

Foundations' Support for European Citizenship – A Snapshot

Results of a European Foundation Centre Survey



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Introduction

European Foundation Centre (EFC) member foundations and corporate funders are making an impact in the field of European citizenship, enabling and encouraging citizens' participation in the development of a citizens' Europe that meets their demands and aspirations.

From December 2005 to April 2006, the EFC collected results from a survey questionnaire sent to its members and partners, and found that foundations' contributions in this field take on many forms, and address several different aspects of European citizenship.

This publication provides an overview of EFC members' and partners' initiatives in the area of European citizenship.

Results of the survey are also available at www.efc.be

Context – Challenging times for the European Project

Following the 2004 enlargement of the European Union (EU), and in the light of the failed referendums on the "EU" constitutional treaty in 2005, what contribution can foundations make to tackle citizens' spreading disenchantment with "Europe", and how can they help to address citizens' concerns and promote European citizenship?

Over the last two decades, the EU has been transformed through successive enlargements and widening of its policy objectives. It has taken on a wide range of tasks affecting citizens' lives in many different ways.

European citizenship was defined in the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 and reaffirmed in the proposed European Constitution in 2005. In the Treaty, it refers to nationality and a set of rights and responsibilities: "Every person holding the nationality of a Member State shall be a citizen of the Union. Citizens of the Union shall enjoy the rights conferred by this Treaty

and shall be subject to the duties imposed thereby."¹ But citizenship is not just a legal status, defined by a set of rights and responsibilities. It is also an identity and an expression of one's membership in a community. In this sense, European citizenship should be considered as an important dimension of building transnational community as well as identity.

Viola B. Georgi of NECE (Networking European Citizenship Education) described the Union today as "... a dense and complex network of institutional, social and political relationships. European citizens are at the heart of these networks and their active involvement is essential in order to ensure a democratic and balanced development of the European Union. The challenge of European citizenship is dual as it involves a more active participation of individuals in the decision making process and a tightening of social bonds and solidarities between them."²

Whereas the gap between the EU and its citizens is widely recognised, recent Eurobarometer³ survey results seem to show a greater optimism about the way things are going at the European level. This survey also reveals that the EU has a positive image; it is perceived as modern, protective and even democratic.

Although membership of the EU is seen as positive by half of the survey respondents, some criticisms remain, such as the lack of political and cultural integration at the European level. Other concerns relate to issues identified as essential by Europeans, in particular the fight against unemployment, the protection of social rights and economic growth.

¹ Maastricht Treaty, 1992, Article 8.

² Viola B. Georgi, NECE, Models of Citizenship, Saarbrücken, November 2005.

³ Special Eurobarometer on Future of Europe: EU listens to citizens, 05 May 2006, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/futur_en.htm

Europeans express both fears and expectations with regard to Europe. According to the conclusions of a 2006 Eurobarometer survey on the future of Europe, "A strong Europe and solidarity appear to be increasingly necessary for guaranteeing the challenges ahead, particularly security (economic, social and internal). Its capacity to respond to expectations and to prepare Europeans for what's ahead is what the future of Europe depends upon."⁴

EU institutions have given a new emphasis to "Communicate Europe"⁵, however there is still a shared general feeling that more has to be done. Until now, work may have focused largely on telling people what the EU does: Less attention has been paid to listening to citizens' views and acting upon them. This is an area where foundations can make a useful contribution by empowering and engaging European citizens through the support of citizen-led initiatives with a view to enhancing mutual understanding and promoting European identity.

Objectives of the EFC survey

The aim of this survey was to collect and identify foundations' initiatives in the field of European citizenship; to increase knowledge and awareness about grantmaking in this field; and to show the role and impact of such activities in addressing citizens' concerns.

Defining project scope

This project was born from discussions during the 2005 EFC Annual General Assembly (AGA) and Conference, "Foundations for Europe: Making the Union Work for All Citizens", with the aim of providing an initial information base on European citizenship for the 2006 EFC AGA and Conference, "Foundations for Europe: Supporting European Citizens' Participation".

A one-page survey was created and posted on the EFC website, with a small introduction to the project, including its objectives. EFC members and interested parties were encouraged to complete the questionnaire, describing their activities in the field of European citizenship. The results of this project should be taken as a preliminary snapshot of the activities of European foundations in this field.

4 Special Eurobarometer on Future of Europe:
EU listens to citizens, 05 May 2006, conclusion p.60

5 – European Commission White Paper on a European Communication Policy, COM (2005) 35 final, 1.2.2006, http://ec.europa.eu/comm/communication_white_paper/doc/white_paper_en.pdf
– European Commission Communication "The Commission's contribution to the period of reflection and beyond: Plan-D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate" COM(2005) 494 final, 13.10.2005, http://ec.europa.eu/comm/commission_barroso/wallstrom/pdf/communication_planD_en.pdf
– European Commission Green Paper on the European Transparency Initiative (ETI) 03.05.2006, http://ec.europa.eu/comm/eti/index_en.htm

Survey Findings

A total of 21 foundations are represented in this survey. The following provides a breakdown of these by country of primary address; a list of the types of foundations that participated in the survey; and focus areas and profiles of their initiatives in the field of European citizenship.

