



KOMMISSION DER EUROPÄISCHEN GEMEINSCHAFTEN

Brüssel, den 2.4.2008
KOM(2008) 158 endgültig

**MITTEILUNG DER KOMMISSION AN DEN RAT, DAS EUROPÄISCHE
PARLAMENT, DEN EUROPÄISCHEN WIRTSCHAFTS- UND SOZIALAUSSCHUSS
UND DEN AUSSCHUSS DER REGIONEN**

**Debate Europe –
Auf den Erfahrungen mit Plan D für Demokratie, Dialog und Diskussion aufbauen**

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EINFÜHRUNG

Im Juni 2005 rief der Europäische Rat zu einem Nachdenken über die Frage auf, wie die institutionelle Reform vorangebracht werden könne¹. Daraufhin legte die Kommission am 13. Oktober 2005 „Plan D für Demokratie, Dialog und Diskussion“² vor. Dessen Ziel war es, die Mitgliedsstaaten dazu zu bewegen, mit Unterstützung der EU-Organen eine ausführliche öffentliche Diskussion über die Zukunft der Europäischen Union durchzuführen und die Bürger, die Zivilgesellschaft, die Sozialpartner, die nationalen Parlamente und die politischen Parteien daran zu beteiligen.

Der Grundgedanke von Plan D bestand darin, die Bürger durch aufmerksames Zuhören, besseres Kommunizieren und mehr lokale Präsenz an der EU-Politik teilhaben zu lassen. Damit wurde eine Form der Konsultation über die Zukunft Europas gefördert, die jene Konsultationen ergänzt, mit denen gewöhnlich Interessengruppen und Öffentlichkeit zu spezifischen politischen Vorschlägen angehört werden.

Im Kern umfasste Plan D sechs transnationale europäische Bürgerprojekte (ausgeführt von Organisationen der Zivilgesellschaft – siehe Anhang 1), mit denen innovative Konsultationsmethoden erprobt und Menschen aus den verschiedenen öffentlichen Bereichen der einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten in die Lage versetzt werden sollten, miteinander als europäische Bürger zu kommunizieren und über die Zukunft der EU zu diskutieren.

Im Juni 2006 würdigte der Europäische Rat den Beitrag der Kommission zu dem Reflexionsprozess und stellte fest, dass das Bekenntnis der Europäischen Union, demokratischer, transparenter und effizienter zu werden, über die Zeit der Reflexion hinaus reiche. Ferner erfordere ein verstärkter Dialog mit den Bürgern „angemessene Mittel und entsprechendes Engagement“³. Der Europäische Rat empfahl, die Zeit der Reflexion bis ins Jahr 2007 hinein zu verlängern.

Die Kommission reagierte hierauf im November 2006 mit ihrem Informationsvermerk „Plan D - Eine erweiterte und intensiviertere Diskussion über Europa“⁴, in dem sie die Lehren aus den Erfahrungen des ersten Jahres zog. Sie bekräftigte ihr Engagement für die im Rahmen von Plan D eingeleiteten Maßnahmen und beschloss außerdem, eine Reihe neuer zivilgesellschaftlicher Projekte mitzufinanzieren, deren Schwerpunkte auf den Bereichen Jugend, Frauen und Präsenz vor Ort liegen.

Die Zeit der Reflexion ging im Juni 2007 zu Ende, als sich der Europäische Rat auf ein Mandat für eine weitere Regierungskonferenz über die Reform des institutionellen Rahmens der Europäischen Union einigte. Diese Konferenz endete im Oktober 2007, und der „Reformvertrag“ wurde im Dezember desselben Jahres in Lissabon unterzeichnet. Diese Vorgänge eröffneten eine neue Phase, in der auf die Ratifizierung des neuen Vertrags die Europawahlen vom Juni 2009 folgen werden. Der Europäische Rat hob die entscheidende Bedeutung einer verstärkten und verbesserten Kommunikation mit den Bürgern hervor, die

¹ Erklärung der Staats- und Regierungschefs der Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union zur Ratifizierung des Vertrags über eine Verfassung für Europa; Tagung des Europäischen Rates vom 16./17. Juni 2005, Absatz 4.

² KOM(2005) 494 vom 13.10.2005.

³ Schlussfolgerungen des Vorsitzes; Tagung des Europäischen Rates vom 15./16. Juni 2006, Absatz 3.

⁴ SEK(2006) 1553.

umfassend über die Europäische Union informiert und in einen ständigen Dialog einbezogen werden müssten⁵.

Im Oktober 2007 verabschiedete die Kommission eine Mitteilung mit dem Titel „Partnerschaft für die Kommunikation über Europa“⁶, ausgerichtet auf die Stärkung von Kohärenz und Synergien der Arbeit der einzelnen EU-Organen und der Mitgliedstaaten, um den Bürgern einen besseren Zugang zu Informationen und ein besseres Verständnis der Auswirkungen der EU-Politik auf europäischer, nationaler und lokaler Ebene zu vermitteln.

Gegenstand dieser Mitteilung ist die künftige Anwendung des mit Plan D von 2005 bis 2007 verfolgten Konzepts (aufmerksameres Zuhören, besseres Kommunizieren und mehr Bürgernähe). Es wird, entsprechend angepasst, in den Jahren 2008 und 2009 parallel zur Ratifizierung des Vertrags von Lissabon und unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der bevorstehenden Europawahlen fortgesetzt.

Damit soll ein Beitrag zu einem der zentralen Ziele der Kommunikationsstrategie der Kommission geleistet werden, dass nämlich die Bürgerinnen und Bürger durch die Bereitstellung entsprechender Hintergrundinformationen in die Lage versetzt werden, eine sachlich fundierte Debatte über EU-Angelegenheiten zu führen.

1. BEWERTUNG VON PLAN D — ERGEBNISSE UND ERFAHRUNGEN

Mit Plan D sollte, um zur Schaffung einer europäischen Öffentlichkeit beizutragen, ein effektiver Dialog sowohl auf persönlicher als auch auf virtueller Ebene zwischen den EU-Organen und den EU-Bürgern gefördert werden. Dieser Ansatz hat sich als besonders hilfreich erwiesen, um nach dem französischen und niederländischen „Nein“ zum europäischen Verfassungsvertrag die Diskussion über die Zukunft Europas zu eröffnen.

Plan D reiht sich ein in mehrere von der Kommission und anderen EU-Organen durchgeführte Programme; ihm kam dabei die Schlüsselrolle zu, die Kombination innovativer Methoden zu testen, wie zivilgesellschaftliche Organisationen Bürger unterschiedlichster Herkunft an den Diskussionen über die Zukunft Europas beteiligen können:

- virtuelle und persönliche Kommunikation,
- deliberative Konsultationen und Umfragen,
- nationale, grenzübergreifende und europaweite Konsultationen.

Auf der Website *Debate Europe*⁷ fanden Online-Diskussionen statt. Die Vertretungen der Kommission in den Mitgliedstaaten und die Europe-Direct-Zentren wurden intensiv genutzt. Die Besuche von Kommissionsmitgliedern im Rahmen von Plan D bei nationalen Parlamenten, Vertretern von Zivilgesellschaft, Wirtschaft und Gewerkschaften sowie bei Regional- und Kommunalbehörden in den Mitgliedstaaten erfüllten wichtige Kontaktfunktionen. Dabei bestätigte sich die Bedeutung des persönlichen Zugehens auf Menschen, um der EU ein „menschliches Gesicht“ zu verleihen.

⁵ SI(2007) 500.

⁶ KOM(2007) 568 vom 3.10.2007.

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/wallstrom/communicating/conference/dialogue/index_de.htm.

Insbesondere zivilgesellschaftliche Projekte wurden als Bestandteil von Plan D von der Kommission kofinanziert. Die Bürger wurden nach dem Zufallsprinzip ausgewählt und trafen sich auf nationaler und internationaler Ebene. Es wurden ihnen zweckdienliche Informationen wie Hintergrundmaterial zu den zu erörternden Themen, das von einer repräsentativen Gruppe von Mitgliedern des Europäischen Parlaments geprüft worden war, und Hilfen zur Überwindung von Sprachbarrieren zur Verfügung gestellt, so dass die Teilnehmer während des gesamten Konsultationsprozesses ihre Muttersprache verwenden konnten. Am Ende waren sie in der Lage, eingehende Diskussionen mit Entscheidungsträgern zu führen und Vorschläge zur Zukunft der EU zu machen. Insgesamt nahmen an den sechs transnationalen Plan-D-Projekten rund 40 000 Menschen persönlich und schätzungsweise mehrere Hunderttausend virtuell über das Internet teil. Die zivilgesellschaftlichen Organisationen, die diese Projekte durchführten, dienten als Multiplikatoren und verbreiteten die von den Bürgern geäußerten Meinungen in verschiedenen Stadien des Projekts über ihre politischen und medialen Kanäle.

Die zivilgesellschaftlichen Projekte im Rahmen von Plan D haben gezeigt, dass partizipative Elemente eine durchaus nützliche Ergänzung der repräsentativen Demokratie darstellen. Durch diese Projekte wurden die Ergebnisse anderer Bürgerprogramme bestätigt, dass nämlich diese Konsultationen den Teilnehmern die Möglichkeit bieten, sowohl menschliche als auch politische Erfahrungen zu sammeln. Unabhängig von der Meinung, die die Bürger zur EU zunächst hatten, wandelten sich ihre Einstellungen im Verlauf der Konsultationen erheblich. Am Ende des Konsultationsprozesses erwarteten sie mit großem Interesse die Reaktionen von Entscheidungsträgern, insbesondere von den EU-Organen und -Einrichtungen.

Aus diesem Grund führte die Kommission im Dezember 2007 eine Abschlusskonferenz über die sechs transnationalen Plan-D-Projekte durch. Sie trug den Titel „Die Zukunft Europas – die bürgernahe Agenda“. Zum ersten Mal hatten Bürgerinnen und Bürger, die an verschiedenen transnationalen Projekten mit Elementen partizipativer Demokratie teilgenommen hatten, die Gelegenheit, auf einem europäischen Podium eine Synthese ihrer Wünsche unmittelbar den Entscheidungsträgern vorzutragen.

Die Empfehlungen, die sich daraus ergaben, wurden den Staats- und Regierungschefs der EU, den nationalen Parlamenten, den EU-Organen sowie den europäischen politischen Parteien im Vorfeld der Dezember-Tagung des Europäischen Rates in Form eines offenen Briefes übermittelt (Anhang 2). Darin wurden die europäischen politischen Parteien aufgefordert, diese Empfehlungen in ihren Programmen aufzugreifen und sie mit den Bürgern im Vorfeld der Wahlen zum Europäischen Parlament im Jahr 2009 zu diskutieren. Die Staats- und Regierungschefs der EU wurden aufgefordert, die Schaffung einer aktiven europäischen Bürgerschaft auf allen Ebenen des Regierens und Verwaltens zu fördern.

Die Bürgerprojekte zeigten verschiedene Wege auf, wie dies erreicht werden kann. Folgende Möglichkeiten wurden getestet:

- eine europäische Website als Diskussionsforum, vernetzt mit nationalen Ablegern und flankiert von Diskussionsveranstaltungen auf lokaler, nationaler und europäischer Ebene;
- eine mehrsprachige und in hohem Maße interaktive Website, deren Inhalt von Arbeitsgruppen in verschiedenen Mitgliedstaaten erstellt und entsprechend den Rückmeldungen ausgewählter Workshops, die als Zielgruppen fungierten, angepasst wurde;

- parallel verlaufende nationale Konsultationen zum gleichen Thema in allen Mitgliedstaaten, die zu einer gesamteuropäischen Synthese führten;
- europaweite Deliberationsforen, in denen ein zufällig ausgewählter Teil der Bevölkerung drei Tage lang im direkten Kontakt miteinander debattierte;
- Diskussionsveranstaltungen auf lokaler Ebene in mehreren Mitgliedstaaten mit Umfragen und Videomitschnitten von Bürgermeinungen.

