

## Civil Dialogue How can we shape the Europe we want?

- **Date** 9-10 December 2008
- **Interpretation** English-French
- **Venue** Centre International pour la Ville, l'Architecture et le Paysage (CIVA)  
rue de l'Ermitage 55  
B 1050 Bruxelles
- **Objectives** To assess the current structures and processes of civil dialogue at European level  
  
To agree concrete recommendations on how to improve these structures and processes

### Tuesday 9 December 2008

09.00 Registration and coffee

10.00 - 12.30 **Why bother with civil dialogue? Discussion between audience and key decision-makers**

Facilitator

Markus Held, European Volunteer Center (CEV), Member of the Management Committee of the Social Platform

Panelists

Jo Leinen MEP, Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Constitutional Affairs

Risto Raivio, Head of Unit Citizenship Policy, Directorate General for Education and Culture, European Commission

Veronica Williams, Head of Sector People To People initiative, Institution building unit, DG Enlargement

Conny Reuter, President of the Social Platform

Debate with the audience

## Concluding remarks

Prof. Beate Kohler Koch, Jean Monnet Chair International Relations, University of Mannheim and coordinator of the CONNEX network of excellence on European governance

12.30 - 14.00 Lunch break

## 14.00 - 17.00 **Workshops**

Workshop 1 : What is the future for the Open Method of Coordination on social inclusion?

Workshop 2 : Funding for public concerns: where should the money come from?

Workshop 3 : What is the role of European NGO networks in bridging the gap between European and national levels?

Workshop 4 : New faces in Europe: how can we connect with the 'hard to reach' communities across the EU?

17.00 Reception

## **Wednesday 10 December 2008**

9.30 - 10.30 **Workshops continue**  
Conclusions and recommendations agreed during workshops

10.30 - 11.00 Coffee break

11.00 - 12.30 **Concluding session**  
Report from workshops and debate on the conclusions

## Workshop 1 : What is the future for the Open Method of Coordination on social inclusion?



FEANTSA

*Organisers: Eurochild and the European Federations of Organisations working with the homeless (FEANTSA)*

This workshop will explore how the social OMC can deliver better results and the role of European NGOs in this process. The debate aims to address the following questions:

- (1) What has worked well in the OMC so far?
- (2) What has not worked?
- (3) What do we see for the future in particular - how do we expand out of the 'inner circle'? How can we deliver better results?

Facilitator: Mary Collins, European Women's Lobby  
Rapporteur: Patricia Hoyos (Eurochild)

In English

**Tuesday 9 December 2008**

**14.00-15.30**

**Perspectives of the OMC**

1. Bart Vanhercke, Policy Analyst, Observatoire Social Européen

Bart is doing research on "*The hard politics of soft policy coordination*". He will draw on his academic and political experience of working in Belgian and EU policy-making to give an insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the OMC processes, their effects 'under the radar' and the barriers he sees to realisation of its full potential, while proposing some ways forwards at EU and national level.

## 2. Jana Hainsworth, Secretary General, Eurochild

Jana is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Eurochild network which promotes the rights and welfare of children and young people in Europe. Eurochild members have been active in the OMC since 2004. Jana will explore the successes and limitations of the OMC in changing the social realities of children in Europe today.

## 3. Liz Gosme, Policy Officer, FEANTSA

Liz monitors the OMC process for FEANTSA, European federation of national organisations working with the homeless. FEANTSA members have actively participated in the OMC at national and EU level since the first round of NAPs inclusion (2001-2003). Liz will explore the impact of the OMC until now and the potential of the OMC for tackling homelessness in the future.

## 4. Katarina Lindhal, Deputy Head of Unit, Inclusion, Social Policy Aspects of Migration, Streamlining of Social Policies, DG Employment, Social Affairs & Equal Opportunities

The Social Inclusion Unit is a key driver of OMC reform. Katarina will provide an insight into the lessons that have been learnt and the EU's plans to reinforce the OMC and place it at the heart of the post 2010 Lisbon agenda.

### **16.00 – 17.00                      Participatory Workshop**

Participants will have the opportunity to discuss their experience of the OMC and how they see it evolving in the future. Particular focus will be on engaging with civil society to broaden the inner circle and strengthening political commitment to more impact on poverty and social exclusion in the EU.

### **Wednesday 10 December 2008**

### **9.30 - 10.30                      Drawing conclusions and recommendations**

The rapporteur will provide at the start of this session some ideas to generate discussion on recommendations and conclusions from the workshop to feed back for wider debate.

## Workshop 2 : Funding for public concerns: where should the money come from?



EUROPEAN ANTI POVERTY NETWORK



*Organisers: the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) and the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)*

This workshop will provide space for critical reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of the systems used to fund NGOs working in the public interest. To facilitate this reflection we will draw on national- and European-level experiences. The workshop aims to establish concrete conclusions and recommendations on the future funding of NGOs.

Facilitator: Fintan Farrell, Director EAPN and Monika Kosinska, Secretary General EPHA  
Rapporteur: Regula Heggli, coordinator EU Civil Society Contact Group

In English

**Tuesday 9 December 2008**

**14.00 - 15.30**

**Lessons from National Experience**

*The presentations are expected to provide information about the system for funding NGOs and to provide some critical reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of the particular funding system concerned.*

1. The Romanian Experience, Iulian Dascalu, Romanian Federation of Youth Organisations

Iulian will draw from the experience of funding the youth sector in Romania. This experience has echoes in a number of former communist countries. It tells how the NGOs became the 'owners' of former state properties and how they have managed this ownership to support the ongoing funding of youth NGOs.