Breakdown of foundations by country of primary address

The following shows the geographic spread of the foundations that participated in this survey:

Belgium (3)
United Kingdom (3)
Germany (2)
Italy (2)
Netherlands (2)
United States (2)
Bulgaria (1)
Croatia (1)
Estonia (1)
France (1)
Sweden (1)
Switzerland (1)
Turkey (1)

Types of foundations

The following types of foundations were included in this survey:

- Independent operating foundation (7)
- Independent trustee-controlled foundation (6)
- Independent multi-purpose, multiply-resourced foundation (4)
- Independent family-controlled foundation (2)
- Independent corporate foundation (1)
- Governmentally-linked foundation (1)

Profiles of foundations' activities in the field

This survey reveals that foundations' work in the field of European citizenship covers a range of focuses and practices. For the purpose of this survey, support in this field covers the following focus areas:

1. Empowering European citizens
2. Engaging citizens in EU policy making
3. Enhancing mutual understanding and promoting European identity
4. Informing citizens about EU objectives, EU policies and citizens' rights
5. Supporting citizen-led European initiatives

In the survey, each foundation selected the focus areas that apply to its projects. The results reveal that most of the projects' initiatives employ a transversal approach to European citizenship and address several areas. However, for the sake of readability of this brochure, the projects are listed under their primary focus.

The survey found that foundations support activities that include advocacy; awareness-raising campaigns; media relations; research and policy analysis; education, training and mobility schemes (scholarships, fellowships, exchange programmes); e-initiatives; and support for citizens' organisations, among others.

1. Empowering European citizens

Carnegie United Kingdom Trust (United Kingdom)

The foundation promotes European citizenship through the following projects:

- Strengthening Democracy and Civil Society
- Children and Young People's Participation in Democracy Programme

Strengthening Democracy and Civil Society

Initiated in 2006, following research undertaken by the Centre for Civil Society at the London School of Economics (LSE) and from work supporting the Civicus International Civil Society Index project, the trust has set up a Future Commission of Inquiry to examine challenges and opportunities over the next decade or two in the context of the EU and globalisation. This will also be used within a developing action research programme.

Children and Young People's Participation in Democracy

Focuses upon such issues as engagement in politics and decision making. Subsets include work around democracy in schools and other public services, in the community, e-democracy and engagement with parliament. The trust funds research, local action projects, network development, and the UK's 'Participation Works' web portal. The trust is also a partner in projects of NEF (Network of European Foundations for Innovative Cooperation), namely 'Initiatives in Learning for Democracy' and 'pan EU Citizens Panels'.

European Cultural Foundation (Netherlands)

The foundation promotes European citizenship through the following projects:

- Policies for Culture programme
- Balkan Reflection Group
- Grants and mobility programmes

Policies for Culture Programme

Supports a regional programme, in collaboration with the ECUMEST Association, Bucharest, which aims to encourage participation in the design, implementation and evaluation of new effective cultural policies throughout South East Europe. The programme is structured around the triangular working relationship between civil society, executives, and the legislature in the policy making process affecting the cultural sector. To this end, the programme engages policy makers and the cultural sector of South East Europe in a serious reflection process on local and national cultural policies. It encourages all players involved to translate ongoing policy debates into concrete actions that will contribute to a sustainable strengthening of the cultural sector in the region.

Balkan Reflection Group

Supports the group that, in 2005, explored the significance of artists and cultural operators in the Balkans before, during and after the crisis in the region; what their role and place is today; and why and how the EU should include the region in European cooperation frameworks. The initiative included regional consultations, a public debate-conference at the Peace Palace in The Hague and the commissioning of essays, a video and a publication to be released in May 2006. The foundation is also engaged in different advocacy actions on the importance of the integration of Balkan citizens into the EU, notably in cooperation with the Citizens Pact for SEE, supporting the organisation of events within the Pact's visa abolishment campaign.

Grants and Mobility Programmes

Supports projects responding to the ECF's current areas of interest, including intercultural competence and collaboration across borders; citizens' participation in the arts and media; strategies to break isolation; the cultural dimension of EU enlargement; strategies for change within cultural infrastructures; and creative responses to current political issues. The foundation also has two mobility programmes:

- Closer Look: provides journalistic travel grants to young European journalists who wish to report on popular and youth cultures in the neighbouring countries of the EU
- STEP Beyond: a travel fund that encourages cross-border cultural cooperation and exchange between all European countries, including those that are not currently members of the European Union

Fondaca – Active Citizenship Foundation (Italy)

Fondaca promotes European citizens' participation by supporting the Active Citizenship Network.