Durch diese Projekte wurde deutlich, dass die Entwicklung einer partizipativen Demokratie in Bezug auf EU-Themen auf lokaler, regionaler, nationaler und grenzübergreifender Ebene sowohl hinsichtlich der Qualität als auch der Logistik möglich ist.

In Bezug auf die behandelten Inhalte zeigte sich, dass bisweilen eine Diskrepanz zwischen den Erwartungen der Bürger und den tatsächlichen Kompetenzen der EU besteht, beispielsweise in den Bereichen Soziales, Bildung sowie Außenpolitik/Verteidigung. Die Teilnahme an den Konsultationen machte die Bürger mit den EU-Verfahren zur Entscheidungsfindung vertrauter. Am Ende der Konsultationen hatten die Teilnehmer eine klarere Vorstellung davon, wie ein Entscheidungsträger in die Verantwortung genommen und wie die Kluft zwischen den politisch Verantwortlichen und den Bürgern künftig verringert werden kann.

Die Projekte führten auch zu interessanten Schlussfolgerungen hinsichtlich der zeitlichen Abstimmung, der Auswahl von Teilnehmern, der Ausbildung von Moderatoren, der logistischen Erfordernisse grenzübergreifender mehrsprachiger Diskussionsforen sowie hinsichtlich der Art von Informationen und Sachverstand, die erforderlich sind, damit Bürger verschiedenster Herkunft eine fundierte Debatte über europäische Themen führen können. Ein einfacher Zugang zu wissenschaftlichem Rat und Sachverstand ist für partizipative Verfahren, an denen Interessenvertreter ohne Fachwissen und politische Entscheidungsträger beteiligt sind, jedenfalls unabdingbar.

2. DIE ZUKUNFT – *DEBATE EUROPE*

In der ersten Phase von Plan D lag der Schwerpunkt auf dem Teil des Konzepts, der für „Debatte und Dialog“ stand. Im nächsten Schritt wird der Aspekt von „D wie Demokratie“ in den Mittelpunkt gerückt. Auf diese Weise sollen einerseits die Bürger noch besser in die Lage versetzt werden, ihre Wünsche unmittelbar den Entscheidungsträgern gegenüber zu artikulieren, und andererseits die Medien in diesem Prozess besser genutzt werden. Deshalb wird die neue Phase *Debate Europe* heißen, ebenso wie die Plan-D-Website der Kommission.

Debate Europe soll Folgendes leisten:

1. Artikulierung der Ergebnisse aus den Bürgerkonsultationen, die die Zivilgesellschaft mit politischen Entscheidungsträgern abhielten. Die von den Bürgern erarbeiteten Schlussfolgerungen werden von diesen selbst gebündelt und dann politischen Mandatsträgern, Parteien und Stiftungen übermittelt. Höhepunkt dieses Prozesses ist eine Diskussion zwischen Bürgern und Politikern über die gebündelten Vorschläge. Hierbei wird *Debate Europe* der neue politische und institutionelle Rahmen der EU

zugute kommen, darunter die neue Verordnung über die Regelungen für die politischen Parteien und Stiftungen auf europäischer Ebene⁸.

2. Enge Zusammenarbeit und, soweit möglich, gemeinsames Handeln der EU-Organe und -Institutionen, um eine maximale Wirkung ihrer Anstrengungen zur Schaffung einer aktiven Bürgerschaft zu erreichen (Bürgerforen; die Kommunikationsstrategien des Europäischen Parlaments vor den Europawahlen im Jahr 2009 und Diskussionen mit Organisationen der Zivilgesellschaft im Rahmen der Initiative „Agora“; Initiativen des Ausschusses der Regionen und des Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschusses).
3. Verstärkung bestehender EU-Initiativen, insbesondere der Kommissionsprogramme zur Förderung einer aktiven Bürgerschaft — z. B. das Programm „Europa für Bürgerinnen und Bürger“, der Europäische Fonds für die Integration von Drittstaatsangehörigen, Programme für den sozialen Zusammenhalt und zur Armutsbekämpfung, andere einmalige Initiativen anlässlich des Europäischen Jahrs des interkulturellen Dialogs (2008), des Europäischen Jahrs der Kreativität und Innovation, die vorbereitenden Maßnahmen in Bezug auf die Aktion „Elektronische Teilnahme Behinderter“ („eParticipation“) und damit in Verbindung stehende Maßnahmen sowie die Initiative zur digitalen Integration („e-Inclusion“). Auf diese Weise wird *Debate Europe* die Kommission in ihren Bestrebungen unterstützen, den Bürgern den Mehrwert der EU-Politiken zu erläutern (u. a. mit Hilfe von Erfolgsgeschichten aus dem Bereich Binnenmarkt: Roaming-Gebühren im Mobilfunk, Billigflüge, Verringerung der Entwicklungsunterschiede zwischen den Regionen, Umweltschutz und Maßnahmen im Zusammenhang mit dem Klimawandel).
4. Fortsetzung anderer erfolgreicher Plan-D-Maßnahmen (Online-Diskussionen zwischen EU-Bediensteten und Bürgern; Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Informationsbüros der Kommission und des Europäischen Parlaments, wobei durch EU-Informationsaußenstellen eine flächendeckende Präsenz gewährleistet werden soll).

2.1. Verknüpfung der Bürgerdebatten mit den politischen Vertretungsorganen

Es besteht der allgemeine Wunsch, die Kluft zwischen der nationalen und der europäischen Politik zu überwinden. Die politischen Parteien Europas müssen in ihren Bestrebungen unterstützt werden, sich an den öffentlichen Diskussionen in den jeweiligen Mitgliedsstaaten zu beteiligen. Insbesondere während des europäischen Wahlkampfs sind europäische Belange in den Vordergrund zu rücken; die Bürger müssen erkennen, welche Folgen ihre auf europäischer Ebene getroffenen politischen Entscheidungen für ihren Alltag haben.

Debate Europe wird eine Katalysatorwirkung auf die derzeit laufenden Initiativen der Kommission zur Überwindung der oben erwähnten Kluft haben. Im Rahmen von *Debate Europe* wird ein europaweites Projekt zur Bürgerkonsultation kofinanziert, das von zivilgesellschaftlichen Organisationen gemeinsam mit Denkfabriken, Forschungsorganisationen und Universitäten, politischen Parteien und Stiftungen ausgeführt wird. Ferner werden Maßnahmen gefördert, die auf nationaler und regionaler Ebene Bürger verschiedenster

⁸ Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1524/2007 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 18. Dezember 2007.

Herkunft befähigen sollen, an Diskussionen teilzunehmen, ihre Ansichten in wenigen Kernsätzen zu bündeln, diese mit Entscheidungsträgern zu erörtern und die Medien in diesen Ablauf einzubinden.

Die neue EU-Verordnung über die Regelungen für die politischen Parteien und Stiftungen wird sich für *Debate Europe* vorteilhaft auswirken. Diese Verordnung ist eines der praktischen Ergebnisse von Plan D. Sie erweitert den Tätigkeitsbereich der europäischen politischen Parteien und fördert die Entwicklung politischer Stiftungen in Europa, was für die Einbindung der Bürger in einen ständigen, aufrichtigen und fundierten politischen Dialog von besonderer Bedeutung ist.

Im Jahr 2007 wurden der Kommission von diesen Stiftungen Pläne zur Entwicklung einer Reihe von Pilotaktionen für das Jahr 2008 vorgelegt: Sensibilisierung der Bürger im Hinblick auf die bevorstehenden Europawahlen mittels Schulungen, gezielte Kommunikationsinitiativen, Internetauftritte, Broschüren, Vernetzung nationaler Stiftungen und Denkfabriken. Ab September 2008 erhalten die politischen Stiftungen dauerhaft Zuwendungen der Europäischen Union.

Debate Europe wird zudem die politischen Stiftungen bitten, zu den von den Organisationen der Zivilgesellschaft durchgeführten Konsultationen der Bürger beizutragen.

2.2. Verstärkte Zusammenarbeit mit dem Europäischen Parlament

Die im Rahmen von Plan D im Dezember 2007 durchgeführte Konferenz „Die Zukunft Europas – die bürgernahe Agenda“ hat deutlich gemacht, dass die EU-Organe mehr Gewicht haben, wenn sie ihre *Kräfte bündeln* und *gemeinsam* an Veranstaltungen, die dem Dialog mit den Bürgern dienen, teilnehmen. Diese bieten ihnen die Gelegenheit, das gesamte Spektrum der EU-Demokratie vorzustellen. Damit wiederum wird es den Bürgern ermöglicht, die EU-Entscheidungsprozesse besser zu verstehen. Diese Form der interinstitutionellen Zusammenarbeit wird ein Querschnittsmerkmal der *Debate-Europe*-Projekte auf europäischer sowie nationaler und regionaler Ebene sein.

In seiner Kommunikationsstrategie anlässlich der Europawahlen drängt das Europäische Parlament auf eine enge Zusammenarbeit der EU-Organe: Durch *Debate Europe* wird ein Beitrag zu dieser notwendigen Zusammenarbeit geleistet. Tatsächlich ist für die Förderung einer aktiven europäischen Bürgerschaft die Zusammenarbeit nicht nur mit dem Europäischen Parlament von wesentlicher Bedeutung, sondern auch mit dem Ausschuss der Regionen und dem Europäischen Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss. Diese Institutionen und Organe haben umfangreiche Erfahrungen mit der Durchführung von Bürgerforen gesammelt.

Die Kommission ist bereit, mit jedem künftigen EU-Ratsvorsitz zusammenzuarbeiten, der „Bürger Gipfel“ mit Beteiligung der verschiedenen EU-Organe und -Institutionen organisieren möchte und damit den Bürgern ein Podium bieten würde, europäischen Entscheidungsträgern ihre Meinung zu konkreten Themen vorzutragen.

2.3. Schaffung von Synergieeffekten zwischen Kommunikationsprogrammen der Kommission

Mit *Debate Europe* werden andere Kommissionsprogramme zur Förderung einer aktiven europäischen Bürgerschaft ergänzt und Synergieeffekte erzielt. Das typische Merkmal aller *Debate-Europe*-Projekte wird ihre institutionenübergreifende, politische und mediale

Dimension sein — die auf regionaler, nationaler und gesamteuropäischer Ebene durchgeführten Konsultationsveranstaltungen werden eine sachlich fundierte Debatte zwischen Bürgern und Entscheidungsträgern aus allen Mitgliedstaaten und von allen EU-Institutionen zum Ergebnis haben.

