

## Feuille de route

### pour la mise en œuvre de l'article 11, paragraphes 1 et 2,

### du traité sur l'Union européenne

*Vers un dialogue civil amélioré et une participation accrue des citoyens au niveau de l'UE pour améliorer l'élaboration des politiques*

Adopté par le Forum des ONG, à Riga, les 2 et 3 mars 2015, dans le cadre de la présidence lettone du Conseil de l'UE

*Article 11, paragraphes 1 et 2, du traité sur l'Union européenne*

*«1. Les institutions donnent, par les voies appropriées, aux citoyens et aux associations représentatives la possibilité de faire connaître et d'échanger publiquement leurs opinions dans tous les domaines d'action de l'Union.*

*2. Les institutions entretiennent un dialogue ouvert, transparent et régulier avec les associations représentatives et la société civile.»*

#### 1. Introduction

La présente feuille de route expose une vision, une structure ainsi que l'ensemble des actions requises en vue de mettre en œuvre un dialogue civil amélioré<sup>1</sup> dans l'UE et d'y faire participer les citoyens et les associations auxquelles ils appartiennent. Elle répond à la demande des citoyens, qui réclament une amélioration de la prise de décisions, de l'élaboration des politiques et de la gouvernance pour répondre à leurs besoins.

L'article 11 du traité sur l'Union européenne constitue la base juridique en la matière. Les institutions de l'UE, les États membres et la société civile - tant les individus que les associations représentatives - doivent travailler de concert pour mettre en pratique ledit article 11. Le dialogue civil a le potentiel d'étendre et de renforcer le modèle démocratique européen et constitue un outil essentiel pour assurer l'appropriation, la réalisation et la modernisation de ce modèle.

Cette feuille de route propose une vision de ce que le dialogue devrait s'efforcer de viser et des modalités par lesquelles il pourrait être mis en œuvre de manière efficace, constructive et réaliste avec un éventail le plus large possible de soutiens et de parties prenantes. Il pose les fondations d'un dialogue civil dans lequel les associations représentatives jouent un rôle clé et qui soit capable, simultanément, de tirer pleinement parti du potentiel des individus.

<sup>1</sup>

Le Comité économique et social européen définit le dialogue civil comme un processus démocratique et relevant de la formation de l'opinion publique, qui est susceptible de prendre différentes formes en fonction des acteurs concernés.

## 2. Une vision pour le dialogue civil

### **À plusieurs niveaux**

Le dialogue civil touche, implique et inclut les associations représentatives et la société civile<sup>2</sup>, à tous les niveaux — local, régional, national et européen.

### **Ouverte, transparente et inclusive**

Le dialogue civil vient compléter les méthodes de participation directe; les citoyens, organisés en associations représentant leurs intérêts seront à même de participer au dialogue civil et d'y contribuer au niveau qui leur convient le mieux. Cette collaboration pourra s'appuyer sur des outils numériques, tels que les plateformes en ligne, et sur d'autres approches liées aux nouvelles technologies, utilisés en complément des outils traditionnels.

### **S'appuyer sur les dialogues ou consultations existants, sans faire double emploi avec eux**

Le dialogue civil confère une structure d'ensemble aux dialogues existants entre les institutions de l'UE et la société civile et à ceux qui doivent encore être mis en place, centrés sur des thèmes particuliers. Il convient d'éviter toute confusion entre le dialogue, la consultation et la communication.

### **Améliorer l'élaboration des politiques — idées pour une Europe nouvelle**

Le dialogue civil est un processus qui permet l'échange d'expériences et le renforcement du lien avec l'innovation dans les organisations citoyennes de terrain. Il s'agit d'un espace permettant de définir, d'appliquer et de consolider les valeurs, principes et objectifs du projet européen, en créant une sphère publique européenne réduisant la distance entre les responsables politiques et les citoyens, tout en valorisant le potentiel de participation directe des citoyens. Il permettra d'améliorer l'élaboration des politiques afin d'atteindre un bien commun qui réponde mieux aux besoins et attentes des citoyens et crée un sentiment d'appropriation commune accru. Le rôle du dialogue civil revêt une importance cruciale dans l'élaboration de la législation, car il permet d'évaluer l'impact qu'aura celle-ci sur les citoyens.