Active Citizenship Network (ACN) is the European branch of the Italian citizen movement, Cittadinanzattiva. ACN mission is to promote the construction of a European citizenship as an "active citizenship", meaning the exercise of powers and responsibilities of citizens in public policies. This recognises the primary role of civic organisations as actors in policy making.

ACN is a flexible network of civic organisations operating in the countries of the New Europe. It has no permanent or formal membership - only partners participating in common projects and activities (about 70 since the start up of ACN in December 2001).

ACN partners work in very different fields (consumer issues, healthcare, environment, human rights, women's rights, etc.) and come from around 30 European countries. ACN strategy is primarily based on the realisation of projects in partnership between civic organisations, public institutions and private companies.

Implementing European projects is the main instrument used by ACN to fulfil its mission. The projects have the common objective of promoting civic participation, either in general policy making or in specific policy fields as health and consumers. They consist of research activities and/or concrete initiatives carried out by ACN partners in the European countries in which they operate and at EU level.

Involving public institutions in ACN projects is essential to creating a dialogue with civic organisations and favours participation. The main institutions which have participated in ACN projects so far are the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank.

Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer pour le progrès de l'homme (Switzerland)

The foundation operates the following initiatives in the field of European citizenship:

- European Citizens' Panel
- European Citizens' Assembly
- Websites and online fora

European Citizens' Panel

Project led by the Foundation for Future Generations (see description in "Informing citizens about EU objectives, EU policies and citizens' rights" section).

European Citizens' Assembly

Allows citizens to discuss what they want Europe to become in the future and to establish inter-individual dialogues to create a sense of community. The Assembly will also establish:

- What citizens want Europe to become and what its role in the world should be
- A common ethical base for Europe
- A reaffirmation of the bases of the European social contract
- The prospects in the medium and long term for the main European common policies and the fundamental principles for European governance

Websites and Online Fora

Encourages the sharing of ideas and experiences relating to the issues facing Europe via the creation of a network of European website resources and online discussions.

Freudenberg Stiftung (Germany):

The foundation has funded the following organisations in the field of European citizenship:

- Civis Media Foundation for Integration and Cultural Diversity in Europe
- Regional Centre for Intercultural Education, Youth Work and School (RAA), Berlin
- Community Foundation Tuzla

Civis Media Foundation for Integration and Cultural Diversity in Europe

Awards the following prizes:

- Ard Media Prize Civis 2006: Awarded to radio and television programmes that are judged suitable for the promotion of a peaceful existence for immigrants within European society
- European Roma Television Prize: "Give the Roma a voice!": Awarded to outstanding reports about the life in the European Union and Switzerland
- Young Civis Media Prize: Awarded to young journalists as well as students and graduates of film and media colleges

Regional Centre for Intercultural Education, Youth Work and School (RAA), Berlin

Supports Yeff!, the Young European Film Forum for cultural diversity, an annual European youth film festival involving the Yeff! Academy and the Yeff! Campus, and held in alternating European cities. Young people from all over Europe are asked to produce films on 'Cultural Diversity' and to present and discuss their work with other young people and professionals at the festival held at the Yeff! campus.

The Yeff! Academy encourages and trains teenagers to learn more about film-making and how to represent their own realities and their visions to a broader public. The European Yeff! Network is a wide-ranging partnership of organisations working in the fields of intercultural education, media literacy, public broadcasting and open channels, filmmaker networks, schools, youth education and antiracism. The foundation took part in the development, implementation and promotion of the project and gave financial support.

Community Foundation Tuzla

Operates the Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme, which aims at contributing to build social cohesion, renewing social capital and bringing about change through:

- Establishing innovative European and trans-Atlantic cooperation and partnerships such as sharing and pooling expertise and resources, transferring and combining best practice and creating new initiatives leading to joint pilot actions and coherent sustainable strategies in a number of selected sites across Europe, named 'Centres of High Intensity' (CHIs)
- Promoting the selected CHIs to become laboratories as well as enterprises of best practice that will develop youth empowerment and community renewal, including social, cultural, economic, and political aspects; create and strengthen democratic culture and social cohesion; and generate new complex and flexible solutions to overcome the fragmentation of perspectives and actions of the different sectors at local, national and transnational level
- Maximising the potential role of foundations/corporate funders as catalysts and mediators
- Increasing the quality, quantity, effectiveness, scope of dissemination and visibility of foundations' initiatives and to intensify effective public-private partnership
- Engaging in and informing policy debate and practices and improving the impact of foundations/corporate funders on public policies under the special focus of further promoting civil society

Through YEPP activities, the foundation works in the following fields:

- Empowering the role and impact of youth in the community
- Empowering civil society and promoting active citizenship and united action
- Promoting economic, social and cultural development
- Supporting initiatives for better education, training and employment of youth
- Exchanging experiences and ideas with other YEPP sites such as Kristinestad, Finland; Lille, France; Mannheim, Germany; and Antwerp, Belgium

2. Engaging citizens in EU policy making

King Baudouin Foundation (Belgium)

The foundation promotes European citizenship through the following projects :

- Meeting of Minds : European Citizens Deliberation on Brain Science
- The European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM)

Meeting of Minds : European Citizens' Deliberation on Brain Research

Supported a series of national and European meetings, consisting of a citizens panel of 126 members, chosen at random from 9 EU countries, to develop recommendations for EU brain research and mental health policies. In collaboration with 12 partner organisations, and the additional support of the European Commission, a new deliberative method was formed that is adapted to a multilingual setting. The results were presented at the European Parliament on the January 23rd 2006.

