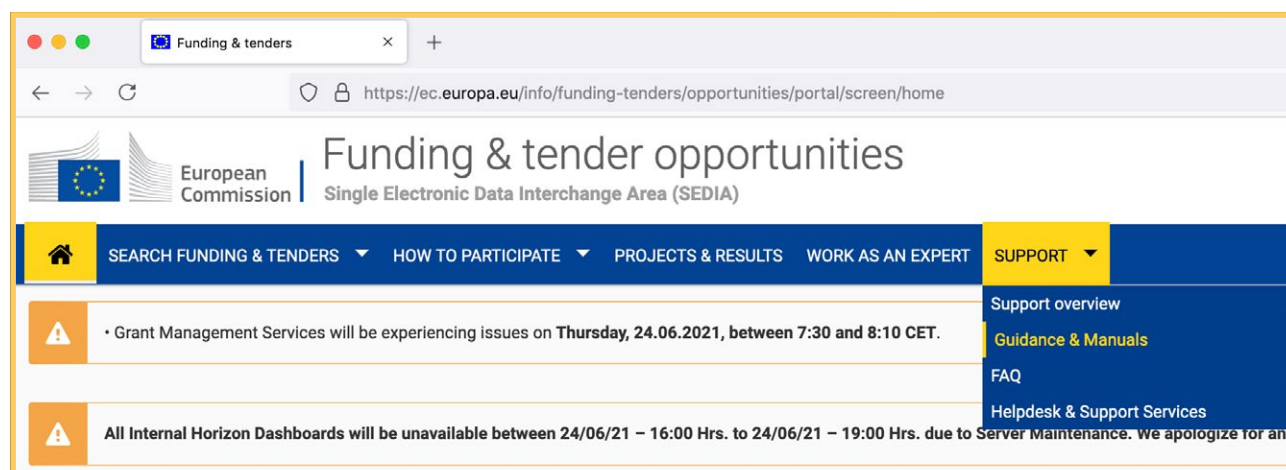
- ▶ [Reporting](#)
- ▶ [Amendments](#)

For more details see the [FAQs](#)

**Watch the video of this session:** [Civil Dialogue Week presentations and Q&As](#)

### Where to find additional information

[Online manual](#) on the Funding and Tender portal



## Reference documents

### Reference documents

SEARCH FUNDING & TENDERS | HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Key steps  
Reference documents  
Participant register  
Partner search

Due to a current database failure, you could experience some issues. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Programming period  
2014-2020

Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (REC)

Clear filter

- + REC legislation
- + Work programme & call documents
- + Grant agreements and contracts
- + Guidance
- Templates & forms
  - + Proposal templates
  - + Validation and LEAR appointment forms
  - + Grant agreement preparation templates
  - + Reporting templates
  - + Suspension and termination templates

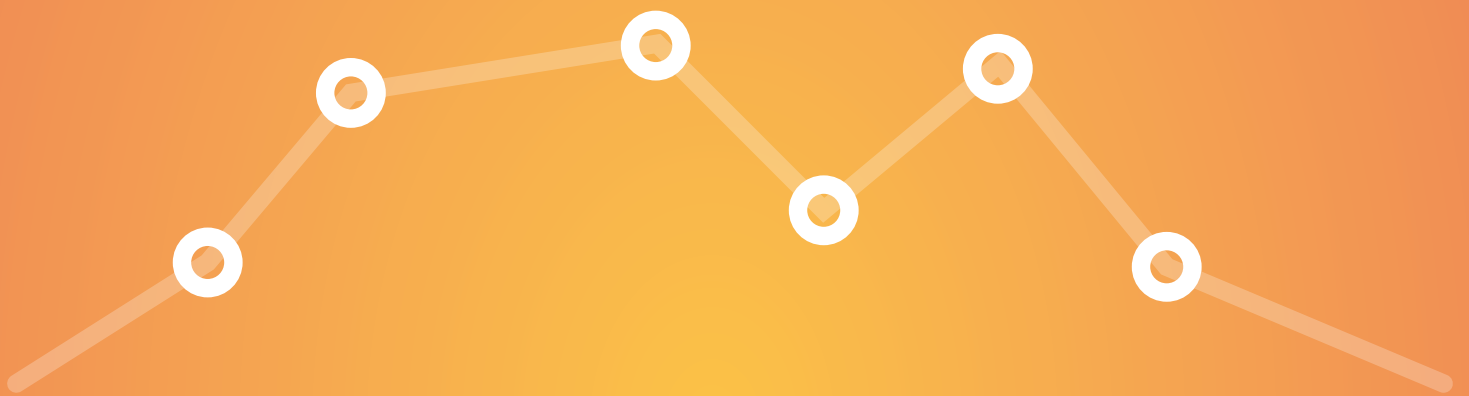
Financial Provisions

Many useful templates:

- Standard Progress report template REC-JUST
- Detailed financial statement – JUST-REC
- EU Grants Timesheets
- Staff cost calculation sheet – JUST-REC, etc.

