



2010 European Year on Poverty and Social Exclusion: EFC Members and Interest Groups Involvement

January 2010

2010 has been declared by the European Commission the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. The European Year offers a wide range of possibilities for EFC members and interest groups to use the Year to advance their own areas of interest and priorities. EFC members and interest groups are invited to consider their interest in getting involved in the Year and to provide their input on the best ways to do it building upon the proposals set out in this document or any other idea they may have.

Objectives of the European Year

The European Year aims to contribute to the pledge made by EU leaders in 2000 to “make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty” by 2010 and the significant progress still needed to achieve this goal.

To this end, the Year will pursue a number of priority areas of direct relevance for EFC interest groups namely: fighting **child poverty**, promoting an **inclusive labour market, education and training**, addressing the **gender** and **age** dimensions of poverty, ensuring **access to basic services and to leisure activities**, overcoming discrimination and promoting the integration of **immigrants and ethnic minorities**.

In addition, the year will follow two transversal aspects which open up opportunities for participation as follows: **civil society and people experiencing poverty** should be taken into account in all activities, and **gender equality** should be mainstreamed throughout the Year’s activities.

As in previous years, there will be activities at national and European level, involving civil society, local and regional authorities. Measures include information, awareness-raising and educational campaigns, surveys and studies, innovative schemes to promote social inclusion, meetings and events, and competitions to identify success stories.

For further details, please check the following resources:

- EU Decision on the European Year
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:298:0020:0029:EN:PDF> (138kb)
- EFC webpage on the European Year
<http://www.efc.be/EUAdvocacy/Pages/2010EuropeanYearforCombatingPovertyandSocialExclusion.aspx>
- Official website of the European Year <http://www.2010againstopoverty.eu>

How to get involved at national level?

As in previous European Years, actions will be undertaken both at national and European level. They will include exchange of experience and good practices, studies and research, conferences and events, and information and promotion campaigns to disseminate key messages.

In each country, a **National Coordinating Body** is appointed to define and manage the European Year activities in the country as well as to select national, regional and local initiatives that will receive funding. The European Commission will be in charge of coordinating the Year at European level.

There are different ways in which foundations can get involved at national and EU level:

- **Becoming a partner of the Year.** Consultation with civil society is a key element of the Years. National coordinating bodies in each country should include, regularly consult and closely cooperate with civil society organisations for both the design and implementation of the Year. You can contact the national body in charge of coordinating the Year in your country to know more about the activities planned for the Year and to develop close and continuous cooperation during the European Year.
- **Co-funding and sponsoring initiatives planned at national level.** Each national project under the auspices of the European Year is co-funded by the EU and national budgets. This can be topped up with unlimited private funding. Foundations can also sponsor projects not supported by any public funding.
- **Taking part in the events that will be organised at European and national level.**
- **Using the Year as a “hook” to advance the priorities on your agenda by organising your own events and/pr promoting activities.**

How to get involved at European level?

The European Year provides an excellent opportunity for EFC members and interest groups to advance the fight against poverty and social exclusion by providing a platform for promotion, networking, knowledge-sharing and partnerships both with public and private stakeholders.

EFC's involvement in the **EU Stakeholders Expert Group on the 2010 European Year** offers EFC members and interest groups an opportunity to contribute to the implementation, follow-up and assessment of the European Year and therefore to use it to advance their own areas of interest/work. They can participate in the events and initiatives organised in the framework of the Year, promote their work and develop their own initiatives using the Year as a hook.

✓ **European Commission activities**

EFC members and interest groups are invited to provide their input regarding the different possibilities offered by European Commission activities to get involved in the Year as follows:

- **Involvement in the events organised at EU level** proposing key issues and speakers for the two major events of the Year, namely:
 - Opening conference, 21 January 2010 (Madrid)
 - Closing conference, 16 December 2010 (Brussels)
 - Other events organised during the Year.

- **Participation in the two "Focus weeks"**, which will take place, namely:
 - 17-30 May 2010: This focus week will be linked to the annual meeting Roundtable on poverty and social exclusion. It will aim to promote awareness-raising activities aimed at bringing the issue of poverty to European televisions and radios.
 - 11-24 October 2010: It will correspond with the International Day against Poverty on 17 October and will aim to create enough political pressure to have a declaration at the end of the year. It will include activities focusing on Community financing and the relationship between financing and training and art.

The Commission is currently seeking input from interested parties on the practical organisation of the Focus weeks (specific topics, projects and initiatives that could feed in them, practical examples to be presented, etc.). Proposals currently being considered are a special meeting on people experiencing poverty, a festival type event in Brussels, a "marketplace" that would bring together different stakeholders to present and discuss specific projects, etc.

This is an opportunity for EFC members and interest groups to present their work and ideas. In some countries, national focus weeks will also be organised.

- Input and material for the **art exhibition** that the Commission is planning to organise. Further information will be available in due course.

- ✓ **Initiatives undertaken by EU-level networks and organisations**
- A wide range of events and initiatives will be undertaken by EU-level networks and organisations on the specific topics they work on. They can offer interesting opportunities to get involved.

✓ **EFC initiatives**

As in previous years, a number of initiatives are being considered by the EFC in cooperation with the EFC members and interest groups to raise awareness and promote foundations' action in the area of poverty and social exclusion. EFC members and interest groups are invited to consider their interest in contributing to the following initiatives:

- Raising awareness about foundations' activities in the areas of poverty and social exclusion in general as well as in particular areas related to poverty (e.g. migration and poverty, climate change & poverty, etc.):
 - ✓ The EFC has created a dedicated webpage about the European Year. This page could be used as a platform for promoting and exchanging information on projects, initiatives or any background document provided by the interest groups in their areas of expertise.
 - ✓ "Mapping" of foundations action.

- Trying to integrate the poverty dimension in the different events organised during the Year or trying to link the work of the group with the poverty dimension.
- Contributing to the events addressing poverty or related topics that are planned in the context of the Foundation Week.
- Organising EFC/Interest groups events in relation to the Year and/or to poverty and social exclusion.

In this context, the EFC **would like to invite you to contact the EFC secretariat** at mhernandez@efc.be if:

1. You are already or planning to get involved in the activities of the European year both at national and EU level (organising your own activities, working with the National Implementing Bodies or with other stakeholders, etc.).
2. You are interested in getting involved in the activities planned which are explained in this information note or others.
3. You have interesting projects in the area of poverty you would like to share with others.

For further information, please contact the EU Affairs Department at mhernandez@efc.be