The European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM)

The programme, a joint European venture led by KBF under the umbrella of NEF (Network of European Foundations for Innovative Cooperation), aims at :

- Opening debate and encouraging broader commitment to the development of constructive integration policies at the EU level and promoting effective linking of these policies with those of Member States at the national, regional and local levels
- Engaging the widest possible range of stakeholders in society in this process with a view also to embedding constructive integration policies and practices in other social and economic programmes

The project consists of a series of national consultations and a grants programme. A special fund provides financial incentives to supporting Europe-wide networking and cooperation between NGOs. Grants are made in this context both to European-level NGOs and to European networks of nationally-based NGOs.

Model European Parliament (Netherlands)

The foundation creates simulation sessions of the European Parliament, initiated by National Committees in each of the participating countries. Within the sessions topical subjects are brought up for discussion that also appear on the agenda of the European Parliament. Sessions are conducted like real parliamentary sessions, starting with committee meetings and ending with a General Assembly. In every country one or two schools play a leading role and act as host schools for an annual national event. Students from different social backgrounds from as many schools as possible from different regions are invited to join this European project.

In this way, the foundation aims to establish a European network in every EU country. The National Committees promote the development of the European dimension in new establishments and maintain European activities in schools that have already participated in the Model European Parliament.

Open Estonia Foundation (Estonia)

The foundation promotes European citizenship through the following projects :

- Wide Europe and New Neighbours
- EU Constitutional Treaty and Participatory Democracy
- Estonia in the EU

Wide Europe and New Neighbours

Aims to give people a better understanding of EU institutions and pan-European civic platforms. The central focus of the programme is the issue of democracy and civil society in neighbouring countries that have recently joined the EU. The objective is to help Estonian NGOs find effective channels for transferring their experiences of Estonia's transition era to neighbouring countries whose current problems are reminiscent of the early years of Estonia's re-independence.

EU Constitutional Treaty and Participatory Democracy

Supports the project "Building Active European Citizenship Through Public Discussions on the Constitutional Treaty" which aims to contribute to a citizen-friendly enlarged EU based on active participation in policy-making. Objectives include increasing public awareness and promoting debates on the treaty establishing a constitution for Europe and participatory democracy in the EU, fostering dialogue between civil society and public institutions, increasing Estonian NGO networks' capacity to participate in EU policy-making and strengthening their cooperation with Latvian and Lithuanian NGOs as well as the Brussels-based umbrella organisations.

The foundation promoted public discussions on five topics that are directly or indirectly related to the EU Constitutional Treaty: participatory democracy in the EU; the Charter of Fundamental Rights; the division of Competencies in the EU; European Social Policy and Europe in the World. The discussions were promoted through a series of international roundtables and public seminars held in Tallinn.

Estonia in the EU

The foundation supports this project in collaboration with the EU Information Unit of the State Chancellery of Estonia. The aim is to bring Europe and its institutions closer to citizens by organising roundtables, debates and information days.

Open Society Institute – Sofia (Bulgaria)

On December 5th 2005, the Open Society Institute - Sofia and Meglena Kuneva, Minister of European Affairs, signed an agreement on monitoring the work of the state administration on the recommendations of the European Commission in the five "red areas" of Bulgaria's preparation for accession to the EU. In these five areas – company law, freedom to provide services, agriculture, regional policy, and justice and home affairs – the delay of reforms raises "serious concern".

With this in mind, the Open Society Institute – Sofia formed five expert groups with the task of monitoring the Bulgarian Government's honouring of its commitments and informing the authorities in Sofia and Brussels and civil society of the actual progress achieved simultaneously with and independently of the government.

Several steps were taken in implementing the monitoring:

- Identifying the areas of serious concern according to the report from the European Commission
- Establishing the actions planned by the government in response to the critical remarks
- Correlating the specific problems to the relevant group identified
- Gathering information on the effect of the measures taken
- Summarising the information

On the basis of collected written information and interviews with officials of the principal ministries, the expert groups have prepared a final report on the progress in implementing the commitments assumed in the five areas up until March 15th 2006. This final report evaluates both the extent of the implementation of the measures and the effect of their application at present or in the medium term, and also formulates

recommendations. A system of evaluation has been adopted to evaluate implementation of any given measure: not implemented, rather not implemented, rather implemented and implemented.

The report also includes a series of recommendations to ensure greater public openness, transparency and accountability of the process of implementation of the Treaty commitments in Bulgaria's accession to the European Union.

