Roadmap for the implementation of Articles 11(1) and 11(2) of the Treaty on European Union

Towards better EU civil dialogue and involvement of citizens for better policymaking

> *Article 11(1) and 11(2) of the Treaty on EU*
>
> *"1. The institutions shall, by appropriate means, give citizens and representative associations the opportunity to make known and publicly exchange their views in all areas of Union action.*
>
> *2. The institutions shall maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society."*

1. Introduction

This roadmap outlines a vision, a structure and the actions needed for the implementation of better civil dialogue[1] in the EU and the involvement of citizens and their associations. It reflects citizens' calls for better decisions, better policymaking and better governance responding to citizens' needs.

Article 11 of the Treaty on European Union provides the legal basis for this. EU institutions, Member States and civil society — both individuals and representative associations — must work together to put Article 11 into practice. Civil dialogue has the potential to extend and strengthen the European model of democracy and is a key tool in securing ownership, completion and modernisation of the model.

The roadmap sets out a vision of what the dialogue should seek to achieve and how it could be implemented in an effective, constructive and realistic manner with the widest range of supporters and stakeholders. It lays the groundwork for civil dialogue in which representative associations play a key role while, at the same time, the full potential of individuals is harnessed.

2. A vision for civil dialogue

Multi-level
Civil dialogue reaches out to, involves and includes representative associations and civil society[2] at all levels — local, regional, national and European.

Open, transparent and inclusive
Civil dialogue supplements direct participation methods; citizens, organised in associations representing their interests, will be able to participate in and contribute to civil dialogue at the level that best suits them. Digital tools such as e-platforms and other new-tech approaches should be used for collaboration along with traditional ones.

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[1] The European Economic and Social Committee defines civil dialogue as a democratic and public opinion-forming process which can take various forms, depending on the players involved.

[2] The term civil society covers both active individuals and organised civil society here.

Building on, not duplicating, existing dialogues or consultations
Civil dialogue gives an overarching structure to existing dialogues, as well as those yet to be developed, between EU institutions and civil society focusing on particular themes. Any confusion between dialogue, consultation and communication should be avoided.

Better policymaking — ideas for a new Europe
Civil dialogue is a process for exchanging expertise and connecting with innovation in grassroots citizens' organisations. It is a space for identifying and reflecting and building on the values, principles and objectives of the European project, creating a European public sphere by closing the gap between policymakers and citizens and also harnessing the potential for direct participation by citizens. It will lead to better policy development for the common good which is closer to citizens' needs and expectations, generating a greater sense of common ownership. The role of civil dialogue is crucial in the drafting of legislation, as it allows the impact of the legislation on the citizens to be assessed.

Joint actions on agreed EU priorities
A place for civil society and the EU institutions to cooperate and build joint projects for better implementation of EU policies, contributing to better understanding amongst citizens of the added value of the European Union and evaluating the impact that policies have on civil society and citizens. The value of cross-sector and cross-thematic initiatives should be borne in mind.

European integration through civil society
Civil dialogue is an opportunity to create links between the citizens themselves and their elected representatives from across the EU. It can lead to EU-wide cooperation, exchange and projects for change that encourage the development of stronger ownership and a stronger sense of European identity.

3. Action towards dialogue at different levels
The roadmap outlines three levels of dialogue reflecting Article 11 (1) and (2):

3.1. Dialogue with representative associations and civil society at national level [3]

Structure (Article 11(2))
Although national traditions and legal frameworks differ considerably, EU decisions are, to a large extent, prepared by national departments and have the greatest impact at national, regional and local levels. Treaties are binding upon Member States and joint commitments and aims (such as the Europe 2020 Strategy) cannot be achieved without broad ownership and participation by the citizens. The thematic dialogues that often already exist at national level need better EU recognition and support measures so that they can be extended to other Member States. National dialogues should form part of the debate in the annual EU dialogue.

Building on
Existing dialogues on EU issues at national level e.g. health, youth, sport, trade etc. EYC 2013 Citizens' Dialogues (adapted and restructured).

Partners
Member States, European Council, European Commission DGs, Eastern Partnership and EU accession countries, civil society representatives involved in the dialogues (also via Economic and Social Councils or other national-level structures (where existing)).

Next steps
- Gathering information about existing successful dialogues at national level. Consultation with stakeholders from sectors and fields with need for improvement regarding regular dialogue.
- A recommendation from the Council to establish national dialogues across the Member States, including on the implementation of the EU 2020 strategy.

[3] See some examples of best practices in Annex 1.

- Establishing mechanisms for exchanging and disseminating good practices, creating spaces for reflection and critical thinking, promoting some level of coordination between existing dialogues, while respecting their differences. Starting a discussion on quality assurance standards, criteria and guidelines for participation, compulsivity, including the time necessary for proper, effective participation. Promoting civic education on common European values; Establishing open consultation processes (both offline and online) on EU topics at national level with EU Presidencies to deliver annual report on civil dialogue developments in MS.
- Member States should find appropriate means to finance civil dialogue and strengthen the capacity of CSOs to take part; the EC should review its instruments/programmes to support CSOs operating in the field of participation, democracy and rule of law at national level; the EC should include citizen participation/democracy among the horizontal priorities of its national programmes, building on good examples of strengthening NGOs during the pre-accession period.
- Supporting new projects, both in terms of information and practical contribution to better decision-making and revitalising and reforming EU Citizens' Dialogues across EU Member States (which began again in Latvia in January 2015), ensuring broader outreach to civil society through common conclusions and feedback from each dialogue.

