



FIRST-EVER “FOUNDATION WEEK” IN BRUSSELS 31 MAY – 4 JUNE 2010

OVER 1000 KEY PLAYERS FROM FOUNDATIONS AND NON-PROFITS ALL OVER EUROPE TO ATTEND

- *European Council President Herman Van Rompuy and other High-Level EU officials will speak*
- *European Foundation Sector makes impact on social change, delivering vital services to millions of Europeans*
- *During Foundation Week, foundations meet the public: Interactive exhibits, debates on key issues, concerts, theatre, festival of short films, photo exhibitions and more*
- *Figures from new Gallup poll of MEPs to be released.*

BRUSSELS, 19 May 2010 – The European foundation sector is coming together for the first time ever for a full week of debates and exhibitions on the work foundations do to tackle the pressing social issues facing Europe and the world today.

Foundations impact on the lives of Europeans at every level, providing vital services and working for social change.

Hosted by the European Foundation Centre (EFC) at “SQUARE” in Brussels, Foundation Week will showcase the work done by foundations through exhibits, demos, films and cultural activities. All events in the exhibition hall are free of charge and open to the public.

A vital contribution to improving lives in Europe

“Foundations make a vital contribution to society, providing crucial support to millions of Europeans”, said Dr Gerry Salole, Chief Executive of the EFC. “The impact they have on so many areas is phenomenal and I hope that through Foundation Week we can showcase some of their work. Additionally, these organisations have shown themselves to be resilient during the global economic downturn, showing responsible leadership and creativity.”

It is estimated that there are some 110,000 foundations in Europe, collectively spending between 83 and 150 billion euros annually on projects and programmes, and providing employment for up to 1 million Europeans.

During Foundation Week discover how Foundations contribute to policy debates and help forge important change on so many levels, including:

- Reshaping the financial sector
- Migration
- Research to combat malaria
- Fostering peace and security
- Poverty
- Gender
- Funding sciences for sustainable development
- Exploring religious plurality and its implications for social cohesion
- Roma inclusion

Events and exhibits, open to the public throughout the week, include:

- **Darwin's Evolution exhibit:** Celebrating the 200th anniversary of the life and work of Charles Darwin: artefacts from Darwin's field trips and personal belongings showing how this great biologist came to shape his theory of evolution and natural selection. The exhibit is hosted by Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.
- **Wheelchair basketball game:** A basketball game by physically impaired players, supported by Fundación ONCE, will raise awareness about recreational activities available to people with disabilities. The demo invites willing visitors to shoot hoops with the players.
- **Puccini concert and live theatre:** Monday 31st May and Tuesday 1st June
- **Screening:** A screening of Early Life, a 3-part series on the BBC, explores scientific and political issues around early childhood development. The series was produced with support from the Bernard van Leer Foundation.
- **Photo exhibition:** A photo exhibition documents the lives of a group of young people from Kalongo, a refugee camp in Uganda which shelters up to 60,000 displaced people. The photographs are taken by the young people who spent a month learning about photojournalism. The exhibit is presented by Fondazioni4Africa, in conjunction with Amref, Cesvi and Coop.

Foundation Week will also play host to the EFC's 21st Annual General Assembly and Conference, which will include high-level speakers from European Union institutions.

The theme of this year's conference is "a conversation with the institutions" and sessions will engage with EU policy and decision-makers and other stakeholders on challenges facing Europe, Haiti and humanitarian aid, financial risks for endowments, as well as legal and fiscal matters such as European Foundation Statute and the steps necessary to making it a reality.

The Annual General Assembly will be held from 2 to 4 June (for registered participants only). Results of a Gallup Poll about Foundations will be released at the start of the EFC's Annual General Assembly, revealing opinions of foundations by Members of the European Parliament.

For more information about Foundation Week, visit www.efc.be/foundationweek

About the European Foundation Centre (EFC)

The European Foundation Centre (EFC), founded in 1989, is an association representing public-benefit foundations and corporate funders active in philanthropy in Europe, and beyond. The EFC develops and pursues activities in line with its objectives: creating an enabling legal and fiscal environment for foundation; documenting the foundation landscape; strengthening the infrastructure of the foundation sector; and promoting collaboration, both among foundations and between foundations and other actors, to advance the public good in Europe and beyond.

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Members of the media are invited to attend.

For media credential information and other details related to Foundation Week, please contact:

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