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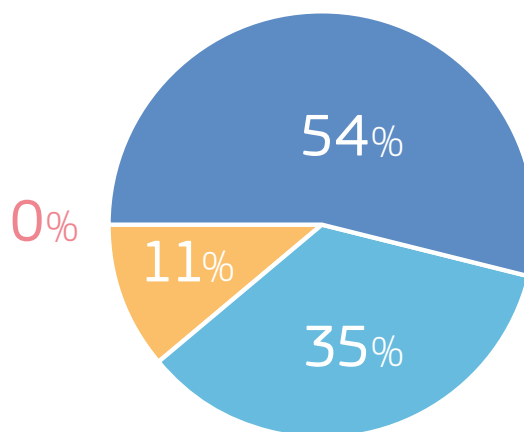


# STATISTICS REPORT

## GENERAL INFORMATION

How useful was this conference for your work?

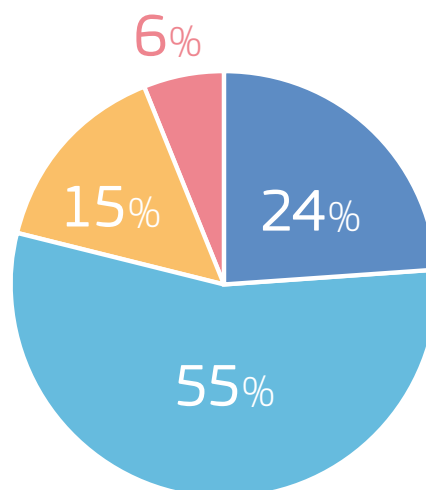
Options	Very Useful	Useful	Not very useful	Not useful at all
Percentage	54%	35%	11%	0%



## NETWORKING

How satisfied were you with the networking opportunity during the event?

Options	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Not very satisfied	Not satisfied at all
Percentage	24%	55%	15%	6%

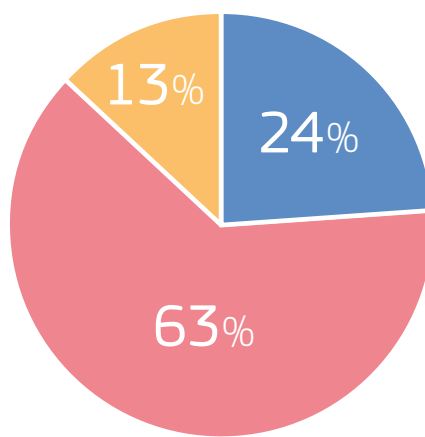




## SOCIAL MEDIA

Did you post anything on social media regarding the conference?

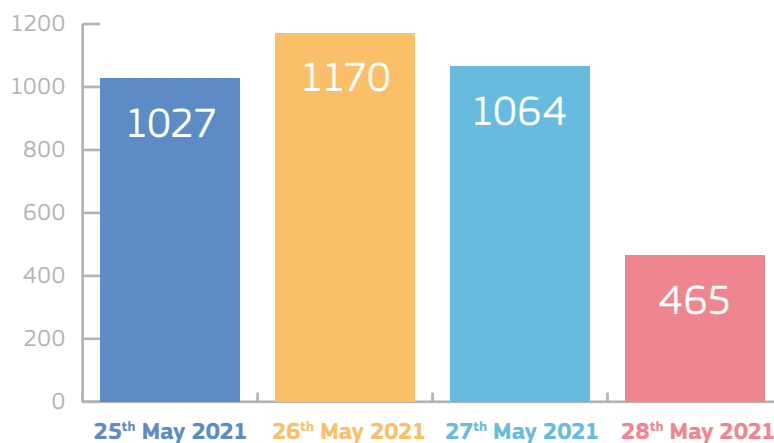
Options	Yes	No	I do not use social media
Percentage	24%	63%	13%