3.2. Dialogue with representative associations and civil society at EU level[4]

Structure (Article 11(2))

Appropriate regular and structured dialogue forums to link every EU institution with civil society while creating synergies between the institutions where possible. Existing best practice should be extended and strengthened to ensure effective impact on policymaking. Among other tools, this would include a yearly event bringing together EU institutions represented at the highest levels and representative associations/civil society as well as representatives from sectoral dialogues and local, regional, national and macro-regional (transnational and neighbourhood policy) dialogues.

This annual meeting could be structured along the lines of the Committee of the Regions' Open Days, with workshops and thematic meetings feeding into a comprehensive closing session and a final joint declaration or annual work plan and follow-up on this roadmap. Wider engagement employing innovative techniques and methods could be developed over time. Any declaration would be forwarded to all the EU institutions, which would all be required to issue a formal reaction.

Building on

The European Economic and Social Committee NGO Liaison group, EESC Civil Society Day and the informal EPSCO meetings which since 2000 have integrated a wider involvement of civil society through consultation – at the same level as the social partners – ahead of decision-making at the formal EPSCO meetings.

Partners

European Economic and Social Committee, European Commission, European Parliament and European Council, Committee of the Regions, EPSCO.

Next steps

- Appropriate measures should be taken to identify, extend and strengthen existing best practice and make the changes in EU decision-making resulting from civic engagement visible. Policy areas with improvement potential should be identified and a mechanism supporting and coordinating these actions and existing dialogues should be set up.
- Make use of the rich experience and in-depth evaluations e.g. made in Commission-funded pilot projects to test citizen participation approaches under the programmes Plan D, Debate Europe and Europe for Citizens and develop intensifying strategies that clearly link participatory processes to decision-making processes and other mechanisms such as crowdsourcing for policy ideas etc. Improvement of online participation possibilities is needed. Agreeing on the Statute for European Associations and appropriate and sustainable funding opportunities from EU sources.

[4] See some examples of best practices in Annex 2.

- Establishing a civil dialogue group/committee and observatory with representatives from all interests involved to measure and monitor civil dialogue and levels of citizen engagement with the EU institutions and adopt a yearly report on this. The Europe 2020 Strategy review offers great potential for planning/piloting these processes.
- Entrust without delay a specific Commissioner responsible for coordinating civil dialogue and allocate the relevant human resources to be able to implement it. Each DG should have staff responsible for dialogue and appropriate finances for supporting participation in decision-making. Also, establishing a specific unit and political position and specific staff responsible for dialogue in the Parliament and the Council.
- Building on the EESC Civil Society Day, giving it broader outreach beyond sectoral dialogues and local/regional/national dialogues.

3.3. Opportunities for citizens and representative associations to make known and publicly exchange views in all areas of Union action (Local, Regional, National and EU Dialogues) (Article 11(1))[5]

Structure
All citizens, through the associations representing their interests or as individuals, will be able to access civil dialogue at the level that suits them best – be that local, regional, national or EU level. These dialogues should be self-organised by the citizens and their representative associations/civil society organisations, with the support of the relevant public authority, thus getting as close to the citizens as possible and helping to reduce feelings of isolation and distance.
The format, agenda and topics for discussion would be decided by the citizens and their representative associations/civil society organisations themselves. The approved reports and representatives would feed into the national and EU-level dialogue process.

Building on
NGO networks, councils, initiatives, EYC 2013 National Alliances.

P**artners**
Public authorities from different levels, Member State European Affairs Departments, Economic and Social Councils (where existing), civil society platforms.

Next Steps
- Relevant public authorities should establish an encouraging environment to facilitate civil dialogue at EU, national and subnational levels.
- Appropriate resources and tools should be available with a special focus on coalition building, consensual approach and sustainability as a basis for high-quality input for better decision-making, ensuring quality of access.
- Special focus on the potential of new media. In this respect both organisations and individuals can develop necessary synergies in their work and find appropriate opportunities for participation, e.g. by launching an EU participation 2.0 Strategy to enable the exchange of promising examples between all levels (local, regional, national and European), set up the objectives and envisage the steps for the creation of a digital system for citizens' engagement using respectful discourse within a strictly defined ethical framework.
- Based on the Charter of Fundamental Rights and by recognising the Freedom of Association, promote participation in decision-making by regularly monitoring the existing situation, reporting on it and spreading best practice.

- Increasing awareness of the European dimension with regard to situations at national and sub-national level and increasing motivation for access to exchanging views.

[5] See in annex 3 two examples of best practices.

ANNEXES

BEST PRACTICES AND EXAMPLES

Below are listed some good practices relevant to the different dialogues mentioned in point 3.1 to 3.3 of the Roadmap.

Annex 1 concerns "Dialogue with representative associations and civil society at national level", Annex 2 is about "Dialogues with representatives associations and civil society at EU level" and Annex 3 relates to examples of "Opportunities for citizens and representative associations to make known and publicly exchange views in all areas of EU action (Local, Regional, National and EU dialogues)".