## 2. The Finnish Experience, Finnish Slot Machine Association

This model, like many countries lotto systems, depends on profits from gambling and this raises interesting ethical questions. The constant threat of the application of free market rules interfering in this source of income gives another interesting aspect to this model.

3. Discussion which will draw lessons about the mechanisms for funding NGOs at Member State level, but also at European level based, on these three experiences.

**16.00 - 17.00**

### **Funding realities at EU level**

4. Challenges faced by health European level NGOs, Monika Kosinska, Secretary General EPHA
5. Work in small groups to identify and discuss challenges and opportunities in relation to EU funding

Participants will work in small groups to raise other issues, concerns and recommendations in relation to the funding of European level NGOs. In this discussion they will try to draw on lessons from the national level experiences presented in the first session

**Wednesday 10 December 2008**

**9.30 - 10.30**

### **Drawing conclusions and recommendations**

The rapporteur will provide at the start of this session some ideas to generate discussion on recommendations and conclusions from the workshop to feed back for wider debate.

## Workshop 3 : What is the role of European NGO networks in bridging the gap between European and national levels?



*Organised by Mental Health Europe (MHE) and SOLIDAR*

This workshop will discuss the role of European networks as a capacity-builder, mediator and facilitator of information flow between the national level and the European arena. Participants will be able to exchange experiences and jointly develop recommendations on capacities and structures that are needed. The workshop will also address the related issue of civil dialogue at national level with a particular focus on Central and Eastern Europe.

Facilitator: Prof. Josef Weidenholzer President of SOLIDAR, and President Volkshilfe Österreich

Rapporteur: Elisabeth Muschik, Mental Health Europe

Translation: English-German

**Tuesday 9 December 2008**

### **14.00 - 15.15 Which capacities and structures are necessary to advance and promote the civil dialogue at the national and the European level?**

1. Organising the work with national members with 'national focal points', Mary Van Dievel and Elisabeth Muschik, Mental Health Europe
2. Civil dialogue in new Member States in Central and Eastern Europe – The case of the Czech Republic, Dr. Karel Schwarz, board member of Czech social NGO umbrella organisation "Asociace NNO"; board member of EAPN

3. Each item will be followed by questions and answer section, as well as an exchange of experiences with participants during the second part of the

## **15.30-17.30 Questions to be discussed by participants**

Four questions to be addressed:

- From the MHE National Focal Points: Which elements can be used by other social NGOs? Where are the advantages and limits of "National Focal Points"? How does this model help to advance civil dialogue at national level and how does it "empower" national members to work with information from European level and to feed back information, opinions, requests, etc. to the European level?
- From the presentation on Civil dialogue in Central and Eastern Europe, What are the specific needs and challenges? Which elements work well? What could be learnt from these countries experiences? How can we strengthen the representation of organisations from these countries at European level and in European debates?
- Which role for European networks in view of capacity building and "transporting back" information, opinions and requests from national members to the European arena?
- What are our expectations vis-à-vis European institutions, in particular the European Commission and the European Parliament (but perhaps also: EESC; CoR)

## **Wednesday 10 December 2008**

### **9.30 - 10.30 Drawing conclusions and recommendations**

The rapporteur will feedback to participants the report she is to make of the workshop. Workshop participants will get a chance to give more input to the report.

## Workshop 4 : New faces in Europe: how can we connect with the 'hard to reach' communities across the EU?



Comité européen des associations d'intérêt général  
European council for non-profit organisations

*Organiser: European Council for non-profit organisations (CEDAG)*

As the EU has expanded into new countries, the expectation of its role has grown. But at the same time, in more established Member States, public confidence in the EU has been shaken. These trends have led to a democratic debate and the recognition of a growing need to engage more effectively with citizens and civil society in every part of Europe. This workshop aims to show how civil society organisations can engage with European institutions in both formal and informal ways, and how the 'hard to reach' community organisations can bring their voices to often-inaccessible European decision-making processes.

Facilitator: Oliver Henman, NCVO  
Rapporteur: Oliver Henman, NCVO

In English

**Tuesday 9 December 2008**

**14.00 – 17.00**

### 1. Introduction by Oliver Henman

Oliver will try to refer to the Social Platform position paper (if and when relevant) and other initiatives that specifically can illustrate the issues (i.e. challenges) and opportunities (i.e. success factors or innovative approaches) to reach and engage with vulnerable groups

2. Involving people living in poverty, in decision-making, Marc Bringer, ATD 4<sup>th</sup> World

Marc will share their experience but also describes what mechanisms worked best and see how these could be be transferrable to other situations.

3. How can we engage with Roma people? Guillermo Ruiz, European Roma Information Office

Guillermo will share their challenges with civil dialogue or engagement initiatives with the Roma community. He will describe worst/best practices and try to see how these mechanisms could be transferrable to other situations.

4. Participatory workshop

Participants will work in smaller groups to develop key thinking and share knowledge. 15 min on each of the following questions:

- 1) Which are the group that need to be brought into the discussion with lack of access at the moment?
  - 2) What are they ways that groups may be included in the process: participation and civil dialogue tools from your own experience?
  - 3) How can we ensure that these approaches are taken on across the EU institutions?
5. Synthesis session and open debate: Short presentation from each group on their discussions. Open debate and discussion to find points of common ground and areas of new thinking.

## **Wednesday 10 December 2008**

### **9.30 - 10.30 Drawing conclusions and recommendations**

Concluding session to bring together ideas from entire session: bring together the major ideas and formulate a key set of recommendations.