The reports are available at: www.osf.bg

3. Enhancing mutual understanding and promoting European identity

Fondation de France (France)

Since 2003 the foundation has operated the programme 'L'Europe, en plus large!', which supports the development of concrete initiatives led by organisations working in partnership: One French and the other of a country that has recently entered or is a candidate for entry to the EU. These initiatives relate to various fields such as culture, health, the fight against exclusion and the environment. The programme aims to promote European citizenship and the reciprocity of exchanges.

Fondazione Monte dei Paschi di Siena (Italy)

The foundation promotes European citizenship through the following projects::

- European training for citizens
- Building EU Citizenship Project

European Training for Citizens

Run by Associazione Input, Florence, this project promotes a culture of European citizenship, particularly focusing on young people and the people of Tuscany. The project is carried out in two phases:

- Research: Interviews people from the professional, social, academic, political and religious arenas in Tuscany and two other European regions to ascertain public opinion on the EU. Secondary analysis is then carried out on data collected by Eurobarometer relating to all EU countries and the theme of citizenship
- Dissemination of results: publishes a book to distribute to teachers of secondary schools in Tuscany with the aim of widening the students' knowledge of European citizenship

Building EU Citizenship Project

Created by the Provincial Administration of Siena, this project promotes lifelong learning, with five initiatives:

- Organisation of initiatives for the development of European citizenship
- Training and informative sessions for small/medium sized companies on the themes and opportunities for development occurring as a result of the unique market created by the enlargement of the EU
- Training and informative sessions for public administrators on European culture as a strategic factor in the development of public administration
- Training sessions on equal opportunities to strengthen women's participation in the job market
- Initiatives related to sharing knowledge and experiences, such as exchanges among teachers, business people and students

The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (United Kingdom)

The trust is active at the pan-European and UK level.

At the pan-European level the trust supports the following:

European Citizen Action Service (ECAS)

Supports the work of ECAS in monitoring the Convention on the Future of Europe and funding its briefings for NGOs across Europe. In 2005 JRCT offered a new grant to ECAS to research and publish its 50 Questions & Answers on the European Constitution, and to take a road show on this theme to all countries where there was to be a referendum. Recently JRCT has assisted ECAS in researching and publishing its 25 questions and answers on "What way out of the EU constitutional labyrinth?"

Network of European Foundations for Innovative Cooperation (NEF)

The trust is contributing to three NEF projects:

- Democracy Learning Project: Fosters the exchange of ideas and cooperation between foundations in the field of democracy learning throughout Europe
- European Programme on Integration and Migration: Opens up debate and encourages broader commitment to the development of constructive integration projects at the EU level
- European Citizens' Panels on the future of European Rural Space: Allows citizens in ten regions of the EU to voice their opinions on the future of European policy on rural issues

Migration Policy Group (MPG)

Supports the Group's organisation of exchanges on rights-based migration policies and anti-discrimination legislation with civil society organisations and policy makers. MPG links national initiatives at European level, stimulates cooperation among stakeholders and promotes partnerships.

European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)

Supports ECRE's work towards creating fair and humane policies for the treatment of asylum seekers and refugees at the EU level and in the 30 countries from which its 76 members come.

European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO)

Supports EPLO which acts as a platform for NGOs from across Europe to engage with the EU institutions on matters relating to peace building. JRCT is currently funding a policy worker at EPLO.

At the UK level the trust supports the following organisations:

UK Race and Europe Network (UKREN)

Supports the network which acts as the coordinating body of the European Network Against Racism, and provides a mechanism for UK NGOs working in the field of race to engage with the European debate on anti-discrimination policy and the integration of refugees, asylum seekers and new migrants.

National Alliance of Women's Organisations (NAWO)

Supports the alliance which acts as the coordinating body of the European women's lobby in England. It promotes empowerment, human rights, equality and justice for all women, and links the 135 local women's organisations and national groups with sister organisations across Europe and contributes towards the European policy debate.

4. Informing citizens about EU objectives, EU policies and citizens' rights

Charles Stewart Mott Foundation (United States)

The foundation promotes European citizenship through the following projects :

- Act4europe
- CEE Citizens Network

Act4europe

Aims to involve NGOs in the debate regarding the future of the EU. In order to coordinate and encourage non-profit sector input into this debate, a coalition of European NGO networks created a campaign called Act4europe. The Social Platform, the largest of the European networks, coordinates the campaign and facilitates participation from new EU Member States and accession countries.