Annex 1

CIVIL SOCIETY CONSULTATION PROCESSES IN EUROPE

AND EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICES

-FOCUS ON DENMARK, POLAND, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND SPAIN-

1.1. DENMARK: Including Civil Society as a Means for Continuous Democracy

Denmark has a long (informal) tradition of consulting civil society – citizens and their organisations – which was enhanced upon EU accession in 1973. Since then, it has shared its good practices at European level and influenced the quality of processes in other Member States.

Indeed, the idea is that "decisions relating to public life (labour relations, environmental protection, public services, education, etc.) are a matter of civil society itself. Hence, responsive matters must be supported by the addressees thereof. Otherwise, society might lose confidence in public institutions"[6].

What's more, Denmark's commitment to consultation, whether among Institutions or between Institutions and civil society (organised or directly with citizens), rests on the belief that it increases communication as well as transparency, which is a principle that has become a fundamental element of Democracy.

With regard to Denmark's relations with the EU, Danish society is still highly Eurosceptic, and consultation processes have therefore been significantly strengthened in order to maintain the highest level of transparency possible, an internal practice which serves EU democracy itself.

So even if Danish Law does not allow an individual citizen or group of citizens to submit an initiative for legislation, it can be taken as an example of good practices on including civil society in decision-making. Although the relation between public administration and civil society was originally informal, there are a number of formal practices too.

Civil society consultation is not the rule, but an often implemented exception. Indeed, civil society consultation is provided for in particular cases and defined in laws. Civil society is consulted both formally and informally.

First of all, it holds dialogues with Parliament thanks to its representation in Parliament committees. In this context, it participates in developing drafts via *ex ante* impact assessments, the dialogues and hearings it has with and by Committees discussing the potential of the draft. Informal discussions between CSOs and government are also common.

CSOs also participate in government-established advisory bodies. These are created on specific matters in order to ensure a continuous dialogue between citizens and government via their representatives[7].

With regard to local democracy, citizens and CSOs are called to join in debates held by Municipal Councils where they informally participate in decision-making.

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[6] D. Chabanet and A. H. Trechsel, *EU Member States' Consultation with Civil Society on European Policy Matters*, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, October 2011, p. 43.

[7] Cf. for instance the DANIDA Project launched by Danish civil society and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2014 and in light of the upcoming European Year for Development 2015, for Danish support to civil society in Developing countries, http://amg.um.dk/en/~/media/UM/Danish-site/Documents/Danida/Samarbejde/Civil-org/Dokumenter/Strat/Civilsamfundspolitik_UK_web.pdf

1.2. POLAND: A Dialogue based on Civil Society Organisation Expertise

For many reasons, mainly historical, the notion of consultation appears in Poland "with regard to general acts prepared by government, as well as local acts prepared by municipalities"[8].

Contrary to Denmark, Polish civil society and its organisations intervene more to support government policymaking rather than contribute to real decision-making. Indeed, it is mostly asked to contribute a source of expertise and knowledge on specific issues rather than be a political voice representing civil society.

Civil society consultation is not the rule, but the exception. When civil society intervenes, it does so in the framework of Advisory Bodies, along with national and/or local government representatives and experts.

Civil society consultation is provided for in particular cases and defined in laws. Indeed, the "government conducts public consultations when it is required to or when it seeks to demonstrate that they considered public opinion, but these consultations rarely influence policy decisions. Some departments or local governments consult with only those organizations unlikely to be critical of the government's policies. At the local level, consultation processes are often formalities because most authorities continue to perceive CSOs mainly as service providers"[9].

Local authorities, on the other hand, are more open to contributions from civil society, and therefore change in practices in Poland might come from the bottom up. Beyond the fact that local authorities have realized that CSOs have a capacity to perform services normally provided by the latter authorities, it is at this level that civil society has a chance to intervene more directly in policy drafting. This step has been reached via the 2011 amendment of the Act on Public Benefit Activity and Voluntary Work which introduced public benefit councils at local and regional levels. These councils consist of representatives of public administration and CSOs and provide CSOs an opportunity to express their opinions on various legislation or policy projects.

[8] D. Chabanet and A. H. Trechsel, *EU Member States' Consultation with Civil Society on European Policy Matters*, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, October 2011, p. 43.
[9] 2013 CSO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia, 17th Edition, June 2014, p. 170-177. This part of the Index was researched and written by the Institute for Public Affairs, European Civic Forum Member in Poland.

1.3. THE UNITED KINGDOM: A Structured Dialogue for Overarching Input from Civil Society

Since 2011, the UK has made great steps forward in enhancing civil society consultation and participation from policy drafting to decision-making, an evolution which mirrors the Danish model according to which consultation is a key element to transparency and accountability, both fundamental to democracy[10].

Such an approach was recognised in the Open Government Partnership UK National Action Plan 2013-2015. In this partnership, the government aims to:

- Work with civil society to develop an OGP national action plan;
- Implement OGP commitments in accordance with the action plan timeline;
- Prepare an annual self-assessment report;
- Participate in the independent reporting mechanism research process;
- Contribute to peer learning across the OGP[11].

The first report was issued in 2013 and called for government to encourage more civil society participation, a conclusion which was accepted by the government in power.