Die Bedingungen in den Aufforderungen zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen im Rahmen von *Debate Europe* sollen gewährleisten, dass die ausgewählten Projekte dem allgemeinen politischen Bestreben der Kommission, eine aktive europäische Bürgerschaft zu fördern, Rechnung tragen; in diesem Zusammenhang sind vor allem zu nennen:

- das Programm „Europa für Bürgerinnen und Bürger“, mit dem eine aktive europäische Bürgerschaft gefördert wird, indem eine große Bandbreite an Akteuren (lokale Behörden, Organisationen der Zivilgesellschaft, Wirtschafts- und Verbraucherverbände, Bürger) Unterstützung erhält, um gemeinsam mittels unterschiedlicher Methoden – sowohl herkömmlicher Art (Aktionen im Rahmen von Städtepartnerschaften, transnationale Projekte der Zivilgesellschaft) als auch innovativer Art (z. B. Bürgerforen) – zu handeln, zu debattieren, zu diskutieren und Netzwerke zu knüpfen;
- das Europäische Jahr des interkulturellen Dialogs 2008, an dem sich alle EU-Organe und -Institutionen beteiligen sowie das Europäische Jahr der Kreativität und Innovation 2009;
- die politischen Stiftungen und Parteien in Europa, die bestrebt sind, mit Unterstützung der EU die Bürger im Hinblick auf die bevorstehenden Europawahlen zu sensibilisieren;
- der Europäische Fonds für die Integration von Drittstaatsangehörigen. Die Integration von Immigranten ist ein Prozess, in dem enge Partnerschaften zwischen staatlichen und nichtstaatlichen Akteuren verschiedener Ebenen bestehen (u. a. Arbeitgeber, Gewerkschaften, religiöse Organisationen, Zivilgesellschaft, Migrantenverbände, Medien und nichtstaatliche Organisationen im Bereich der Migrantenhilfe);
- die vorbereitenden Maßnahmen in Bezug auf die „eParticipation Preparatory Action“, deren Ziel eine stärkere Einbindung von Bürgern in die Gesetzgebungs- und Entscheidungsverfahren auf EU-Ebene mittels neuer Technologien ist. Neue Formen der Interaktion zwischen Bürgern und den europäischen Institutionen werden derzeit bereits versuchsweise eingeführt;
- vom Siebten Rahmenprogramm für Forschung und Entwicklung finanzierte Forschung und begleitende Initiativen in den Bereichen gesellschaftliche Steuerungssysteme („Governance“) und Bürgerschaft (Arbeitsprogramm für Sozial- und Geisteswissenschaften) sowie öffentliches Engagement im Bereich der Wissenschaft (Arbeitsprogramm für den Bereich „Wissenschaft und Gesellschaft“)⁹.

2.4. Weiterentwicklung sonstiger Plan-D-Initiativen

Debate Europe und andere derzeit in den Mitgliedstaaten laufende Initiativen – mit zum Teil wertvollem Potenzial für die interinstitutionelle Zusammenarbeit – werden ineinandergreifen; hierzu gehören:

- Pilot-Informationsnetze (PIN) — Diese Netze sind bereits geknüpft. Sie sollen europäische, nationale und regionale Parlamentarier zum Austausch von Informationen, Kenntnissen und Ideen über die EU zusammenführen. Die PIN werden die Europadebatte

⁹ Beschluss Nr. 1982/2006/EG des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates, Entscheidung 2006/971/EG des Rates und Entscheidung 2006/974/EG des Rates.

näher an die nationalen Parlamente herantragen. Mit Hilfe des Internets und anderer Online-Werkzeuge und bei Zusammenkünften sollen „Ideen-Netzwerke“ entstehen und ein Beitrag dazu geleistet werden, Politiker und Medien mit innovativen zivilgesellschaftlichen Projekten in Kontakt zu bringen.

- Europäische öffentliche Räume — Die Kommissionsvertretungen und die Informationsbüros des Europäischen Parlaments in Madrid, Tallinn und Dublin haben gemeinsam solche Räume eingerichtet, in denen Ausstellungen, Diskussionen, Seminare und Fortbildungsveranstaltungen zu EU-Themen stattfinden. Dieses Pilotprojekt soll auf andere Hauptstädte ausgeweitet werden; den Anfang werden Rom, London, Kopenhagen und Berlin machen.
- Bürgerforen — Das Europäische Parlament, der Europäische Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss und der Ausschuss der Regionen organisieren solche Foren in den Mitgliedstaaten. *Debate Europe* wird die Bediensteten der EU-Organe und -Institutionen ermuntern, sich – auf der Grundlage des Plan-D-Konzepts „Europäische runde Tische für Demokratie“¹⁰ – zusammenzutun und gemeinsam in solchen Foren aufzutreten.
- Besuche in den Mitgliedstaaten — Die „Plan-D“-Besuche von Kommissionsmitgliedern finden in nationalen Parlamenten, bei regionalen und lokalen Behörden, bei Medien und bei der Zivilgesellschaft statt. Die Bediensteten der Kommission werden ermuntert, ihre ehemaligen Schulen zu besuchen. Im Einklang mit der Strategie zur Einbindung des Kommissionspersonals¹¹, wonach sich die Bediensteten als Botschafter aktiv an der Öffentlichkeitsarbeit beteiligen sollen (Beispiele hierfür sind die Aktion „Back to School“ und das „Enterprise Europe Network“), wird *Debate Europe* solche direkten Kontakte weiter fördern und die anderen EU-Organe und -Institutionen animieren, sich diesen Maßnahmen anzuschließen.
- Die Präsenz vor Ort noch weiter verstärken — Zusammen mit den Kommissionsvertretungen organisieren die Europe-Direct-Zentren in den Mitgliedstaaten Diskussionen, Veranstaltungen und Seminare außerhalb der Hauptstädte. *Debate Europe* wird diese Aktivitäten künftig ausbauen und dabei ab 2009 auf die „zweite Generation“ von Europe-Direct-Zentren zurückgreifen können.
- Verfeinerung der Eurobarometer-Meinungsumfragen — Bei Eurobarometer-Umfragen der Kommission sollen die Erfahrungen aus der ersten Phase der Plan-D-Projekte berücksichtigt werden, in der europaweit mit Verfahren des *Deliberative Polling* zur Zukunft der EU experimentiert wurde.
- Internet-Debatten — Die dem Plan D gewidmete Website von *Debate Europe* ist im Januar 2008 mit Unterstützung der Kommissionsvertretungen überarbeitet worden, um die Möglichkeiten für interaktive Debatten mit Internetnutzern über bestimmte EU-Themen zu verbessern. Den unlängst wieder aufgenommenen Internetdiskussionen werden noch im Jahr 2008 und dann 2009 weitere ähnliche Diskussionen folgen.

¹⁰ KOM(2005) 494, Abschnitt 4.1.5.

¹¹ SEK(2007) 912.

3. AUFFORDERUNG ZUR EINREICHUNG VON VORSCHLÄGEN UND DEZENTRALE MASSNAHMEN

Debate Europe wird gewährleisten, dass die umfassenden Bemühungen der Kommission zur Förderung einer aktiven europäischen Bürgerschaft Teil einer integrierten interinstitutionellen Anstrengung werden, die die Verantwortlichen auf allen Entscheidungsebenen erreicht.

Vorgeschlagen wird ein zweigleisiges Vorgehen, für das Haushaltsmittel in Höhe von 7,2 Millionen EUR bereitstehen:

- europaweit: eine zentrale europaweite Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen für ein die 27 Mitgliedstaaten umfassendes transnationales Projekt, das mit 2 Millionen EUR kofinanziert wird;
- länder- und regionspezifisch: dezentrale Aufforderungen zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen und Maßnahmen zur Unterstützung lokaler Projekte, die mit 5,2 Millionen EUR kofinanziert werden¹².

In den europaweiten Aufforderungen soll in den Bedingungen stehen, dass im Rahmen von *Debate Europe* – unter Berücksichtigung der Erfahrungen aus der ersten Serie transnationaler Projekte mit Elementen partizipativer Demokratie –

- in jedem Mitgliedstaat Konsultationen der Bürger durchgeführt,
- auf europäischer Ebene gemeinsame Schlussfolgerungen formuliert und an die europäischen politischen Organisationen übermittelt,
- Dialoge zwischen Bürgern und gewählten Volksvertretern oder europäischen politischen Organisationen organisiert werden sollen; hierbei sind das Europäische Parlament, der Europäische Wirtschafts- und Sozialausschuss und der Ausschuss der Regionen eng einzubinden.

Auf nationaler oder regionaler Ebene: Die Kommissionsvertretungen

- planen für 2008 ungefähr 140 Aktionen zur Anregung der öffentlichen Diskussion über die EU;
- werden sich – nach lokalen Aufforderungen zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen – an der Finanzierung bedarfsgerechter Aktionen beteiligen (z. B. Maßnahmen in Schulen und Jugendzentren, Ausstellungen und Messen, Festivals, Konferenzen, Seminare, Veranstaltungen mit nichtstaatlichen Organisationen (NRO));
- werden diese Maßnahmen gemeinsam mit anderen EU-Organen und -Institutionen durchführen, beispielsweise im Rahmen der Europäischen öffentlichen Räume, des Europäischen Jahres des interkulturellen Dialogs, des geplanten Europäischen Jahres der Kreativität und Innovation sowie nationaler Kulturinstitute in der EU.

Je nach den nationalen Gegebenheiten könnten sogar begrenzte Mittel zugunsten von national tätigen NRO zu einem nutzbringenden Dialog über EU-Themen führen. Der Nutzen eines solchen Dialogs ließe sich dadurch steigern, dass die Kommissionsvertretungen in

¹² Beschluss der Kommission vom 12.3.2008 über die Annahme des Jahresarbeitsprogramms 2008 für Finanzhilfen und öffentliche Aufträge im Bereich Kommunikation (Tabelle 2.6.2).

Zusammenarbeit mit den Informationsbüros des Europäischen Parlaments regionale und lokale Behörden einbeziehen.

Derartige Initiativen könnten eine Schubwirkung auf bestehende und neue regionale und lokale Netzwerke entfalten und – dank des Einsatzes von E-Participation-Tools¹³ – zur Verbreitung von bewährten Verfahren beitragen. Sie wären möglicherweise auch für Politiker von Interesse, die in Europawahlen kandidieren und diese Diskussionen als Grundlage für einen Dialog mit ihren Wählern nutzen könnten.

4. FAZIT

Einbeziehung der Bürgerinnen und Bürger

Um die Allgemeinheit für eine Unterstützung der EU zu gewinnen, muss eine rege und offene Debatte stattfinden und müssen die Bürger aktiv an den europäischen Belangen beteiligt werden. Neben den vielen Konsultationen, die die Kommission zwecks Anhörung von Interessengruppen und allgemeiner Öffentlichkeit zu spezifischen Politikbereichen durchführt, braucht die EU eine verstärkte politische Debatte und Bewusstseinsbildung, um ihre Ziele zu erreichen und die richtigen politischen Entscheidungen zu treffen. Die Rolle der Bürger durch die Förderung eines aktiven europäischen Bürgersinns zu stärken ist eines der zentralen Ziele der Kommunikationspolitik der Kommission.¹⁴

Mit den politischen Entscheidungsträgern Verbindung aufnehmen

Politische Parteien und deren gewählte Vertreter sind in der privilegierten Lage, europäische Themen in die nationale Debatte einbringen und eine öffentliche grenzüberschreitende Debatte in ganz Europa anstoßen zu können. Grenzüberschreitende Kommunikationskanäle sind erforderlich, um die Debatte und den Dialog über gemeinsam interessierende Themen auf der europäischen Agenda zu fördern. Die Kommission hat zur Entwicklung dieser Kanäle durch Legislativvorschläge beigetragen, mit denen die Bildung europäischer politischer Parteien erleichtert werden soll, sowie durch eine Reihe von Bürgerprogrammen und NRO-Maßnahmen sowie durch den Plan D.

Nach Abschluss der Pilotprojekte gilt es nun, deren Ergebnisse in den politischen Entscheidungsprozess einfließen zu lassen. Die erste Phase von Plan D hat bestätigt, dass ein eindeutiger Bedarf besteht, den politischen Dialog über europäische Themen zu intensivieren und auszuweiten, und dass die partizipative Demokratie die repräsentative Demokratie nutzbringend ergänzen kann.

In der nächsten Phase (2008-2009) und im Vorfeld der europäischen Wahlen wird *Debate Europe* einen operationellen Rahmen dafür liefern, auf andere zuzugehen, Verbindungen zu knüpfen und partnerschaftlich zu handeln. Doch ist auch die langfristige Perspektive wichtig: *Debate Europe* will die Wahrnehmung ändern, dass EU-Angelegenheiten zu abstrakt und zu abgekoppelt vom nationalen Kontext seien, um für die Bürger von Interesse zu sein. Zugleich bietet *Debate Europe* die Chance, die oft künstliche Kluft zwischen nationalen und europäischen Themen zu überwinden.

¹³ Wie zum Beispiel unter www.epractice.eu beschrieben.

¹⁴ KOM(2007) 568 vom 3.10.2007.