## EVENT PLATFORM STATISTICS

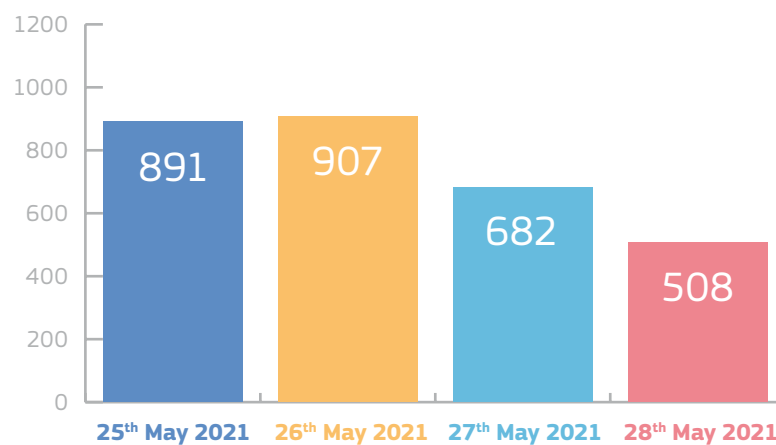
Number of registered participants (Per day)

Day	Number of registered participants
25 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	1027
26 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	1170
27 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	1064
28 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	465

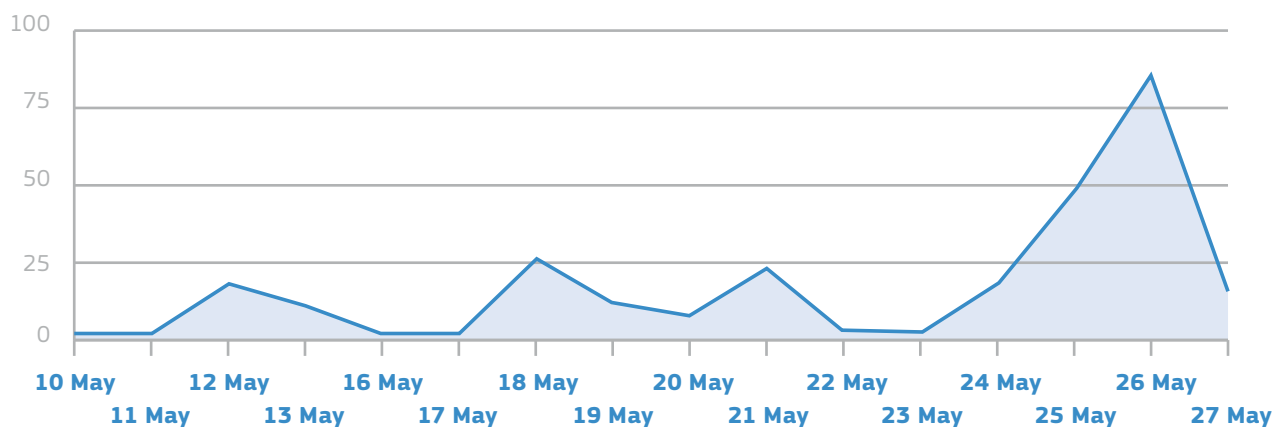


## Number of logged in participants (TOTAL)

Day	Number of registered participants
25 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	891
26 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	907
27 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	682
28 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	508