Act4europe carries out the following activities :

- Coordination of the development of participatory democracy : Organises coordination meetings among the NGO networks at European level ; facilitating joint advocacy input toward the EU institutions on matters relating to civil dialogue, transparency, and NGO funding; and holding conferences for NGOs to discuss civil dialogue and access to EU political debates.
- Training for NGOs in new Member States and accession countries on participation in EU debates : Offers training to NGOs in the new Member States and accession countries on topics such as access to information about and from EU institutions, concepts of participatory democracy, European NGO structures and involvement in NGO debates and advocacy skills.
- Study on NGO participation in EU affairs : Researches the actual experiences of national and European NGOs vis-à-vis interaction with EU institutions. The study will include a substantive overview of what is needed in terms of future structures. It will also highlight the experience of NGOs from new Member States that have been involved in advocacy work on EU matters. The collection of best practice examples will be of particular value for NGOs in accession countries and future accession countries as they prepare for involvement in EU civil society.
- Information work : Provides information on civil dialogue matters through the Act4europe Bulletin, the Act4europe Web site, and ad hoc meetings with NGOs.

CEE Citizens Network

Encourages grass-roots, civic participation in decision-making processes throughout Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the former Soviet Union. To this end, this grant supports a vibrant network of 27 NGOs working in the field of community organising. The programme aims to promote public participation in CEE and provide opportunities for grass-roots initiatives to learn and exchange experiences and ideas. The network focuses on increasing the skills and capacities of community leaders, facilitating joint initiatives among network members, and promoting and raising awareness about civic participation throughout the region. The network was initiated in 2001 as a project of the Centre for Community Organising – Slovak Republic and was registered as an independent organisation in 2005.

CEE Citizens Network has four broad objectives for its work in 2006-07:

- To promote public participation throughout the region
- To increase awareness among members and the public at large about civic initiatives throughout the region
- To build the capacities of grass-roots, civic groups and local community leaders in CEE and the New Independent States (NIS) of the former Soviet Union
- To promote joint activities

Foundation for Civil Society Development – Croatia (Croatia)

The foundation promotes European citizenship through the following projects:

- EU Information, Training and Scholarship Programme for Croatian Civil Society Organisations (CSO) representatives: Support to a group of 25 representatives from CSO in Croatia in 2004/2005. On completing the programme the participants were contacted by the foundation to disseminate their knowledge about the EU and European citizenship to other civil society organisations and citizens in their local communities and regions of Croatia. A second group of 25 CSO representatives will participate in the programme in 2006/2007. The programme is run in cooperation with European Citizen Action Service (ECAS).
- European Centre for Cross-Sector Partnerships: To be opened in October 2006 in Zadar, a town on Croatian Adriatic coast.

Foundation for Future Generations (Belgium)

The most significant initiatives developed under the "Innovation in Citizens' Participation" programme are three citizens' panels at regional, national and European levels.

Citizens' panels aim at:

- Enabling citizens to deliberate on the basis of balanced and comprehensive information and provide their point of view to decision makers as a complementary decision making tool
- Stimulating learning in participation and mutual understanding through dialogue among citizens, politicians, experts and stakeholders from different backgrounds
- Raising and sustaining public debate in a transparent way during the implementation phase of the project, and after this phase through a wider dissemination of the citizens' recommendations to interested organised groups and the wider public

General methodology of citizen's panels

A citizens' panel assembles randomly selected citizens from a cross-section of society. Their role is, after thorough deliberations, to build and present a citizens' report on the chosen issue based on an assessment of balanced and authoritative information, provided by decision makers, experts and stakeholders. They publicly present their report and recommendations to the relevant authorities. The citizens' report is widely diffused to stimulate wider public debate and the whole process is made transparent and receives public coverage.

The European Citizens' Panel

The global objective of the European Citizens' Panel is to encourage a bottom-up contribution from citizens to a key European issue: Citizens will provide their perspective on the role of rural areas in tomorrow's Europe (90% of EU territory, almost half of the EU budget). One of its important aims is to work from a diverse European perspective combining regional and transnational levels. This will be achieved in two major steps:

- Through the implementation of nine panels at the regional level in seven Member States and two neighbouring countries (Romania and Switzerland), from May to December 2006

- Via the organisation of a panel at the European level in which citizens delegated by the regional panels will present their views and define their common policy priorities, in February 2007

A partnership among foundations has been decisive in the setting up and launching of the operation at European level. It will give an oversight of the initiative at European level and monitor the process. Partner foundations include the Bernheim Foundation (Belgium), the Carnegie UK Trust, the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation (France/Switzerland), the Evens Foundation (France/Belgium/Poland), the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (United Kingdom) and the King Baudouin Foundation (Belgium), in partnership with NEF (Network of European Foundations for Innovative Cooperation). In addition to the committed regional authorities, the EU Committee of the Regions also supports the initiative. The European Commission and members of the European Parliament are showing much interest for the process and its outcomes.

Other panels initiated by the foundation that led to the development of the European Citizens' Panel include :

First citizen's panel in Belgium (2001)

Citizens handed their report to the Walloon Government, at the request of the minister in charge of spatial planning and the minister in charge of mobility, on the following issue: "Regional Development, Mobility, Sustainable Development... What future for our province?" The citizens' report provided the government with an insight into the collective values and the ranking of these values according to citizens.