- Anhang 1: Beschreibungen der Plan-D-Projekte
- Anhang 2: Offener Brief / Empfehlungen der Teilnehmer der Abschlusskonferenz zu den sechs Bürgerprojekten im Rahmen von Plan D
- Anhang 3: Entwurf der zentralen Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen
- Anhang 4: Entwurf der dezentralen Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen

ANNEX 1

Citizens' consultations projects co-funded by the Commission in the framework of Plan D in 2006-2007 projects

Speak Up Europe

- Co-ordinator: European Movement International
- Amount of the project: EUR 1,039,310.63
- Grant from the EU budget: EUR 719,375.70
- Pan-European
- An integrated approach combining virtual and face to face communication, both on a European level and on a national level.
- Virtual: each partner created a national web site. Web animation (e.g. cartoon "What has Europe ever done for us?").
- Face to face: a series of local, national and European events.
- 27 000 people had taken part physically in the project by the end of September 2007.
- Specific multimedia site targeting youth, called "European Vibes".
- Specific site launched by one of the partners, Euractiv, called "EU debates and opinions" to promote the outcome of Speak Up Europe had received 110 000 viewers by end of September 2007.

European Citizens' Consultations

- Co-ordinator: King Baudouin Foundation
- Amount of the project: EUR 2.715.376,60
- Grant from the EU budget: EUR 1.895.751,95
- Pan-European.
- Deliberative consultation of citizens on a national level, on the basis of an agenda set at European level by a sample of citizens.
- European synthesis of the outcome of the national consultations and a European web site.
- 1 800 citizens participated in the project altogether.
- Feedback from 1 000 out of the 1 800 citizens involved via an evaluation survey.

Tomorrow's Europe

- Co-ordinator: Notre Europe
- Amount of the project: EUR 1.352.500
- Grant from the EU budget: EUR 849.500
- Pan-European
- Europe-wide deliberative poll.
- 3 550 citizens polled on the future of the EU.
- 362 of them were randomly selected to deliberate for three days in Brussels, with the help of experts.

- They filled in a questionnaire at the beginning of the deliberative phase and were polled at the end to measure the evolution of their views.

Our message to Europe

- Co-ordinator: Deutsche Gesellschaft e.V.
- Amount of the project: EUR 358.000,00
- Grant from the EU budget: EUR 250.000,00
- Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland.
- 4 000 participants altogether.
- 70 intensive dialogue events (54 in Germany, 4 in Austria, 4 in Slovakia, 4 in Czech Republic, 4 in Poland) with panel discussions.
- Opinion polls carried out during those events: 2600 people polled altogether, under 21 and over 21.
- In 20 of the events people had the opportunity to have their individual "message to Europe" recorded on video - 300 audiovisual messages collected altogether.

Radio Web Europe

- Co-ordinator: CENASCA-CISL
- Amount of the project: EUR 794.475,03
- Grant from the EU budget: EUR, 556.132,50
- Italy, Lithuania, Austria, UK, Spain, Portugal, Malta.
- Creation of a multimedia and interactive website targeting 18-35 years old. Content determined by face to face meetings with target audience through focus groups (two per country). At a second stage, workshops to collect feedback.
- National reports served as a basis for a synthesis report.
- Users can view and download audiovisual products and post their own (comments, videos, interviews, games, cartoons...). At the end of the project, website hosted 200 multimedia products. Average number of monthly visits: 5 000.

Our Europe-Our Debate-Our Contribution

- Co-ordinator: European House Budapest
- Amount of the project: EUR 364.000
- Grant from the EU budget: EUR 254.500
- Hungary, Austria, Italy, Slovakia and Slovenia.
- Fostering debate at grass-root level by meeting people in the streets and public transport, asking them to reply to a questionnaire (also posted on the project's English-language website).
- A "regional events" dimension (face to face meetings).
- A European bus touring the five countries, displaying a "European labyrinth" at every stop which people were invited to enter with a "European passport". People's views were recorded on video at every stop.
- The aim was to collect 2 500 people's views on Europe either through the questionnaire or by video.

Projects co-funded by the Commission Representations in the framework of Plan D in 2007-2008

Representation	Project
Bulgaria	Regional Dialog Open Forum: Women for Social Inclusion
	The Tender Europe: targeting more marginalised social groups – meetings and debates in schools, youth organisations, municipalities, chambers of commerce etc.
	An Investment for Creating Qualified and Internationally Educated Young People Corresponding to the Requirements of the European Single Market: Advertise the possibilities provided through European funding under the ERASMUS Program.
	No to Discrimination in United Europe: Let us Talk about the Different! Civic debate on issues related to discrimination and dissemination of EU best practices in the field of anti-discrimination measures in the cross-border region Svishtov (BG) - Zimnitch (RO).
Czech Republic	Gender Studies OPS: Flexicurity/labour market/ professional-private life - survey, video, discussions, leaflets, audit of pre-school establishments.
	Klub mladých Evropanu, o.s.: Generation EU: Target group - young people 15-19years. Workshops on labour market, education, security, freedom, future, European social model, European identity/values, 1 national conference.
Denmark	Your Europe
	Food Safety in the Consumers' EU
	Gender Divided Labour Market and Violence against Women
	Global Citizen and EU
	The Model Parliament
Estonia	Federation of Estonian student unions - Estonia in the EU's higher educational system (seminars, conference, articles in student press, discussions on internet forums, publication).
	Junior Achievement Estonia - Youth Entrepreneurship Conference on gender equality Project activities.
	NGO umbrella organisation in Viljandi - promotion of equal opportunities of local level citizens in the EU (conference, seminars, youth forum, study visit to Finnish rural areas).

France <i>Paris</i>	Europe, the future and citizenship in the Aquitaine region.
	Brittany youth's contribution to a European strategy to limit the scale of climate change.
	Know more about Europe to understand it better.
	Young European prize.
	Les Eurois, citizens of Europe.
	Europe for and by the young.
	A silent majority: women in the EU. Awareness raising among women, a major stake for the future of Europe.
	Etats généraux de l'Europe.
	Etats généraux de l'Europe.
	Deedale – Vendée region.
Hungary	Launch of the Hungarian chapter of the European Youth Parliament (Pillar Foundation)
	National consultation of women (Partners Hungary Foundation)
	Climate Change Youth Campaign (WWF Hungary)
Ireland	Institute of European Affairs (Future of Europe including immigration; crime and terror; climate change; Reform Treaty; Citizens Europe; EU@50; What has Europe done for citizens; use of overall theme "Europe 2.0". Use of web based products to widen and deepen the debate; meetings and debates across colleges, and other centres; production and dissemination of publications; explaining the new Treaty to different groups and especially the target groups; specifically target young professionals. Virtual tools and meetings, debates, high visibility events; dedicated Europe 2.0 website; podcasts; production of "6 Pack" information items for use with the target groups; production of a book "What the Reform Treaty Means", pamphlets; Young Professional network; high profile discussions and debates.
	Irish Countrywomen's Association (ICA) : legal rights in Europe; Irish farm Families; Quality of Life in Europe; Migration; Social Reality. Regional Seminars; training of co-ordinators; use of co-ordinators for training and organisation of seminars; use of expert speakers. Focus is on 16,000 families.
Latvia	Regional debates on social reality
	Youth observers in local and district authorities on cohesion and regional policy
	Training of multipliers - schoolchildren and teachers - on corruption and transparency issues

Malta	Fondazzjoni Temi Zammit
Portugal	Porto, Coimbra, Santarém, Évora and Faro Environment protection / Energy- Youth
	National: Future of Europe; Europe in the world; Migrations; Security - Youth
	All islands of the archipelago of Azores European integration; Future of Europe; Europe in the world
	Vila Real district Prosperity; Solidarity; Security and Freedom e Liberdade; Future of Europe; Europe in the world
	Beira Interior Solidarity – European Year Equality; European Year of Intercultural Dialogue; Cohesion and Rural Development Sept.2007 to August 2008
Spain Madrid - Barcelona	Fundación Ciudadanía Euro activos. ex:talleres para jóvenes que quieren darle la vuelta a Europa
	Europa Action and Lobby Development of a multilingual forum.
	Infocentro de Zaragoza Europa Joven, 50 años de logros
	Casal d'Europa de Sabadell Euroaptive,T
The Netherlands	Communicado Foundation Le Camping: Development of a pilot episode for six broadcastings for NL school TV. EU is visualised as a campsite; Member States are tents with their habitants. EU cooperation issues (enlargement, environment etc..) are explained through interaction of the actors in a comprehensible and educational way.
	ETV NL <i>Europe is Fun!</i> : Production of an educational project for secondary education scholars. A competition for digital EU stories, study materials and teachers training.
	Stichting Eggietalk (io) Eggietalk. Communication translation programme: pupils can communicate in their own language with pupils in other EU languages.
	<i>Click on Europe</i> . "Debatainment" with website and educational material for lower secondary education. Organisation aims at stimulating hard-to-reach target group to debate Europe in a competitive way.
	Nationaal oorlogsmuseum/ CHO Consultants Freedom and Democracy: Fundamental rights in Europe. Creating awareness and stimulating debate among youth in the national war museum. Electronic info pillars will be placed in the museum (including a voting system), and a website will be launched with small clips on 4 basic rights.

	<p>Passage Christelijk-Maatschappelijke Vrouwenbeweging <i>Living together in Europe</i>: Project proposed by the 4 largest woman movements in NL combined. The target group is approximately 120.000 female members, including many housewives. Newsletter, symposium, study days and an EU crafts contest. spin-off through family, friends etc. Create awareness of European issues among the members and to promote woman participation (use of voting right) in the 2009 European Parliament elections.</p>
	<p>Nationale Jeugdraad All about Europe.nl: website aiming at providing youth with a complete overview of the EU, to facilitate a structured dialogue. Bundle all relevant info for youth in one website. Nationale Jeugdraad (National Youthcouncil) portal website: Allesovereuropa.nl. This portal will bundle all relevant EU information for youth and youngsters in an understandable manner. Advertising campaign.</p>
	<p><i>CED Groep</i> <i>Europe in the news</i>: 8 special topics on the EU. Communication with pupils in other EU countries. EU section added to existing website. Website is part of "learning by discussing/debating" teaching method.</p>
<p>United Kingdom London</p>	<p>Women in Northern Ireland – Connecting to Europe. Northern Ireland Women's European Platform. The platform aims to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of women in Northern Ireland including the advancement of their education and development.</p>
	<p>My Voice in Europe The Community Development Foundation is a leading source of intelligence, guidance and delivery on community development in England and across the UK. The overall aim of the European and International Unit of CDF is to link and feed into practice and policy within the European and International arena by acting as a bridge between the UK and relevant international mechanisms.</p>
	<p>Voicing young people's views on climate change Inspire, support and celebrate young people as agents for change in society. Their aim is to create a generation of young, active citizens, drawn from all sectors of the UK population who will be a force for change in achieving global social and environmental justice.</p>
	<p>Flexicurity: young workers' views in a cohesion region Bevan Foundation, at the forefront of new thinking about achieving a fair and just Wales by carrying out research, organising conferences and debates, and by publishing articles and reports.</p>
	<p>Fem e-U Link, FATIMA Women's Network Innovation Centre. Fatima is a socially responsible minority ethnic-led organisation supporting the social and economic empowerment of all women through inter alia personal development, education and training, networking and engagement, as well as research and consultation.</p>
	<p>Forward Ladies Limited Non-profit business support network for women -networking opportunities, inspirational speakers, training, mentoring, coaching, business support and facilitates international trade missions.</p>

People and Politics Day-Europe: promoting democracy and active citizenship. Research, conferences, reports, promotion of democratic change.