The Compact

The UK's legal order provides a consultation mechanism for CSOs to observe, submit evidence and set agendas for consultation procedures. This mechanism is to be found in the UK Government Compact, made in 1998 and renewed in 2010.

It was developed by a Working Group that included representatives from leading voluntary and community sector umbrella bodies, representatives from community groups and organisations, volunteer organisations who consulted over 25,000 organisations about what the Compact should include and the text was agreed in 1998[12].

Although the Compact is not legally binding, it has become a kind of custom, and it can therefore be expected that signatories will act according to its provisions.

It is also followed by an Accountability and Transparency Guide, "which outlines steps to take at national and local level if these principles are not followed, including dispute resolution, internal complaints procedures and ombudsmen functions"[13].

Finally, it also creates a permanent representative body for the volunteer sector, the Compact Voice.

Other Formats for Civil Society Consultation

Civil society also plays an important role after legislation has been enacted, namely by participating in *ex post* impact assessments, in the framework of specialised Councils or committees.

Finally, civil society is successful in its lobbying activities, another way of influencing policymaking outside the strict confines of consultation.

[10] Cf. quotes in *For a Democratic Europe Now,* Final Report of the "Real Civil Society Democracy in Europe", paragraph on the United Kingdom.
[11] *Ibid.* above.
[12] *Ibid.* above.
[13] *Ibid.* above.

1.4. SPAIN: Weak and Formal Consultation of Civil Society

Having been ruled by a dictatorship for almost 40 years, Spain joined the union of democracies with very poorly developed civil society.

Akin to most other European countries, no legal text deals explicitly with relations and consultation between public administration and civil society. As for France, civil society consultation is organised by specific legal provisions on specific matters. In this vein, Spanish Law has created a number of bodies, or committees, in charge of voicing civil society's concerns, such as The Advisory Council on the Environment (Consejo Asesor de Medio Ambiente), The Consumers' and Users' Council (Consejo de Consumidores y Usuarios), The Council on Women's Participation (Consejo de Participación de la Mujer)[14].

Their tasks include delivering opinions, issuing recommendations and producing reports falling under their area of expertise.

Even if these organisations exist, they remain in an official framework closely linked to the government.

However, civil society's role has evolved in local administration. Indeed, under a Law of 1985 "popular consultations" may be held by mayors on issues which fall under specific municipal competence, are of a local character and of particular importance for the interests of the inhabitants. Local finance is excluded. Approval by an absolute majority of the members of the Council, as well as authorisation by the national Government, is required. However, some ACs have in practice dropped the requirement for central authorisation and now provide in their own Statutes for the convening and regulation of local popular consultations in the form of polls, public hearings, consultation fora, citizens' panels and citizen juries[15].

What's more, a number of significant reforms were introduced starting in 2003[16], and have gained significant importance with citizens' attempts to respond locally to the difficulties they have been facing since the beginning of the economic crisis, which is particularly virulent in Spain:

- "Popular initiatives" may now be presented for agreements, actions or draft regulations in matters of municipal competence.
- City councils were obliged to create districts, with the explicit aim of promoting and developing citizen participation in municipal affairs.
- A City Social Council (Consejo social de la ciudad) had to be established, composed of representatives of economic, social, professional and neighbourhood organisations with the task of producing reports, studies and proposals. These legislative changes were followed in 2005 by a White Paper on Local Government and new initiatives by the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) to promote public participation at local level.
- Finally, Spain is one of the leading countries in Europe in implementing participatory budgeting.

[14] D. Chabanet and A. H.Trechsel, *EU Member States' Consultation with Civil Society on European Policy Matters*, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, October 2011, p. 192.
[15] A. Del Rio Rosello, "Updating Policymaking and Participation in Europe", Thesis, University of Milan, July 2014.
[16] *Ibid. above.*

1.5. GERMANY: Variety of Civil Actors and Medium-to-Strong Corporatist Political Structure

The lobbying/civil society landscape in Germany offers a great variety of different civil actors that are regularly consulted by public institutions. In literature Germany is considered to have a medium-to-strong corporatist structure, although consistent rules for civil consultation processes do not exist[17]. At federal level ("Bund") CSO engagement is focused on the executive body (government, administrations), whereas federal ministries give priority to selecting interest groups. Consultation procedures are normally regulated in the Common Rules of Procedure of the Federal Ministries. Though overall participation of CSOs in Germany is high, implementation varies across government institutions. Regarding EU issues, public consultations have an ad-hoc character and are not institutionalised. Dialogue forums (conferences, round tables, internet consultations) are appointed by the ministries to gain expertise in the policy-forming process whereas policy-specific networks connect different CSOs with political institutions[18].

Civic involvement on European issues in Germany is highly valued, although the lack of involvement in concrete European policy issues is criticised regularly. The biggest network for European stakeholder engagement is the European Movement Germany (EM Germany) [19] with 239 member organisations combining labour unions, economic and non-profit associations, political parties, companies and foundations. It aims to improve German coordination of European policy and communication on European politics in close cooperation with political institutions. It therefore organises regular hearings between national and EU-politicians/experts and its member organisations to stimulate the exchange of ideas and expertise. EBD debriefings (as a reviewing tool for European Councils and Council formations) and briefings can be seen as the only sustainable practice for structured dialogue with civil society and interest groups. Other formats like "Rapporteurs in Dialogue" focus on debating the European Parliament's position in the legislation process or on the pre-legislative process of the Commission ("green paper analysis" format) under close involvement of the respective line ministries. [20]

EM Germany has extended this forum to other fields of European policy: aiming to bridge the gap between citizens, representative associations, and the EU; improve democratic governance in the EU; foster citizenship and citizens' participation and civil dialogue at all levels (Article 11 TEU); promote the consolidation of a European public sphere; promote transparency of decision-making procedures and lobbying activities at all levels.