National citizen's panel on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) cultures (2003)

Citizens selected from a cross-section of society in two Belgian local councils worked at the request of federal (together with regional and local) executive, administrative and advisory authorities. They then provided them with a citizens' report on GMO cultures before those authorities took a decision on the issue. The panel was also a unique experience for stakeholders to debate and express their points of view on such a controversial issue in an atmosphere where everyone showed great respect for each other. The combination of local and national levels was also an interesting innovation in the project.

Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) (Turkey)

TESEV focuses on the most important policy questions facing Turkey and the region in the new century. Programme areas are grouped under three headings :

- Governance and transparency
- Democratisation of Turkey
- Foreign policy and international relations

Governance and Transparency

Supports the implementation of democratic governance and its principles, namely participation, accountability, responsiveness and transparency, and contributes to the enactment of reforms necessary for Turkey to accede to the EU. TESEV's Democratic Governance Program works on issues including Public Administration Reform, Local Government, Decentralisation, the struggle against corruption and the right to information to which the UNDP gives priority.

Democratisation of Turkey

Analyses the mentality-based obstacles in the way of a democratic state and society. The foundation undertakes formulation of proposals for legal reform, monitoring of reforms undertaken by the government,

and preparation of analysis and policy proposals on critical socio/political issues. These activities are further complemented by critical literature surveys on areas where there is an existing knowledge gap, and with conferences, seminars and lectures.

Foreign Policy and International Relations

Supports Turkey's harmonisation process with the EU, contributing to solving outstanding issues in the realm of foreign policy, and helping Turkey define its regional position. The main purpose is not only to influence the decision-making processes in Turkey, but also to influence the EU, US and other regional powers that Turkey will cooperate with in the future. In order to reach these goals, various conferences and workshops organised with international partners as well as the publication of relevant reports are planned.

5. Supporting citizen-led European initiatives

The Barrow Cadbury Trust (United Kingdom)

The foundation promotes European citizenship through the following projects:

- Reconnecting Europe
- Diversity in Europe

Reconnecting Europe

This project is part of a partnership with the Centre for European Reform think tank. The project aims to consider the debate about EU reform from the eyes of European citizens and put forward proposals about the kinds of interventions that foundations could make to improve public understanding and involvement in the EU. In its initial phase, the project has focused on events with a range of experts in the field. A report will be published that will put forward proposals on the ways in which civil society could be better integrated into debates about EU reform and the way in which rights and living standards need to be put back at the centre of debates about the role of the EU.

Diversity in Europe

The Barrow Cadbury Trust has been working on a number of initiatives over the past years to address issues around immigration and integration of minorities at EU level, including:

- Supporting a project on "Integration of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Europe" currently being undertaken by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles, a European network of 76 NGOs: The aim of this project is to track key EU initiatives in the area of refugee integration in order to raise awareness about them at national level and among civil society actors. Supporting refugee voices within this debate has been an important aspect of this work, as has creating a network of NGO focal points that can track the activities of the National Contact Points on Integration which have been set up by the EU Commission.
- Chairing the EFC's Diversity, Migration and Integration Interest Group since its formation in spring 2006: This group aims to develop greater collaboration of foundations working on these issues, promote exchanges of good practice and generate opportunities for greater interaction with key EU institutions.
- The trust helped to organise an EFC Eurobriefing on Migrant Integration with key officials and commissioned a paper by expert Sarah Spencer of Oxford University which analysed the areas of foundation activities in this area.

Fondation Evens Stichting (Belgium)

The foundation promotes European citizenship through the following projects :

- Evens Prize for Intercultural Education
- European Citizens' Panel

Evens Prize for Intercultural Education

Awarded to a project or organisation that has contributed to the integration of European citizens in the field of intercultural education, and has demonstrated determination and creativity. The prize aims to enhance the skills needed in multicultural societies in Europe both in the present and in future. The next prize will be awarded in 2007. The call for nominations is disseminated throughout Europe with specified criteria :

- Projects active in the field of intercultural education that have made an important contribution to the development of harmonious relations in mixed regions
- Projects involving at least two EU members or candidate member countries
- Projects with a long-term vision and an innovative social influence
- Projects that benefit a substantial number of people and preferably directed towards more than one target group, for example youngsters, teachers, parents, and between the majority and minorities
- Projects that recognise the dynamic nature of cultures
- Projects in their implementation phase in order to allow for evaluation

European Citizens' Panel

Project led by the Foundation for Future Generations (see description in "Informing citizens about EU objectives, EU policies and citizens' rights" section).

International Youth Foundation (United States):

The foundation supports two foundations that run projects in the field of citizen participation in Hungary and Poland :

- Foundation for Democratic Youth (DIA)
- Polish Children and Youth Foundation

Foundation for Democratic Youth (DIA)

Supports a youth volunteer group network of currently 52 local youth volunteer groups, including 850 young people, across Hungary to continually develop volunteer community service projects, established according to the DIA model. The aim is to develop the young people's life skills such as communication, cooperation, creative thinking, contribution, leadership, and social sensitivity/active citizenship. The network also aims to develop the community by assigning each group a coordinator such as a youth worker, teacher, or social worker. Each group chooses, develops, and implements its own projects, which range from environmental protection, to social work and cultural events.