Decentralised communication actions planned by Commission Representations in 2008

Plan D decentralised actions planned for 2008					
<i>Action type</i>		<i>Member State</i>	<i>Associated communication priority</i>	<i>€</i>	
1. Local calls	Programmed	UK	Energy & CC	150 000	
		Italy	Intercultural Dialogue	150 000	
		Netherlands	None	142 000	
		Austria		203 000	
		Germany		200 000	
		Sub-total			845 000
	To be programmed	Amounts confirmed	Netherlands	None	258 000
			Malta		150 000
			Germany		100 000
			Slovakia		50 000
			Czech Rep.		50 000
			Lithuania		20 000
		Sub-total			628 000
		Amounts TBC	Latvia	None	TBC
			Slovenia	Reform Treaty	TBC
Total				1 473 000	
2. Other actions				3 429 867	
Total Plan D	Allocated			5 200 000	
	Requested			4 902 867	

ANNEX 2

Open letter / recommendations from the participants at the concluding conference of the six Plan D citizens' projects

The future of Europe-the citizens' agenda

Open letter to the EU Heads of State and Government, the National Parliaments, the European Union Institutions and European political parties

Brussels, 9 December 2007

Next week, the Heads of State and Government of the European Union will sign the Lisbon Treaty. The EU celebrated its 50th Anniversary this year. Since 1957, the European Union has progressed from economic cooperation to a political union that affects the lives of almost 500 million citizens. This evolution also brings responsibilities for the political leaders of Europe. The permissive consensus that existed at the beginning has to be turned into an actively earned consensus in dialogue with the European citizens.

Associating citizens to the European construction is more than ever a fundamental issue. If we do not want the citizens to desert once more the European elections in 2009, political leaders need to regain the citizens' trust and confidence in the European project and show they care about citizens' involvement in the decision-making machine.

Plan D launched by Commission Vice-President Margot Wallström responded to this challenge in a novel manner. It co-financed a series of projects to learn how ordinary citizens can be involved in the EU decision-making and how they view the EU's future. This exercise responds to a basic value of the EU in the 21st century: active citizenship.

The European Movement International, the King Baudouin Foundation, Notre Europe, Deutsche Gesellschaft, European House Budapest and CENASCA-CISL, with a large network of partners across Europe have engaged actively in Plan D. A series of grass roots debates, consultations, polls and events aimed at consulting citizens on their visions of Europe have been carried out in a number of Member States, while deliberative polling and consultation has taken place on a pan-European scale.

Thousands of citizens took part in those projects throughout the European Union in 2007. Over 250 of them have assembled in Brussels on 8 and 9 December to debate on the major concerns which have emerged through Plan D. There was a clear consensus among participants that more opportunities of this kind should be provided to involve citizens in the debate over Europe's future.

They have structured these concerns into three themes:

1. The human aspects of globalisation
2. Enlargement, political integration and EU citizenship
3. The EU's role on the world stage.

They have consolidated their conclusions into a single set of recommendations (annexed to this letter).

They have debated those recommendations with decision-makers representing the EU institutions as well as the present Portuguese and future Slovenian Presidencies of the EU:

- Mrs. Margot Wallström, Vice-President, European Commission.
- Mrs Jillian van Turnhout, Vice-President, European Economic and Social Committee.
- Mr. Ivo Opstelten, Mayor of Rotterdam, Member of the Committee of Regions,

- Mr. Pierre Jonckheer, Member of the European Parliament
- Mr. Valter Lemos, Portuguese Secretary of State for Education,
- Ambassador Igor Sencar, Permanent Representative of Slovenia.

They call on the European political parties to address those recommendations in their programmes and to discuss them with citizens in view of the elections to European Parliament in 2009.

They call upon the EU Heads of State and Government, both in their capacity as European but also as national leaders, to heed those recommendations and thereby encourage the development of active European citizenship, without which there cannot be a truly political Union.

They call for the dialogue with citizens on European issues to be continued and deepened in the future.

The participants to the conference on "The future of Europe-the citizens' agenda"

Twenty–seven recommendations

1.

As work is considered a crucial dimension for individual emancipation, the **welfare systems** should protect citizens' life conditions during periods of transition for example by providing people with an unemployment indemnity when changing jobs.

2.

Citizens expect more action from the EU in the area of **social policy and social cohesion** in order to fight the black market, reduce salary gaps, promote gender-equality, ease unemployment and to make it attractive to work longer before retiring.

3.

The EU should promote **equal rights, comparable standard of living** in all EU member states and foster equal opportunities through harmonised social and economic policies and a welfare model for all member states.

4.

The Member States and the EU should make sure that **migrants** enjoy equal rights and opportunities and have access to education and work if they observe the laws, rules and values of the host country and commit to learning the language.

5.

The **European migration policy**, so far based only on restrictive measures, should adopt a more sophisticated approach aiming at the social and economic development of the involved countries. The EU needs to clarify its approach to economic refugee status.

6.

Migration needs to be acknowledged as one of today's most pressing issues, and cannot be tackled without a coherent development aid strategy.

7.

The EU should ensure that part of each country's national curriculum, in both **schools and universities**, requires a section on Democracy and European Citizenship, to ensure a greater understanding of the EU, its history, and its opportunities.

8.

The EU should show more commitment to **educational promotion** in general but also specifically regarding European issues, e.g. through the expansion of existing educational EU programmes or the

establishment of new EU programmes as well as the incorporation of the European integration process as a central topic in the national school curricula.

9.

Exchange projects need further support to encourage young people to recognise the importance of their EU citizenship in the global context.

10.

The EU should help preserving, appreciating and respecting the **diversity** of peoples, knowledge, customs and languages identities - while recognising common and shared European values.

11.

Integration strategies such as the **educational policy** incorporating the EU into school curricula will favour the development of a European identity.

12.

The EU should prioritise creating and communicating a **new ‘memory’ about Europe**, to move away from the stereotypes associated with certain countries and history, so that all citizens can be valued and we can understand each other better.

13.

The EU should increase opportunities for a more active, **direct participation of European citizens** from all walks of life in policy-making through regular citizen Plan D-type participatory projects, debates, public hearings, etc. at EU but also at regional and national levels. More transparency-more influence for European citizens!

14.

The EU should make sure that the **current citizen recommendations** are considered and discussed not only by the EU but also national policy-makers or become part of existing policy-making processes (e.g. impact assessments, public consultations). The EU should not only listen but also learn.

15.

The EU should become more interactive, citizen friendly and inclusive, recognising the growing significance of **regional approach and identity**. New and innovative information technique should be used to improve communication with citizens especially young people. Specific attention has to be paid to the frequently neglected gender issues.

16.

Climate change and energy security cannot successfully be dealt with at the national level alone. The EU should be given stronger powers to develop a common energy policy and ensure that Member States live up to the commitments they have made at European level.

17.

In a global world, it makes sense for the EU to take greater responsibility than today in the fields of **military action, foreign aid and diplomatic relations**. The EU should be able to speak with one voice on a global level to defend its values.

18.

The EU can be more efficient than national governments in **security, police and struggle against drugs traffic and cartels**.

19.

The EU should lead the world in **protecting the environment** and promoting clean energy.

20.

Europe should develop a strong voice on the global stage with **common foreign and security policies that promote peace**, security in regional conflicts democracy and the respect for human rights providing for a strong role model across the world, whilst recognizing the importance of the nation state.

21.

The EU should show **a united front in international affairs**; the current practice is influenced too much by national short-term interests and considerations.

22.

The EU should tackle the impact of Europe's energy use on both the economy and the environment and foster the transition to environmentally clean, safe and sustainable energy sources.

23.

European citizens want the EU to **take the lead when it comes to social, energy and environmental standards** on a global level.

24.

The EU should develop **specific educational and action-oriented programmes for citizens on global issues** such as trade, energy and the environment.

25.

The EU should **coordinate its aid programmes with NGOs** engaged in humanitarian work to bring timely and efficient relief to crisis regions or to promote sustainable development.

26.

The EU should **lower barriers to international trade** as, overall, freer trade benefits developed and developing countries.

27.

The EU should show **more commitment in the fields of international peacekeeping** as well as humanitarian aid during catastrophes.

ANNEX 3

CENTRAL CALL FOR PROPOSALS - DG COMM No < A2-1/2008 >

Financial support for an initiative emanating from organisations with a significant trans-national dimension as provided by the European Commission's Debate Europe Communication

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

On 13 October 2005 the Commission approved its Communication to the Council, to the European Parliament, to the European Economic and Social Committee and to the Committee of the Regions: Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate.

This was a listening exercise so that the European Union can act on the concerns expressed by its citizens. The Commission aimed to stimulate debate and widen recognition for the added value that the E U provides.

It was a two-way process which:

- informed the public about the EU's role, with examples of its projects and achievements,
- identified their expectations for the future in return.

On 29 November 2006 Vice President Wallström presented an information note to the College of Commissioners on Plan D – Widen & deepen the debate. The purpose of this was to take stock and further widen and deepen the debate in the period of reflection.

On 2 April 2008, the Commission adopted a Communication to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled "Debate Europe-building on the experience of Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate". It noted that the first phase Plan D focused on the "debate and dialogue" part of the process. The next phase of Plan D will take this process one step further and focus on "D for democracy", further enabling citizens to articulate their wishes directly to decision-makers and making better use of the media in the process. This new phase has been named "Debate Europe".

In October 2005 the Commission launched a series of Europe-wide civil society projects for 2006, which it co-financed. In 2007, it promoted a further series of initiatives, targeting young people and women in particular.

2. OBJECTIVES

One of the key lessons from this first round of projects and the concluding conference of Plan D is that the interface between citizens and EU decision-makers needs to be strengthened to ensure that issues of interest and concern Europe-wide are debated and addressed at a European level. There is a need to communicate those Europe-wide issues and concerns which affect to a large degree all of Europe's citizens identified from consulting on a pan-

European basis and to communicate these to European political decision-makers and media especially in view of the June 2009 European elections.

As a result, the Commission wishes to strengthen the existing debate about the future of Europe and its impact on citizens' daily lives by launching one or more pan-European projects with the following objectives:

In a first phase;

- Carry out a Europe-wide dialogue between citizens, political decision-makers and other key opinion formers through a series of debates/conferences/consultations and other events, with a view to ascertaining citizens' principal issues and concerns at a European level which touch their daily lives. This dialogue will ensure a close involvement of the other EU institutions (EP, EESC, COR) and European political parties' foundations.
- The conclusions arising from these events should be synthesised and made public. At a concluding event they should be presented to European decision makers to give them the opportunity to react and take into account the concerns of the European electorate. This phase of the project should be completed ideally before the June 2009 European elections.

In a second phase, the contractor could continue with a series of meetings with newly-elected MEPs and representatives from the principal European media (television, radio, press).

In carrying out both phases, the contractor will take into account the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue and on-going Commission programmes such as Europe for Citizens and e-Participation.

The resulting projects will involve consortia of civil society organisations with a view to replying to these objectives on a Europe-wide scale. These consultations will complement those planned to be held at local level designed to address concerns focused on European issues with a more local impact.

3. TIMETABLE

3.1. Submission of applications

Publication of call beginning April 2008.

Applications must be submitted by end June 2008 at the latest.

Contracts will be signed September 2008.

Please read carefully section 10 of this call for proposals concerning the procedures for submitting applications.

3.2. Duration of projects

The project should begin between 1 September and 1 October 2008 and will be in two phases as described above.

The first phase will be completed by mid-May 2009 (before the European elections) and the second phase by 1 November 2009.

Applications must clearly state the project's starting and finishing dates (dd/mm/yy).

The maximum duration of projects is 14 months.

However, if, after the signing of the agreement and the start of the project, the beneficiary observes that, for fully justified reasons beyond his control, it becomes impossible to complete the project within the scheduled period, an extension to the eligibility period may be granted. A maximum extension of 3 months will be granted, provided that this is requested before the deadline specified in the grant agreement. The maximum duration will then be 18 months.

The period of eligibility of expenditure resulting from implementation of a project will begin on the day of signature of the grant contract by the last of the parties. If the nature of the project requires the project to start before the contract is signed, expenditure may be considered eligible before the signature of the contract. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application.