In order to combine national-level engagement politics with European integration politics, EM Germany and the "National Network for Civil Society" BBE[21] set up reciprocal membership to improve the general legal, organisational and institutional conditions for civic involvement in the multilevel European system. Thus, EM Germany adopted BBE's demand for a "Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process".

The close cooperation of EM Germany with the Federal Foreign office has been officially assigned since 2011. Not only is internal federalism a major challenge for German EU policymaking, but fragmented policy coordination also makes it difficult to strengthen an open and sustainable structured civil dialogue. This is not just an issue for European politics but also for national consultation standards, in accordance with Art. 11 TEU.

Above all, the extensive use of trilogues during the EU's legislation process makes it extremely difficult to balance the need for efficient law-making and transparency.

[17] D. Chabanet and A. H. Trechsel, EU Member States' Consultation with Civil Society on European Policy Matters, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, October 2011, p. 69ff
[18] http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/dialogue_en.htm
[19] http://www.netzwerk-ebd.de/aktivitaeten/politik/civil-dialogue-in-germany/
[20] http://www.netzwerk-ebd.de/
[21] http://www.b-b-e.de/ as an example for a network of "civic involvement" CSOs

1.6. ESTONIA: Innovative Policy Idea Crowdsourcing Process

As a result of a crisis in confidence in Estonian politics, in 2012 more than 10 Estonian NGOs and think tanks created the website rahvakogu.ee which was intended to be an action to crowdsource policy ideas that would lead to: a) improvements in the Estonian electoral system, b) increased competition between the political parties and strengthening of their internal democracy, c) a better model of financing political parties, d) more extensive civic participation, and e) stopping the politicisation of public offices. This civic action had great publicity and the support from the Estonian president and major political parties were invited to participate as observers.

More than 1500 ideas from Estonian people were collected during three weeks in January 2015. These ideas were then bundled, analysed and evaluated by experts. This evaluation allowed the initial 1500 proposals to be boiled down to the 20 most important ones. An event – Deliberation Day – was then held, where 320 randomly selected people participated and decided on 15 ideas to be presented to the Estonian parliament. The proposals were presented to the Parliament by the President of Estonia Toomas Hendrik Ilves. The proposals were discussed by the Parliament and some of them have already been transformed into law (example, the proposal to institutionalise agenda-setting civic initiatives).

1.7. LATVIA: Institutionalising E-participation

2011 was a year of political turmoil in Latvia. The anti-corruption agency asked the Latvian Parliament to lift the parliamentary immunity of one of its members. This request was refused by the Parliament. Then the president of Latvia called a referendum that resulted in the Latvian people deciding to hold new parliamentary elections in October 2011. During the election campaign several NGO representatives and other civic activists demanded new forms of public engagement and institutionalisation of public oversight – one of those demands concerned the agenda-setting e-petitions.

The newly-elected parliament did institutionalise the agenda-setting e-petitions. Latvian citizens have the right to receive a reasoned response from the Latvian Parliament if they manage to collect 10 000 signatures which can also be gathered online, verifying each signature via e-signature or internet banking authorisation.

This method of participation is widely used in Latvia, especially via the public participation website manabalss.lv. In the time period between autumn of 2011 and winter of 2015, 14 initiatives have gathered more than 10 000 votes, the Latvian Parliament has discussed them and seven initiatives have either directly led to amendments of laws/policies or have been one of the important factors behind their success.

Manabalss.lv is an internet portal (run by the Foundation for Public Participation – a non-profit organisation) that has been recognised as an open government success story all across the globe. It was mentioned by US President Barack Obama during the launch of the Open Government Partnership Initiative, it has been featured in publications such as the New York Times and The Guardian, as well as recognised as "one of the outstanding challengers from Eastern and Central Europe".

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Annex 2

2.1. Civil dialogue in matters covered by the "Europe for citizens" programme 2014-2020

2.1.1. Description

Following the adoption of the Council Regulation establishing the Europe for Citizens programme (2014-2020), a new Civil Dialogue group was convened in June 2014 to take over the "Structured Dialogue group" established in 2007 with the previous Europe for Citizens Programme.

The group's tasks are:

• To hold a regular dialogue on all matters relating to the Europe for Citizens programme, including "Remembrance" and "Democratic and civic engagement", and to implement it.

• To bring about exchanges of experiences and good practices in those fields.

• To contribute to the dissemination of the programme's results.

• To contribute to preparation and implementation of any event or activities organised under the programme.

• To monitor and discuss policy developments in related fields.

There are usually two meetings per year, depending on the Europe for Citizens programme agenda and on the European political agenda, including the annual priorities of the European Union.