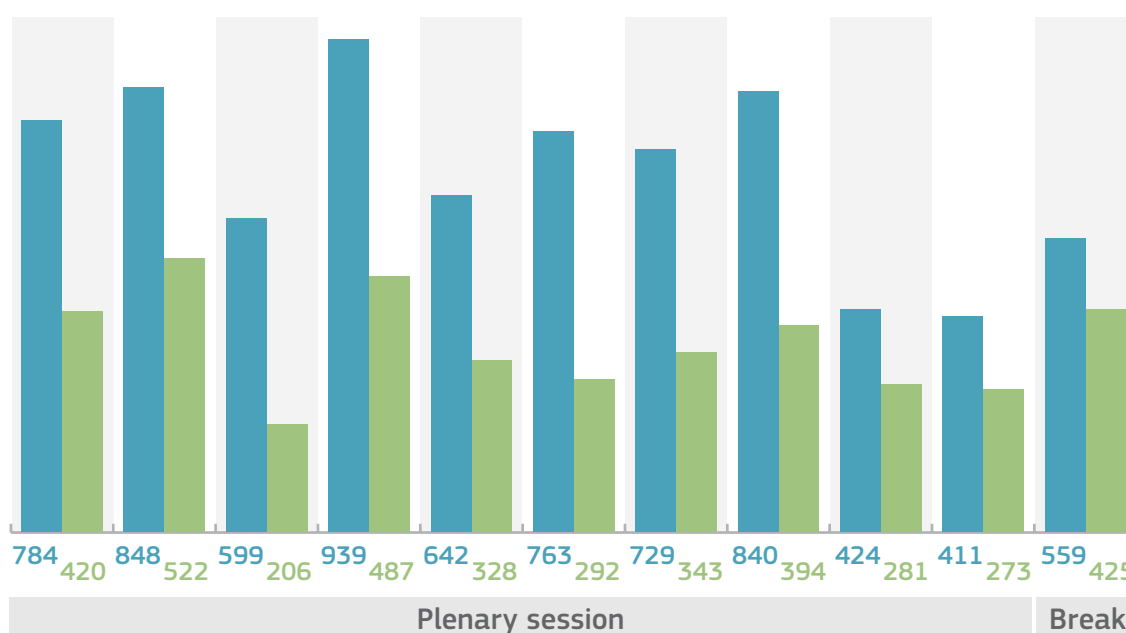


## Evolution of organised meetings between participants



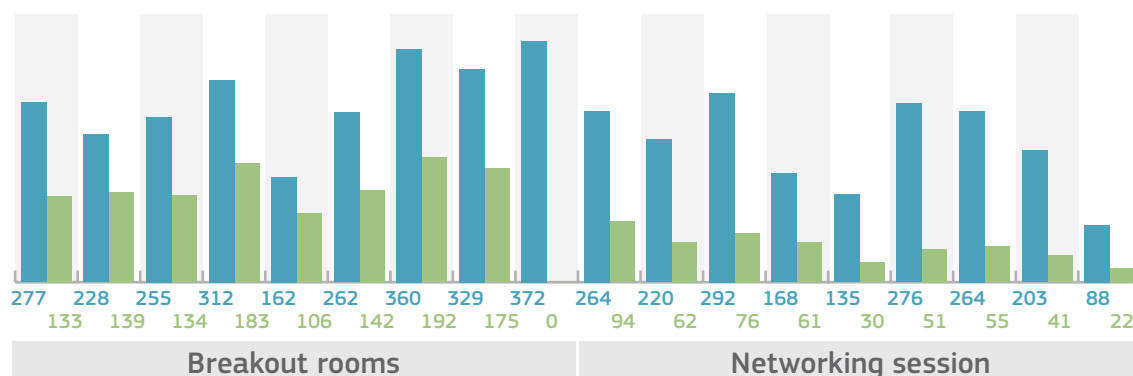
## Comparison between registration and attendance per session

Sessions	Attendees
	Registered / Attended
<b>Plenary session</b>	
Welcome word by Acting Director General Salla Saastamoinen and Keynote speech by Commissioner Didier Reynders	784 / 420
High-level panel with debate: "Promoting values and rights in the EU: challenges and opportunities"	848 / 522
Wrap-up of the parallel sessions and closing remarks by Helena Dalli, Commissioner for Equality	599 / 206
Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values work programme 2021-2022 and Union values strand	939 / 487
Wrap-up of the parallel sessions and closing	642 / 328
Strategic support to and partnership with CSOs in CERV programme	763 / 292
Panel discussion on EU strategic partnership with CSOs	729 / 343
Info session on the CERV call for proposals - Operating Grants	840 / 394
Presentation on Reporting requirements: why, what, when and how	424 / 281
Presentation on Amendments	411 / 273
<b>Break</b>	
Coffee break - Cultural intermezzo by Xavier Locus	559 / 425