3.3. Information on the results of the selection

It is planned that applicants will be informed of the outcome of the selection procedure in July 2008.

The lists of selected projects will be published on the following website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/communication/grants/index_en.htm

Applicants whose applications have not been selected will be informed in writing.

4. FINANCING

The budget initially available for part-financing projects is estimated at € 2 000 000.

If during the 2008 budget year, additional amounts are allocated to boost the initial budget for this call for proposals, they might be allocated to co-financing projects which were adopted at the selection phase but not given priority for co-financing in the overall budget initially available. The Commission therefore reserves the right to set up a “reserve list” of proposals evaluated positively in order to take account of the resources actually available in the 2008 budget.

The grant awarded may not exceed 70% of the total eligible project costs.

Community contributions are meant to facilitate the implementation of a project which could not otherwise be implemented easily without the support of the European Union. They are based on the co-financing principle.

Consequently, a minimum of 30% of the total estimated eligible expenditure of the project must come from sources other than the European Union budget. Applicants must include evidence that co-financing is available (secured) for the remainder of the total cost of the project.

The Commission intends to finance 1 to 2 projects for a budget of € 1 or € 2 million in total..

The European Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

The amount allocated by the Commission may not in any circumstances exceed the amount requested. Moreover, the Commission reserves the right to award a grant lower than the amount requested by the applicant.

An organisation is not entitled to receive more than one grant from the Commission for the action covered by the selected project.

After approval by the Commission, a “grant contract”, a draft of which is reproduced at Annex VI, expressed in euros and specifying the conditions and the financing level, will be concluded between the Commission and the beneficiary. The originals of the finance contract must be signed and returned to the Commission immediately for signature. The Commission will be the last party to sign.

The payment methods are detailed in the draft contract (Article I.4), with a list of eligible and ineligible costs (Article II.14 of the general conditions and Article I.3 of the special conditions of the grant contract).

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applications which comply with the following criteria will be the subject of an in-depth evaluation.

5.1 Eligible countries

Grant applications are eligible if they are presented by organisations having a legal status and established in one of the 27 Member States.

Organisations established in countries other than the countries listed above are not eligible.

5.2 Types of cooperation eligible

The types of cooperation eligible include partnerships. The term partnership/partners implies full or partial active intellectual collaboration in the execution of the project. In no case will financial support alone (sponsorship) be deemed to constitute a partnership. However, any financial support accompanied by active intellectual collaboration in the execution of the project will be accepted as a partnership. In all cases, the purpose of partnership is to add value to the project.

6. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants must certify on their honour, by signing the application form, that they are not in one of the situations mentioned in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002), which are listed below.

Applicants will be excluded from participating in this call for proposals if they are in one of the following situations:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of res judicata;
- c) they have committed serious professional misconduct recorded by any means that awarding authorities can justify;
- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

Applicants will not receive financial support if, during the grant allocation procedure:

- a) they are subject to a conflict of interests;
- b) they are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the European Commission as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure, or fail to supply this information.

In accordance with Articles 93 to 96 of the Financial Regulation, administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants who are guilty of misrepresentation or are found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations under a previous contract award procedure.

To respect these provisions, the applicant and his partners must provide evidence that they are in none of the situations listed in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation.

7. SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria are designed to demonstrate the applicant's capacity to see the project through to a successful conclusion.

Applicants must provide evidence of stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain the activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out and/or grant-aided,

as well as evidence of their financial participation. The applicant must also provide evidence of professional competencies, qualifications and/or experience relevant to the proposed project.

7.1 Technical capacity

Candidates must show that they have the operational (technical and management) capacity needed to complete the proposed action and provide evidence of their capacity to direct a large-scale activity corresponding to the dimension of the project for which the grant is requested. Particular attention will be devoted to the capacity for integration in society in the Member States, to the mobilisation of the public and to the analysis of their contributions. The capacity to operate in a large number of Member States (ideally in all of them) would be an advantage.

Applicants must attach to the grant application a curriculum vitae for the project leader and for the personnel of their organisation who will actually do the work. They must also enclose a recent activity report .

7.2 Financial resources

In order to permit assessment of this criterion, applicants must submit with their application the following documents:

- annual accounts for the last complete financial year;
- the “financial identification” form (bank details) (Annex III), completed by the beneficiary and certified by the bank (with original signatures).

If, on the basis of the submitted documents, the Commission assesses that the financial capacity of the applicant is not sufficient, it may:

- reject the request for a Community grant;
- ask for further information;
- ask for the deposit of a guarantee;
- propose a grant agreement without a pre-financing payment.

7.3 Audit

Where the cost of the project to be financed exceeds €300 000, the grant application must be accompanied by an external audit report produced by an approved auditor.

This report must certify the accounts for the last year available and give an assessment of the applicant’s financial viability.

8. AWARD CRITERIA

Account will also be taken of other Commission programmes such as the European Year for Intercultural Dialogue in 2008, Europe for Citizens and INTI (Integration of Third-Country Nationals).

Eligible projects will be evaluated on the basis of:

- a) the consistency of the overall concept of the project with the objectives of Debate Europe, as described at point 2 of the call for proposals;
- b) the quality of the work programme and the *modus operandi*;
- c) the dynamics of networking and the establishment of pan-European cooperation;
- d) the capacity of the project to:
 - act in the largest number of Member States as possible, and ideally in all 27;
 - involve the largest number of citizens as possible;
 - ensure their diversity of origin and their representativeness;
 - provide for the use of the largest number of national languages possible;
 - generate transnational results;
- e) the likely multiplier effect through the media and civil society networks, as calculated on the basis of the measures proposed to give visibility to the project and its outcomes;
- f) the system of feedback to European political decision-makers and citizens involved, as recommended by Debate Europe;
- g) the mechanism for evaluation of the objectives pursued by the project.

9. PUBLICITY

Provided the successful tenderer agrees (unless the publication of information is likely to endanger the successful tenderer's safety or harm his interests), the Commission will publish the following information in whatever form and on whatever medium it wishes, including the Internet:

- the name and address of each beneficiary;
- the subject of the grant;
- amount awarded and rate of funding.

10. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

10.1 Publication

The text of the call for proposals, the annexes and, for information purposes, a copy of the standard agreement can be obtained from the Europa website at the following address:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/communication/grants/index_en.htm

10.2 Application form

Applications must be presented in one of the official languages of the EU.

Since the call is addressed first of all to organisations operating in several Member States, DG Communication would, however, appreciate it if grant applications (which must be made out on the 2006 form devised for the purpose) are accompanied by a version in one of the European Commission's working languages (French, English or German).

This form can be downloaded from the above Internet address.

Only grant applications submitted on the application forms attached to this call for proposals and comprising all the necessary documents mentioned in Annex D will be considered.

Applications must be:

- typed; hand-written applications will not be accepted;
- duly dated, filled in and signed by the legal representative of the organisation;
- sent in quadruplicate (the original, which must be identified as such, plus three copies).

10.3 Submission of the application

Deadline for the submission of applications: end May/early June 2008

Applications submitted after will not be considered.

Applications may be submitted in one of the following ways:

Proposals must be submitted on paper:

- by registered post to the following address, for which purposes the relevant date is to be the date of dispatch by post, as evidenced by the postmark or the registered delivery receipt issued by the postal services:

European Commission
Directorate-General COMMUNICATION
Unit A2 (Communication: planning and priorities)
Debate EuropeOffice BERL 5/234
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

- by hand delivery or courier service.

For security reasons, applications submitted personally or conveyed by a courier service can be presented only to the Commission's Central Mail Department (Rue de Genève 1, 1140 Evere, Belgium), and envelopes must be marked "DG COMMUNICATION, Unit A2 (Communication: planning and priorities), BERL 05/234 – Debate Europe Project". In the event of hand delivery, the submission date is the date of receipt. In the event of delivery by a courier service, the submission date is the date of receipt by the mail department.

Applications submitted by fax or e-mail will not be considered.

No modification of the application will be authorised after the submission of the application and its annexes. However, the Commission reserves the right to request any additional information needed for it to take a final decision on the award of financial support.

Applicants will be informed in writing when their application is received.

Only applications complying with the eligibility and exclusion criteria will be considered for the possible award of a grant.

Applicants whose applications are judged to be ineligible will be notified by mail, with an explanation as to why they were judged ineligible.

Tenderers will be informed, as soon as possible, of the decision taken by

the Commission on their grant application. No information will be released until the Commission's decision on project selection has been taken.

All selected applications will be subject to technical and financial analysis. In this connection the Commission may ask the applicant organisation for supplementary information, or possibly for guarantees.

Any applicant whose application for a Community grant is not accepted will be informed in writing.

10.4 Legal framework

- European commission Communication datedMarch 2008 (Comm): "Debate Europe-building on the experience of Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate".
- European Commission Communication dated 13 October 2005 (COM(2005) 494 final): The Commission's contribution to the period of reflection and beyond: Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate
- European Commission Communication dated 03 October 2007 (COM(2007) XXX final): Communicating Europe in Partnership
- OJ L 248, 16.9.2002 (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities)
- OJ L 357, 31.12.2002 (Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities)

10.5 Contacts

The Commission department responsible for the implementation and management of call for proposals DG COMM No A2-1/2006 is Unit A2 (Communication: planning and priorities) of Directorate-General Communication (COMM).

Additional information can be obtained by electronic mail or by fax, either at the electronic address COMM-A2@cec.eu.int , or by fax number from ++ 32 2 295 24 69 , indicating clearly the reference of this call for proposals.

Annexes:

Annex A: Daily allowance scale

Annex B: Contractual obligations

Annex C: Text of the banking guarantee to be completed (only on request)

Annex D: Application checklist

Annex I: Application form (parts A and B)

Annex II: Budget form

Annex III: Financial identification form

Annex IV: Financial capacity form

Annex V: Legal entity form

Annex VI: Draft contract (for information)

Annex VII: Acknowledgement of receipt of the application

ANNEX 4

CALL FOR PROPOSALS MANAGED BY EUROPEAN COMMISSION REPRESENTATIONS IN EU MEMBER STATES (LOCAL CALL)

- DG COMM No xxxxxx, EC Representation xxxxxxxx

**Grants for local and national civil society initiatives
to promote public debate about European issues
- part of the European Commission's "Debate Europe" initiative**

1. BACKGROUND

On 13 October 2005 the Commission approved its Communication to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled "Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate".

This was a listening exercise to enable the European Union (EU) to act on citizens' concerns. The Commission aimed to stimulate debate and widen recognition for the added value that the EU provides.

It was to be a two-way process which:

- informed the public about the EU's role, with examples of its projects and achievements,
- identified their expectations for the future in return.

On 29 November 2006 Vice President Wallström presented a note to the Commissioners entitled, "Plan D – Widen & Deepen the Debate". Its purpose was to take stock and further widen and deepen the debate in the period of reflection. The note is publicly available and has been sent to Member States and other EU institutions.

On 2 April 2008, the Commission adopted a Communication to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled "Debate Europe - Building on the Experience of Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate". It noted that the first phase of Plan D focused on the "debate and dialogue" part of the process. The next phase of Plan D will take this process one step further and focus on "D for democracy", further enabling citizens to articulate their wishes directly to decision-makers and making better use of the media in the process. This new phase has been named "Debate Europe".

In October 2005 the Commission launched a series of Europe-wide civil society projects¹⁵ for 2006, which it co-financed. In 2007, it promoted a further series of initiatives, targeting young people and women in particular.