The group, which may set up working groups to examine specific questions, is composed of 55 organisations:

• Organisations selected to receive an operating grant under the "Europe for Citizens" Programme, under strand 1, "Remembrance", and 2, "Democratic engagement and civic participation".

• Organisations which have received an operating grant under the former "Europe for Citizens" Programme 2007-13 and have expressed their continued interest to take part in the dialogue.

• Some organisations/think tanks which have expressed an interest in the Europe for Citizens programme and/or work in this policy area but were not necessarily supported by the programme.

Member organisations are invited to register on the Transparency Register.

2.1.2. Evolution/lessons learnt

The success of the Dialogue carried out under the previous Europe for Citizens Programme led the Commission to propose to enshrine the principle in the new Regulation, thereby highlighting its strategic importance. The group contributes actively to implementing the programme, notably the discussion on its annual priorities; it also gets involved in major political events, such as campaigning for the European elections and analysing their results. The contribution of their working groups on EU financial support in response to the public consultation on the review of the European financial regulation led to concrete improvements (for example as regards the non-profit rule).

2.1.3. Links

http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/europe-for-citizens-programme/civil-dialogue/index_en.htm

2.2. European Migration Forum

2.2.1. Description

The European Migration Forum is a platform established jointly by the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) which provides representatives of civil society a voice on issues related to migration, asylum and migrants' integration. This allows the European institutions to promote a comprehensive approach to migration, involving stakeholders at all levels. It developed from the European Integration Forum, of which eleven meetings took place between 2009 and 2014.

The Forum takes place at least once a year in the EESC and is attended by organisations representing civil society, both at EU and national level, EESC members, representatives from various EU institutions, from local and regional authorities and from EU Member States.

The agenda and organisation of the Forum are overseen by a Bureau composed of six members: a representative of the Commission, a representative of the EESC and four representatives from civil society, elected by the participants and each serving a mandate of two years.

2.2.2. Novelties

The first edition of the EMF took place on 26-27 January 2015 with a focus on mixed migration flows in the Mediterranean.

Following the enlarged scope of the Forum, civil society participants, who used to be nominated by National Contact Points on Integration (national ministries), are now selected by means of an open call for interest. As each Forum will have a new theme, a selection will be made for each meeting, with due respect for geographical balance and the need for specific expertise.

2.2.3. Evolution/lessons learnt

One of the political messages resulting from the most recent meeting is the need for maximum cooperation and coordination between the various actors in this field, which confirms the importance of the role played by civil society and the EESC in the Forum and, more generally, in the elaboration of migration policy at EU level.

Civil society organisations appreciated the participatory approach and will continue to be involved in the preparatory phase of future editions of the Forum. It will be important to avoid having too full a programme for a debate to which all participants can contribute.

2.2.4. Links

http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-european-migration-forum-1

2.3. Structured Dialogue on Youth

2.3.1. Description

The Structured Dialogue on Youth (SDY) is an ongoing process that brings together young people and policymakers across the European Union to jointly discuss, formulate and put forward proposals for the development of youth policy at national and European levels. It involves regular consultations of young people and youth organisations at all levels in EU countries, as well as dialogue between youth representatives and policymakers at EU Youth Conferences organised by the Member States holding the EU presidency.

The SDY focuses on a different thematic priority for each 18-month cycle (set by the Council of Youth Ministers). During the first six months, the National Working Groups are consulted on the Guiding Framework, endorsed by the youth representatives and policymakers at the first EU Youth Conference. During the second EU Youth Conference, a joint recommendation is debated and adopted based on these consultations. The recommendations are then discussed by youth ministers from the 28 Member States during the third EU Youth Conference before being endorsed.

2.3.2. Novelties

It reaches out to young people and youth organisations through 28 National Working Groups. In the current cycle, it is planned that the national consultations should be carried out using the central European Youth Portal website, for example.

The Recommendations are the basis for discussion for Member States in the preparation of the Council Conclusion on that topic addressed to European institutions and national authorities, which will be endorsed by youth ministers at the end of the 18-month cycle. These set the common practices and standards for youth policy in the EU.

2.3.3. Evolution/lessons learnt

Even though it is a challenging process and its proposals are not always taken into the final Council Conclusion, it is important to acknowledge its benefits, as it formalises the active participation of young people in reflecting about the policies that directly affect them.

2.3.4. Links

European Youth Forum: http://www.youthforum.org/claims/empowered-youth/the-structured-dialogue/

European Commission webpage: http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/dialogue_en.htm

European Youth Portal: http://europa.eu/youth/sd_en.

2.4. Participation of Social Platform in bi-annual informal EPSCO meetings

2.4.1. Description

Twice a year, under the auspices of the Presidency of the EU Council, an informal Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumers Affairs Council (EPSCO) meeting is organised, convening the EU Ministers for employment and social affairs. At these meetings, Member States exchange ideas on employment and social policy priorities selected by the EU Presidency, such as "Youth and Employment", "Social Services under Pressure", "Improving access to the labour market" and "Economic recovery and social policies: the role of minimum income schemes". The main topic of the meeting is discussed in a plenary session with all Ministers while other topics are touched upon in different workshops.