## Comparison between registration and attendance for breakout rooms and networking sessions

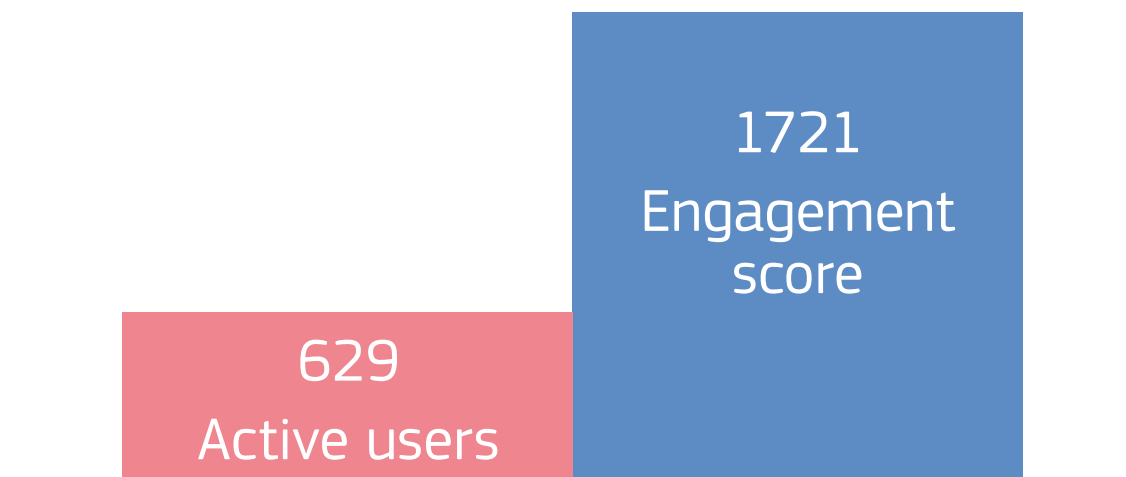
Sessions	Attendees
	Registered / Attended
<b>Breakout rooms</b>	
Policy debate - Group 2: Equality and Rights	277 / 133
Policy debate - Group 3: Daphne: Combating violence	228 / 139
Policy debate - Group 1: Fundamental rights, Democracy and Rule of Law	255 / 134
Policy debate - Group 4: Citizens' engagement	312 / 183
Presenting calls for proposals - Group 3: Daphne: Combating violence	162 / 106
Presenting calls for proposals - Group 2: Rights of the child, gender equality, data protection (Equality and Rights)	262 / 142
Presenting calls for proposals - Group 4: Citizens' engagement	360 / 192
Presenting calls for proposals - Group 1: Anti-racism and non-discrimination	329 / 175
17 parallel sessions: meeting policy officer and other project beneficiaries from your call	372 / 0
<b>Networking session</b>	
Networking session on Anti-racism and non-discrimination	264 / 94
Networking session on Rights of the child, gender equality, data protection (Equality and Rights)	220 / 62
Networking session on Citizen's engagement	292 / 76
Networking session on Daphne: combating violence	168 / 61
Networking session on Remembrance	135 / 30
Networking session on Rights of the child, gender quality, gender-based violence and violence against children	276 / 51
Networking session on Civic engagement	264 / 55
Networking session on Anti-racism and non-discrimination	203 / 41
Networking session on Rights of persons with disabilities	88 / 22



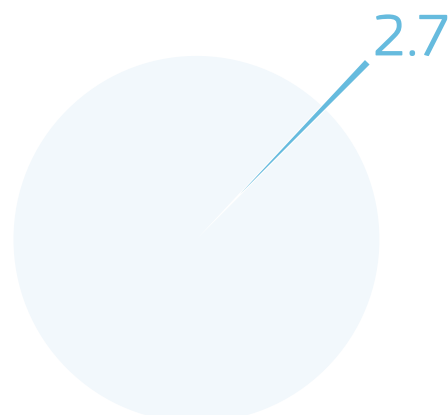
## SLI.DO STATISTICS

### Active users


	Active users	629
Engagement score	1721	
Engagement per user	2.7	

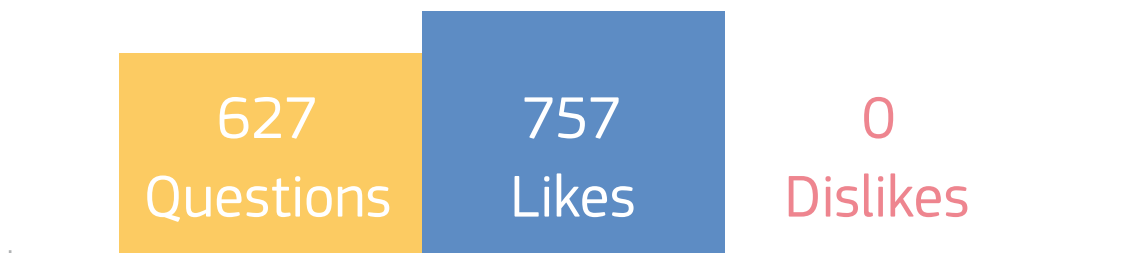


### Engagement per user



## Number of questions

	Questions	
	627	
Likes / dislikes		757 / 0
Anonymous rate		23%



## Anonymous rate