Polish Children and Youth Foundation

Operates two programmes supporting European citizenship :

- **Make a Connection** : supports local youth projects by enabling young people to enjoy a social life and broaden their individual development. The idea is that by initiating projects using their own ideas, young people not only help their peers live better and more interesting lives, but also acquire valuable practical skills which will help them to find a job. The programme helps build partnerships between young people and adults

- **Equal Opportunities:** supports local social initiatives aimed at introducing equal educational opportunities for pupils from villages and small towns of up to 20,000 inhabitants. The participating parties include NGOs, educational institutions, and informal youth groups, which propose activities addressed to secondary and high schools students. The programme involves providing both grant and training courses providing rules on preparation and running local community educational programmes, teaching project-oriented working, and providing grounds for organising "coalitions" which are to solve local problems

The King Gustaf V 90th Anniversary Foundation (Sweden)

The foundation seeks to contribute to the development of a sustainable Europe and thus to a significant increase in knowledge of how the EU is structured and where various democratic decisions are made, both jointly within the EU and in each country. Within this field, the foundation works in the following areas:

- Rebuilding of associations in the Baltic States
- Democratic work
- Collaboration

Rebuilding of Associations in the Baltic States

Supports the 4H youth movement in establishing contacts between Sweden and the Baltic States, namely Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia. The 4H organisations contribute to rebuilding youth organisations in each country, through training programmes on the subjects of associations, democracy and leadership; collaboration; exchanges; support via foundations in Sweden; and through the voluntary involvement of associations. 4H also plays a role together with many other youth organisations in promoting life-long learning and the preservation of democratic ways of life in these new Member States within the EU.

Democratic Work

Supports the creation of associations in the former Yugoslavia by establishing contacts with new and old organisations. The foundation aims to use committed youth leaders on site in their home countries to find forms of collaboration and to take part in exchanges and specially adapted leadership training courses. Through contacts and a long-term approach, both organisations and foundations offering support contribute towards building up democratically controlled organisations in these new countries. The aim is to generate increased knowledge and reinforce democracy, exemplified by the appointment of politicians elected by the people. The foundation encourages people to be more active in terms of participating in society. Examples include work in Bosnia-Herzegovina with Save the Children, Bris and 4H in collaboration with the Bonafides organisation. The Swedish Sports Confederation is also active in many countries, including Macedonia. The foundation supports the creation of new, independent youth organisations formed in the wake of exchanges and training taking place.

Collaboration

Supports collaboration between youth organisations to develop international work as a means of addressing globalisation. The foundation encourages voluntary organisations to invest more in joint activities with similar associations in other countries, as well as with other organisations in their own country, in order to achieve their objectives. Within this, the foundation supports collaboration in two main areas:

- **Social Economy Sjuhärad (SES) and Stockholm County Youth Partnership Organisation (SUS):** Focuses on the increased importance of voluntary organisations in the development of society. Both SES and SUS have successfully run projects to increase work with young people and democratic issues, as well as raising their profile and promoting participation through international exchanges and a large number of training courses for youth leaders in collaboration with other countries in the EU including Germany, France and Poland

- Collaboration between funds and foundations : Supports a number of different initiatives, including a fellowship scheme, arranged by Robert Bosch Stiftung, but with the involvement of several other players. The initiative puts a particular focus on increasing citizen participation and influence in Europe in future

Körber Stiftung (Germany)

The foundation operates the EUSTORY History Network for young Europeans, with the aim of encouraging young people to undertake an independent and critical examination of the past through participating in history competitions. At the moment 18 NGOs from across Europe are members of the network. By closely cooperating with each other in EUSTORY as well as with well known experts of history and history education, the organisations want to strengthen a multiperspective approach towards history, foster new historical awareness, and promote mutual understanding, especially in young people. The programme involves the following :

- History competitions for young people
- International Youth Academies
- International cooperation among organisations, networks, research institutes and independent experts in the field of history education
- Conferences for competition organisers, researchers and teachers from all over Europe to discuss issues of historical research and history education

The foundation disseminates information on its EUSTORY activities via a range of publications that encourage people to think about the role of history in forging a European identity.

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About the EFC

The European Foundation Centre (EFC) is a membership association that promotes and underpins the work of foundations and corporate funders active in and with Europe. Established in 1989 by seven of Europe's leading foundations, the EFC today serves a core membership of more than 200 members, associates and subscribers; 350 community philanthropy initiatives; as well as a further 50,000 organisations linked through a network of 58 information and support centres worldwide. The Centre is an independent international not-for-profit association under Belgian law. Membership of the Centre implies commitment to the EFC brand. Members agree to adhere to the principles and objectives set out in the Prague Declaration, and to a voluntary and self-regulatory Code of Practice endorsed by members and revised and updated on an ongoing basis.

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