Created in 1995, Social Platform is the largest civil society alliance fighting for social justice and participatory democracy in Europe. Social Platform campaigns to ensure that EU policies are developed in partnership with the people they affect, respecting fundamental rights, promoting solidarity and improving lives. In this capacity, Social Platform has been invited to the informal EPSCO meetings alongside the EU social partners[22] since the Danish EU Presidency in 2002. This has led to a unique structured civil dialogue between the EPSCO Council and civil society organisations.

2.4.2. Novelties

In 2014, The Italian EU Presidency took a step forward on civil dialogue by inviting SP to participate in their informal EPSCO meeting on equal footing with the EU ministers and the social partners. SP participated in the exchange between ministers on the poverty target in the context of the upcoming review of Europe 2020 and contributed to the discussions on a common European unemployment benefit scheme and on the importance of the social economy, pointing out the added value of the social economy to the fight against poverty. SP was also given the opportunity to participate in the Informal Joint meeting of environmental and social ministers.

2.4.3. Evolution/lessons learnt

Since 2002, Social Platform was invited mainly to present its contribution on the topics covered at the meeting of the Presidency Troika (the Member State holding the EU presidency and the two following ones), the Commission, the chair of the European Parliament Employment and Social Affairs Committee, and the social partners. This meeting would take place ahead of the informal EPSCO meeting itself.

In 2008, Social Platform was invited to attend the plenary session of Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs and thus was able to hear the different positions of Members States regarding a selected topic. In the following years and alongside participating in the Presidency Troika meeting, Social Platform was invited to directly address all Ministers with a statement regarding social NGOs' position on Ministers' priorities.

2.4.4. Links

How to establish an effective dialogue between the EU and civil society organisations

[22] European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), Business Europe, the European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME) and the European Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public Services (CEEP)

2.5. Deliberative citizen forums at European level

2.5.1. Description

The term 'deliberative forums' covers approaches used to convene groups of citizens to discuss a given or self-selected issue based on provided information and expert testimony. The aims range from gaining insights into citizens' views by formulating (consensual) recommendations for policymaking to helping to improve decisions on public policy. Forums of this type have spread around the globe and have become ready-made options for enhancing public participation. 'Deliberative forums' can be understood as an umbrella term for methods of public participation such as citizen juries, consensus conferences, 'planning cells' and many other similar initiatives. New steps to promote transnational citizen deliberation in the EU have brought initiatives based on larger groups of citizens and/or multiple-site deliberations such as Meeting of Minds, European Citizen Consultations, and EuropeWideViews (as part of the PACITA research project). These initiatives have been supported by DG Communication and DG Research. Forms of citizen involvement can be seen as an important complement to the involvement of civil society organisations at European level.

2.5.2. Lessons learnt

Deliberative forums are linked with the hope to give ordinary citizens the opportunity to make their voices heard. They also help to understand the diversity of views and opinions of European citizens and thus help to understand their various needs and concerns, thereby potentially contributing to more robust policymaking. European experiments so far have been criticised as lacking impact on European policymaking, and have also been contested in terms of the functions they highlighted (Boucher 2009). It is thus necessary to devise better ways of involving citizens at European level, e.g. by involving professionals, expert designers and contractors at an early stage of the process and clarifying purposes, values and interests in order to develop a reflexive, responsible and effective design. Negotiating designs and procedures for citizen deliberation and its role within democracy is not a purely technical or methodological process but also a political one. It implies negotiating the understanding, forms and processes of influencing political decision-making among a range of concerned actors. It defines which voices are to be heard and the degree of democratic legitimacy that can be claimed. This includes negotiations about different values, norms and interests that define the public and its role in the European Union as well as justification systems for political decision-making. It is equally important to find agents of change and champions who can take these initiatives forward.

2.5.3. Links

- http://www.participedia.net gives an insightful overview about various methods and case studies
- https://europa.eu/sinapse/sinapse/index.cfm?&fuseaction=lib.attachment&lib_id=2FF96871-9617-84CB-19401CF971500B1F&attach=LIB_DOC_EN, report from Meeting of Minds – European Citizens Deliberation on Brain Science
- http://ecc.european-citizens-consultations.eu/, website documenting European Citizen Consultations
- http://citizenconsultation.pacitaproject.eu/, website documenting EuropeWideViews on Sustainable Consumption

2.5.4. References

Boucher, S. 2009. *If citizens have a voice, who's listening? Lessons from recent citizen consultation experiments for the European Union*. URL: http://www.ceps.eu/book/if-citizens-have-voice-whos-listening-lessons-recent-citizen-consultation-experiments-european-

Annex 3

3.1. Policy Agenda on Volunteering in Europe (PAVE)

3.1.1. Description

The Policy Agenda on Volunteering in Europe (PAVE) provides policy recommendations for a more efficient and effective policy framework in Europe to support and promote volunteers, volunteering and organisations involving volunteers. PAVE aims to ensure a lasting legacy for the European Year of Volunteering 2011 (EYV 2011) by encouraging all stakeholders to address the shortcomings of current policies. Consequently P.A.V.E contributes to reaching the EYV 2011 objectives and securing the legacy it promised for volunteering in Europe.

The recommendations agreed on by the EYV 2011 Alliance Steering Group on 17 November 2011 and endorsed by the listed EYV 2011 Alliance member organisations are directed at all stakeholders: the European institutions, member state policy-makers at all levels, social partners (employers from any sector – profit, non-profit, public, private etc. and trade unions) and civil society, and are informed by the conclusions of the EYV 2011 Alliance working groups.