¹⁵ "Tomorrow's Europe" introduced by the foundation "Notre Europe" (Paris)
<http://www.notre-europe.eu/>
"European Citizens' Consultations" introduced by the "King Baudouin Foundation" (Brussels)
<http://www.european-citizens-consultations.eu>
"Speak up Europe" introduced by the "European Movement International" (Brussels)
http://www.europeanmovement.org/emailing/newsletter/speakupeurope_briefing_nonote.pdf

Drawing on this experience, the Commission, through its Representations in EU Member States, will offer grants in each Member State for civil society initiatives focusing on "Debate Europe" priority issues¹⁶. These are:

- Priority issue 1: involvement of citizens with political decision-makers;
- Priority issue 2: joint action between EU institutions and bodies to promote active citizenship.

Differences in economic, social and other aspects of national life greatly affect the public's attitudes to the EU and to particular European issues. So the new round of local calls will therefore be **tailored to each Member State's needs**.

The Commission's Representations will help define the content, and manage and follow up the calls. Depending on the national context, even limited funding for country-level NGOs could result in a fruitful debate **on EU issues**.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1. General

The Commission wishes to help fund national and regional initiatives by civil society organisations to:

- solicit citizens' views on European issues which have a direct impact, locally and nationally, on their daily lives; and
- encourage citizens to become more informed about these issues, and to discuss and debate them with local opinion-formers.

"Our message to Europe" introduced by the Deutsche Gesellschaft (Berlin)

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/grants/index_fr.htm

"Radio Web Europe" introduced by CENASCA (Rome)

<http://www.cenasca.cisl.it/entra.htm>

"Our Europe – Our Debate – Our Contributions" introduced by the European House (Budapest)

<http://www.europeanhouse.hu/>

All data on the 6 Plan D projects are summarized at the following address:

http://europa.eu/debateeurope/paneurope_en.htm

¹⁶ Priorities specified in the Commission's communication entitled "Debate Europe - Building on the Experience of Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate"(2 April 2008) and in its 2008 annual work programme.

These initiatives will:

- facilitate dialogue between citizens, national and/or local political decision-makers and opinion-formers through debates, conferences, consultations and/or other events;
- closely involve local members of:
 - the European Parliament, European Economic and Social Committee, and Committee of the Regions, and
 - European political parties, and those parties' foundations
- collate and publish these events' conclusions to:
 - identify specific European issues which matter to people in their particular local/national environment;
 - raise local media and politicians' interest in the debate on Europe;
 - increase understanding of the EU's impact on citizens' everyday life;
- create networks of participatory democracy which integrate the European dimension of local/regional/national debates;
- complement:
 - Commission Representations' other initiatives to target local constituencies;
 - current EU programmes with similar goals, including:
 - the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (EYID) 2008
 - Europe for Citizens
 - e-Participation
 - Integration of Third Country Nationals (INTI).
- be tailored to meet each Member State's specific needs.

2.2. Detailed

2.2.1. Form

Projects can:

- take many different forms – from public debates to online fora.
- be combined with events targeting the public
 - schools and youth centres,
 - exhibitions,
 - fairs and festivals,
 - conferences and seminars

2.2.2. Content

They should:

- define specific issues to be addressed around the overarching topic of debating the relevance of the EU to ordinary citizens lives;
- be accessible to the public and provoke their interest;
- link in with current issues:
 - of local/regional/national interest
 - at EU level.

- allow a variety of opinions to be expressed, without excluding any opinions
- include:
 - dialogue with local, national or EU political authorities;
 - participation by members of the European Parliament, European Economic and Social Committee and Committee of the Regions;
- use the internet to promote the project and facilitate debate.

2.2.3. Impact

As a result, projects should:

- make a lasting contribution to the debate on the EU;
- promote genuine local and national participation in debates on the EU;
- lead to the creation of regional and local networks or strengthen existing ones with a view to continuing and deepening the involvement of citizens in the debate on Europe;
- identify those issues at EU level of greatest local concern and how best they can be addressed on an ongoing basis.

2.2.4. Action plan

To allow the Commission to assess whether proposals meet these criteria, the applicant will need to present an action plan setting out:

- the issues which the project will address;
- the project's overall concept and the tools it will use;
- measures to attract the awareness and involvement of the:
 - media - through partnerships and press relations activities;
 - target audience;
- actions to follow up the debate including the preparation of a structured summary of citizens' concerns and describe how these will be brought to the attention of local decision-makers including Members of the European Parliament;
- a detailed schedule which respects the deadlines in section 3.1 below.

3. TIMETABLE

3.1. Submission of applications

Applications must be submitted by end June 2008.

Please read carefully section 12 of this call for proposals concerning the procedures for submitting applications.

3.2. Duration of projects

The project should begin before 1 September 2008.

The project must finish no later than 01 November 2009.

Applications must clearly state the project's starting and finishing dates (dd/mm/yy).

The maximum duration of projects is 14 months.

The period of eligibility of expenditure resulting from implementation of a project will begin on the day of signature of the grant contract by the last of the parties. If the nature of the project requires the project to start before the contract is signed, expenditure may be considered eligible before the signature of the contract. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application.

3.3. Information on the results of the selection

It is planned that applicants will be informed of the outcome of the selection procedure [deadline needs to be no later than Jul. 2008]

The lists of selected projects will be published on the following website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/communication/grants/index_en.htm &

<http://xxxxxxxxx>

Applicants whose applications have not been selected will be informed in writing.

4. FINANCING

The budget available for this call for proposal is € [to be filled by each Representation].

The grant awarded may not exceed 70% of the total eligible project costs.

Community contributions are meant to facilitate the implementation of a project which could not otherwise be implemented easily without the support of the European Union. They are based on the co-financing principle.

Consequently, a minimum of 30% of the total estimated eligible and final expenditure of the project must come from sources other than the European Union budget. Applicants must include evidence that co-financing is available (secured) for the remainder of the total cost of the project.

Indicatively, the amount of the grant from the EU will be between 50 000 and 100 000 EUR per project.

The European Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

The amount allocated by the Commission may not in any circumstances exceed the amount requested. Moreover, the Commission reserves the right to award a grant lower than the amount requested by the applicant.

An organisation is not entitled to receive more than one grant from the Commission for the action covered by the selected project.

After approval by the Commission, a “grant contract”, a draft of which is reproduced at Annex VI, expressed in euros and specifying the conditions and the financing level, will be concluded between the Commission and the beneficiary. The originals of the finance contract must be signed and returned to the Commission immediately for signature. The Commission will be the last party to sign.

The payment methods are detailed in the draft contract (Article I.4), with a list of eligible and ineligible costs (Article II.14 of the general conditions and Article I.3 of the special conditions of the grant contract).

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applications which comply with the following criteria will be the subject of an in-depth evaluation.

5.1. Eligible organisations

Grant applications are eligible if they are presented by organisations having a legal status and established in one of the 27 Member States¹⁷.

6. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants must certify on their honour, by signing the application form, that they are not in one of the situations mentioned in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002), which are listed below.

Applicants will be excluded from participating in this call for proposals if they are in one of the following situations:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of *res judicata*;
- c) they have committed serious professional misconduct recorded by any means that awarding authorities can justify;
- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;

¹⁷ Based on the organisation's registered place of business or its place of main activity.

- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

Applicants will not receive financial support if, during the grant allocation procedure:

- a) they are subject to a conflict of interests;
- b) they are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the European Commission as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure, or fail to supply this information.

In accordance with Articles 93 to 96 of the Financial Regulation, administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants who are guilty of misrepresentation or are found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations under a previous contract award procedure.

To respect these provisions, the applicant and his partners must provide evidence that they are in none of the situations listed in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation.

7. SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria are designed to demonstrate the applicant's capacity to see the project through to a successful conclusion.

Applicants must provide evidence of stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain the activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out and/or grant-aided, as well as evidence of their financial participation. The applicant must also provide evidence of professional competencies, qualifications and/or experience relevant to the proposed project.

7.1. Technical capacity

Candidates must show that they have the operational (technical and management) capacity needed to complete the proposed action and provide evidence of their capacity to direct an activity corresponding to the dimension of the project for which the grant is requested. Particular attention will be devoted to the capacity for mobilising the public and to analyse of their contributions. The capacity to involve organisations from other EU countries would be an advantage.

Applicants must attach to the grant application a curriculum vitae for the project leader and for the personnel of their organisation who will actually do the work. They must also enclose a recent activity report.

7.2. Financial resources

In order to permit assessment of this criterion, applicants must submit with their application the following documents:

- annual accounts for the last complete financial year;
- the “financial identification” form (bank details) (Annex III), completed by the beneficiary and certified by the bank (with original signatures).

If, on the basis of the submitted documents, the Commission assesses that the financial capacity of the applicant is not sufficient, it may:

- reject the request for a Community grant;
- ask for further information;
- ask for the deposit of a guarantee;
- propose a grant agreement without a pre-financing payment.

8. AWARD CRITERIA

Commission Representations will evaluate eligible projects against four criteria:

- a) consistency – is the project's overall concept consistent with the:
 - i. objectives of Plan D?
 - ii. general and detailed objectives of the call (see point 2 above)
- b) quality – are the work programme and working methods of sufficient quality?
- c) feasibility – is the project feasible, based on the action plan?
- d) visibility – what is the likely effect of the project's actions to raise awareness?

9. ELIGIBLE COSTS

For all projects, the eligibility period for expenditure relating to the implementation of a project will be stipulated in the grant agreement and will, except as described in the next point, be no earlier than the signature of the agreement by the Commission.

A grant may be awarded for a project which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the project before the agreement is signed. In such cases, expenditure eligible for financing may not have been incurred before responding to the call for proposals.

The eligibility period for expenditure will not exceed the time allowed under each type of action, and **may not go beyond**.

Only the categories of expenditure listed below are eligible, provided that they are properly accounted for and evaluated in accordance with the market conditions, and that they are identifiable and verifiable. **They must be direct costs** (i.e. generated directly by the project and indispensable for its implementation, having regard to the cost/benefit principle):

- **personnel costs** incurred exclusively for the purpose of implementing the project are eligible only where the accounting systems of the applicants in question can clearly isolate and demonstrate the percentage of staff time devoted to the implementation of the project within the period of expenditure eligibility, and therefore the percentage of personnel costs which can be attributed to the project;
- **travel / accommodation / subsistence costs** associated with the project. Organisations must use their own daily scales to calculate these costs. However, these may not exceed the maximum amounts set by the Commission¹⁸;
- **the cost of organising and running conferences and seminars** (rental of rooms, welcoming and reception services, interpretation, speaker fees);
- cost of **hire or depreciation of technical equipment and services** (only the depreciable element of durable goods can be considered);
- **information dissemination** costs (production, translation, distribution and dissemination costs, etc.);
- cost of **consumables and supplies**
- costs entailed by **other contracts** awarded by the beneficiary for the purposes of the project (also see Section 10);
- costs arising from **requirements imposed by the agreement**;
- **general costs** (or "**eligible indirect costs**": office supplies, sundry consumables, depreciation of computer equipment, etc.). These costs may be eligible if incurred by the beneficiary for the purpose of implementing the project, but **may not exceed 7% of total eligible direct expenditure**.

N.B.: indirect costs will not be eligible if the applicant already receives an operating grant from the Commission during the lifetime of the project.

10. NON-ELIGIBLE COSTS

Non-eligible expenditure

The following expenditure cannot be considered eligible **under any circumstances**:

- costs of invested capital;
- general provisions (e.g. for losses, possible future liabilities);
- debts;
- interest owed;
- doubtful debts;
- exchange losses;
- expenditure on luxuries;

¹⁸ Commission Decision C(2004) 1313 of 7 April 2004: General implementing provisions adopting the Guide to missions for officials and other servants of the European Commission.

- the production of material and publications for commercial purposes; however, monographs, books, journals, discs, CDs, CD ROMs and videos will be taken into consideration if they are an integral part of the project;
- VAT, unless the beneficiary proves that he cannot recover it;
- contributions in kind.

Contributions in kind

Part of the contribution from project sponsors to the project costs may be in kind. These contributions in kind must be included in the provisional budget under the "receipts" section, expressed as a financial equivalent of the services or materials provided, and for an identical amount in the "expenditure" section, but separately from the rest of the budget. In fact, they cannot be considered as eligible costs.