3.1.2. Innovation

A total of 100 European experts in volunteering from EYV 2011 Alliance member organisations, many of them volunteers themselves, participated in this unique initiative during 2011 to develop the recommendations included in P.A.V.E. Drawing on the experiences of the diverse EYV 2011 Alliance membership of European Networks Active in Volunteering in this way has allowed PAVE to be developed with a unique practitioner's perspective and to build on the policy statements made by the EYV 2011 Alliance and the European Institutions prior to the European Year. *

3.1.3. Evolution

PAVE has been used as an important resource for volunteering stakeholders since its presentation to Commissioner Georgieva in December 2011 at the EYV 2011 closing conference in Warsaw. Its legacy can be found in the European Volunteering Capital Competition launched by the European Volunteer Centre that rewards municipalities that demonstrate adherence to the PAVE recommendations. The European Alliance for Volunteering has also been established in order to actively coordinate and develop efforts aimed at appropriate follow-up by targeted stakeholders of the policy recommendations contained in PAVE.

3.1.4. Links

* http://www.eyv2011.eu/resources-library/item/39-the-european-year-of-volunteering-eyv- 2011-discussion-paper,

http://www.eyv2011.eu/resources-library/item/40-eyv- 2011-alliance-position-paper-available-in-different-language-versions-2008

EYV 2011 Council Decision (2009)

EC Communication on EU Policies and Volunteering (2011)

http://www.eyv2011.eu/images/stories/pdf/EYV2011Alliance_PAVE_copyfriendly.pdf

http://www.cev.be/initiatives/european-volunteering-capital/

http://www.volunteering-alliance.eu/

3.2. EYCA and Civil Society Europe

3.2.1. Description

During the "European Year of Citizens 2013", 62 European networks of associations representing 4500 individual organisations and 20 national coordinators have collectively developed a common value-based vision on European citizenship articulated in the founding Manifesto: "Active European citizenship is about pursuing European collective goals and values enshrined in the treaties". They were working in different areas such as education, culture, health and youth. It has also been active in the EU Member States and in six other European countries, directly involving more than 400 national and local civil society organisations and large umbrella organisations.

Debates, conferences, screenings, workshops, exhibitions, etc. have been organised at the local, national and European levels to raise citizens' awareness of their rights and their means of participation in the EU decision-making process by member organisations and in partnership with other stakeholders involved in the European Year of Citizens. These actions and discussions on citizenship have also been fuelled and continued online through the EYCA website and social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr: EYCA2013).

The main aim of the EYCA was to advocate for citizenship to become a transversal dimension of European policies and a key priority in all areas of the Union's action so as to move toward a truly citizen-friendly European Union that would no longer be reduced to merely economic preoccupations. For the EYCA, EU citizenship should not be confined to an individual rights-based approach, as fundamental as this component is, but should have a strong value-based dimension so as to tackle Europeans' sense of belonging to a common European project. In this respect, throughout the Year, the members of the EYCA have contributed to a transversal, multi-level and transnational reflection process on key themes linked to active citizenship in Europe via three working groups. Their recommendations have been gathered in the document "It's about Us, It's about Europe! Towards Democratic European Citizenship" which will be shared with European decision makers.

3.2.2. Evolution

It then seemed necessary to keep up the momentum, unite and coordinate these efforts to make this vision become a reality. **Civil Society Europe** (the European Coordination of Civil Society Organisations) launched at the end of last year and linked to civic movements at sub-national, national and European level aims to represent the values they claim should be at the heart of the European project. Civil Society Europe should create an encouraging environment for horizontal exchanges between civil society organisations and movements across Europe and be influential in shaping the agenda on transversal issues of common interest for organised civil society in Europe.

3.2.3. Links

www.ey2013-alliance.eu

3.3. Digital tools for a European Common Space

3.3.1. Description

Digital democracy tools can complement traditional participatory methods. E-platforms for collaboration and other new-tech approaches in the digital era allow outreach to and engagement of new audiences – e.g. young people. Civil society organisations should act as mediators to facilitate the use of digital tools along with traditional ones to transform the relationship between themselves and also between EU citizens and decision-makers into more of a partnership, thus contributing to the establishment of an engaged citizenship. Exchange of promising examples between all levels (local, regional, national and European), establishment of objectives and planning of steps towards the creation of a digital ecosystem for citizen engagement.

3.3.2. Development

- Define the role of CSOs as intermediaries that facilitate the process of both decision-makers and citizens using digital tools so as to enable broader participation in the policy-making process.
- Design a comprehensive framework for combining on-line with off-line activities and devoting sufficient resources to ensure their smooth running and impact – EU Citizen 2.0 Strategy.
- Identify and create a Knowledge Centre of successful examples of e-democracy platforms that are user-friendly with simple and effective designs.
- Advocate and motivate policy-makers to engage in an open and transparent dialogue with citizens on line, using the knowledge and technology that is already available at national level.
- Advocate at EU level for progress from Commission consultations towards true co-decision.
- Shape a space for mutual learning, networking and synergy building between the different national, local and European e-democracy projects.
- Develop a training curriculum for the use of the new digital tools to foster truly pan-European discussion and overcome technical challenges.