Contributions in kind refer in particular to the provision of durable capital goods, raw materials and unpaid voluntary work by a private individual or corporate body.

The amount declared by the beneficiary as contributions in kind must be valued either on the basis of objective factors or on the basis of official scales laid down by an independent authority or by an outside independent professional.

The cost of private charity work must be valued in accordance with the national rules regarding the calculation of hourly, daily or weekly labour costs.

Contributions in kind will not be accounted for as eligible costs but rather as an increase in the grant in terms of value or as a percentage of the eligible costs.

The Community contribution is subject to a ceiling relating to the total eligible cost (70% maximum of the total eligible cost), excluding the value of contributions in kind.

Subcontracting and calls for tender

Where the implementation of subsidised actions requires a subcontract or the launch of a call for tender, the beneficiaries of the grant must award this contract to the tender offering the best value for money, respecting the principles of transparency and equal treatment of potential contractors and ensuring there is no conflict of interests. None of the basic activities of the project may be subcontracted, et subcontracting must account for only a limited part of the project.

For all contracts, beneficiaries must keep evidence that the selection of subcontractors was competitive, involving at least three offers, unless it can be shown that only one supplier exists in a given market. Grants may only be awarded after a project's start date (given in the application) upon prior written approval from the Commission.

11. PUBLICITY

The Commission will publish the list of successful applicants (unless the publication of information is likely to endanger the successful applicant safety or harm his interests). The Commission will publish the following information in whatever form and on whatever medium it wishes, including the Internet:

- the name and address of each beneficiary;
- the subject of the grant;
- amount awarded and rate of funding.

12. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

12.1. Publication

The text of the call for proposals, the annexes and, for information purposes, a copy of the standard agreement can be obtained from the Europa website at the following address:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/communication/grants/index_en.htm &

<http://xxxxxxx> (Website of the Representation)

12.2. Application form

Applications must be presented in one of the official languages of the EU.

This form can be downloaded from one of the above Internet addresses.

Only grant applications submitted on the application forms attached to this call for proposals and comprising all the necessary documents mentioned in Annex D will be considered.

Applications must be:

- typed; hand-written applications will not be accepted;
- duly dated, filled in and signed by the legal representative of the organisation;
- sent in quadruplicate (the original, which must be identified as such, plus three copies).

12.3. Submission of the application

Deadline for the submission of applications: 30 June 2007

Applications submitted after will not be considered.

Applications may be submitted in one of the following ways:

Proposals must be submitted on paper:

- by registered post to the following address, for which purposes the relevant date is to be the date of dispatch by post, as evidenced by the postmark or the registered delivery receipt issued by the postal services:

European Commission
EC Representation XXXXXXXX

- by hand delivery or courier service.

For security reasons, applications submitted personally or conveyed by a courier service can be presented only to the Commission's Representation xxxxxx, and envelopes must be marked "DG COMMUNICATION, EC Representation xxxxxxxx - Plan D Project". In the event of hand delivery, the submission date is the date of receipt. In the event of delivery by a courier service, the submission date is the date of receipt by the mail department.

Applications submitted by fax or e-mail will not be considered.

No modification of the application will be authorised after the submission of the application and its annexes. However, the Commission reserves the right to request any additional information needed for it to take a final decision on the award of financial support.

Applicants will be informed in writing when their application is received.

Only applications complying with the eligibility and exclusion criteria will be considered for the possible award of a grant.

Applicants whose applications are judged to be ineligible will be notified by mail, with an explanation as to why they were judged ineligible.

Tenderers will be informed, as soon as possible, of the decision taken by

the Commission on their grant application. No information will be released until the Commission's decision on project selection has been taken.

All selected applications will be subject to technical and financial analysis. In this connection the Commission may ask the applicant organisation for supplementary information, or possibly for guarantees.

Any applicant whose application for a Community grant is not accepted will be informed in writing.

12.4. Legal framework

- European Commission Communication dated 2 April 2008 - COM(2008) 158: "Debate Europe-building on the experience of Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate"
- European Commission Communication dated 13 October 2005 - COM(2005) 494: The Commission's contribution to the period of reflection and beyond: Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate
- Information note from Vice President Wallström to the Commission – Plan D, Wider and deeper debate on Europe - SEC(2006) 1553, 24.11.2006.
- OJ L 248, 16.9.2002 (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities)
- OJ L 357, 31.12.2002 (Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities)

12.5. Contacts

The Commission department responsible for the implementation and management of the call for proposals is EC Representation XXXXXXXX

Additional information can be obtained by electronic mail or by fax, either at the electronic address xxxx@ec.europa.eu, or by fax number from ++ xx xx xx xx xx , indicating clearly the reference of this call for proposals.

Annexes:

Annex I: Application form (parts A and B)

Annex II: Budget form

Annex III: Financial identification form

Annex IV: Financial capacity form

Annex V: Legal entity form

Annex VI: Draft contract (for information)

Annex VII: Acknowledgement of receipt of the application

Annex VIII: Application checklist

FINANZBOGEN – AUSWIRKUNGEN AUF DEN HAUSHALT

Mitteilung der Kommission: Debate Europe – Auf den Erfahrungen mit Plan D für Demokratie, Dialog und Diskussion aufbauen

POLITIKBEREICH:	KOMMUNIKATION
TÄTIGKEIT(EN):	SPEZIFISCHE AKTIONEN ZU PRIORITÄREN THEMEN, EINSCHLISSLICH DES PROGRAMMS PRINCE

ARBEITSPROGRAMM FÜR: 2008

1. HAUSHALTSLINIE (NUMMER UND BEZEICHNUNG)

16 03 04: Spezifische Aktionen zu prioritären Themen, einschließlich des Programms PRINCE

2. RECHTSGRUNDLAGE

Aufgaben aufgrund der institutionellen Befugnisse der Kommission gemäß Artikel 49 Absatz 6 der Verordnung (EG, Euratom) Nr. 1605/2002 des Rates vom 25. Juni 2002 über die Haushaltsordnung für den Gesamthaushaltsplan der Europäischen Gemeinschaften (ABl. L 248 vom 16.9.2002, S. 1), geändert durch die Verordnung (EG) Nr. 1995/2006 (ABl. L 390 vom 30.12.2006, S. 1).

3. ALLGEMEINE ZAHLENANGABEN FÜR DAS HAUSHALTSJAHR (IN EURO)

■ 3.a – Laufendes Haushaltsjahr

	VE
Ursprünglicher Haushaltsansatz für das Haushaltsjahr	12 830 000
Mittelübertragungen	0
Zusätzliche Mittel	0
Mittel insgesamt	12 830 000
Bereits für ein anderes Arbeitsprogramm zurückgestellte Mittel	0
Verfügbare Restbetrag	12 830 000
Betrag für die vorgeschlagene Maßnahme	7 200 000 ¹⁹

■ 3.b – Übertragungen

entfällt

■ 3.c – Folgendes Haushaltsjahr

entfällt

4. BESCHREIBUNG DER MASSNAHME

Mit *Debate Europe* wird Plan D auf die Jahre 2008 und 2009 ausgedehnt. Damit wird gewährleistet, dass die umfassenden Anstrengungen der Kommission zur Förderung einer aktiven europäischen Bürgerschaft – vor dem Hintergrund der politischen und Kommunikationsprioritäten der EU-Organen – zu einer interinstitutionellen Anstrengung werden, die die Entscheidungsträger auf allen politischen Ebenen erreicht.

Vorgeschlagen wird ein zweigleisiges Vorgehen, für das Haushaltsmittel in Höhe von 7,2 Millionen EUR bereitstehen:

- eine zentrale Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen für ein umfassendes transnationales Projekt, das mit 2 Millionen EUR kofinanziert wird;

¹⁹ Der Betrag für die Maßnahme (7 200 000 EUR) gehört zu den Ermächtigungen des Haushalts 2008 für die Haushaltslinie 16 03 04 (Spezifische Aktionen zu prioritären Themen, einschließlich des Programms PRINCE). Es werden somit keine zusätzlichen Mittel beantragt.

Der Beschluss der Kommission vom 12.3.2008 über die Annahme des Jahresarbeitsprogramms 2008 für Finanzhilfen und öffentliche Aufträge im Bereich Kommunikation (K(2008) 924) enthält die genaue Aufschlüsselung dieses Betrags (vgl. Tabelle 2.6.2).

- dezentrale Aufforderungen zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen und Maßnahmen zur Unterstützung lokaler Projekte, die mit 5,2 Millionen EUR kofinanziert werden.

In den europaweiten Aufforderungen wird in den Bedingungen ausdrücklich stehen, dass im Rahmen von *Debate Europe* – unter Berücksichtigung der Erfahrungen aus der ersten, mit Plan-D-Mitteln kofinanzierten Serie transnationaler Projekte mit Elementen partizipativer Demokratie – eine zivilgesellschaftliche Initiative unterstützt werden soll, die in jedem Mitgliedstaat Konsultationen der Bürger durchführt, auf europäischer Ebene gemeinsame Schlussfolgerungen/Vorschläge formuliert und an die europäischen politischen Organisationen übermittelt sowie – auf der Grundlage dieser gemeinsamen Ausgangsbasis und in partnerschaftlicher Zusammenarbeit mit europäischen politischen Stiftungen – Dialoge zwischen Bürgern und gewählten Volksvertretern oder europäischen politischen Organisationen organisiert.

Auf nationaler Ebene sollen im Rahmen von *Debate Europe* – unter Berücksichtigung der Erfahrungen aus den von den Kommissionsvertretungen in einigen Ländern kofinanzierten zivilgesellschaftlichen Projekten dezentrale bedarfsgerechte Aktionen kofinanziert werden (z. B. Maßnahmen in Schulen und Jugendzentren, Ausstellungen und Messen, Festivals, Konferenzen, Seminare, Veranstaltungen mit nichtstaatlichen Organisationen (NRO)). Diese Maßnahmen werden lokale Aufforderungen zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen und andere Maßnahmen, wie sie im Rahmen von *Debate Europe* festgelegt sind, umfassen (z. B. Internet-Debatten, Besuche von Kommissionsmitgliedern, Aktivitäten im Rahmen der Europäischen öffentlichen Räume und der Pilot-Informationsnetze, Vor-Ort-Präsenz mit Hilfe der Europe-Direct-Zentren).

5. BERECHNUNGSWEISE

Die *Debate Europe* zugewiesenen Haushaltsmittel in Höhe von 7,2 Millionen EUR verteilen sich wie folgt:

- Wie bereits erwähnt, wird die GD COMM (Zentrale) eine Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen veröffentlichen (Umfang vermutlich 2 Millionen EUR), um ein globales transnationales Projekt zu kofinanzieren.

Darüber hinaus werden die Vertretungen dezentrale Aufforderungen veröffentlichen (Umfang vermutlich 3,1 Millionen EUR). Es wird voraussichtlich eine Aufforderung je Mitgliedstaat geben (mit einer durchschnittlichen Mittelausstattung zwischen 100 000 und 200 000 EUR).

Diese Beträge wurden aufgrund früherer Erfahrungen geschätzt (die Aufforderungen im Rahmen von Plan D im Jahr 2007 beliefen sich für 13 Mitgliedstaaten auf 2,4 Millionen EUR).

- Hinsichtlich der restlichen 2,1 Millionen EUR planen die Vertretungen, abgesehen von laufenden Verträgen, rund 136 Ausschreibungen (davon 131 \leq 60 000 EUR und 5 $>$ 60 000 EUR).

6. FÄLLIGKEITSPLAN (IN EURO)

Haushaltslinie 16 03 04	2008	2009	2010	Gesamt
Mittelbindungen	7 200 000	0	0	7 200 000
Zahlungen	3 600 000	1 800 000	1 800 000	7 200 000