### **Des actions communes concernant les priorités définies par l'Union**

Il s'agit d'un espace permettant la coopération et la mise en place de projets communs entre la société civile et les institutions de l'UE en vue d'une meilleure mise en œuvre des politiques de l'Union, ce qui contribue à une meilleure compréhension par les citoyens de la valeur ajoutée de l'Union européenne et permet d'évaluer l'impact que les politiques ont sur la société civile et les citoyens. Il convient de prendre en considération la valeur des initiatives intersectorielles et multithématiques.

### **L'intégration européenne par l'intermédiaire de la société civile**

Le dialogue civil est l'occasion de tisser des liens entre les citoyens eux-mêmes et leurs représentants élus de l'ensemble de l'UE. Il peut mener, à l'échelle de l'UE, à une coopération, à des échanges et à des projets de changement qui encouragent le développement d'une plus grande appropriation et d'un sentiment renforcé d'identité européenne.

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<sup>2</sup>

Le terme «société civile» recouvre ici tous les acteurs, à la fois les individus entrepreneurs et les organisations de la société civile.

### 3. Action en faveur d'un dialogue à différents niveaux

La feuille de route présente trois niveaux de dialogue qui sont conformes au contenu de l'article 11, paragraphes 1 et 2:

#### 3.1 *Dialogue avec les associations représentatives et la société civile au niveau national*<sup>3</sup>

##### **Structure (article 11, paragraphe 2)**

Même si les traditions nationales et les cadres juridiques des États membres diffèrent considérablement, les décisions de l'UE sont, dans une large mesure, préparées par des services nationaux et ont la plus grande incidence aux niveaux national, régional et local. Les traités sont contraignants pour les États membres et des engagements et objectifs communs (tels que la stratégie «Europe 2020») ne peuvent être atteints sans une large adhésion et participation des citoyens. Les dialogues thématiques qui existent déjà souvent au niveau national doivent être mieux reconnus par l'UE et bénéficier de mesures de soutien afin de pouvoir être étendus aux autres États membres. Les dialogues nationaux devraient faire partie du débat dans le cadre du dialogue annuel de l'UE.

##### **Éléments sur lesquels s'appuyer**

Les dialogues déjà existants au niveau national sur les problématiques européennes telles que la santé, la jeunesse, les sports, les échanges commerciaux, etc. Dialogues avec les citoyens dans le cadre de l'Année européenne des citoyens 2013 (adaptés et réorganisés).

##### **Partenaires**

États membres, Conseil européen, directions générales de la Commission européenne, pays du partenariat oriental et pays candidats à l'adhésion à l'UE, représentants de la société civile associés aux dialogues (y compris par l'intermédiaire de conseils économiques et sociaux ou d'autres structures au niveau national, le cas échéant).

##### **Prochaines étapes**

- Recueillir des informations sur les dialogues existants et qui ont fait leurs preuves au niveau national. Consultation avec les parties prenantes des secteurs et domaines où une amélioration est nécessaire en matière de dialogue régulier.
- Recommandation du Conseil pour l'établissement de dialogues nationaux dans tous les États membres, y compris en ce qui concerne la mise en œuvre de la stratégie UE 2020.
- Mettre en place des mécanismes d'échange et de diffusion des bonnes pratiques, créer des espaces de réflexion et de pensée critique, promouvoir un certain degré de coordination entre les dialogues existants, dans le respect de leurs différences. Démarrer un fil de discussion sur les normes d'assurance de qualité, les critères et lignes directrices concernant la participation, le caractère obligatoire ou non, y compris le temps nécessaire pour une participation appropriée et efficace. Promouvoir une éducation civique axée sur les valeurs européennes communes; mettre en place des processus de consultation ouverts (sur Internet et dans d'autres cadres) sur des problématiques

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<sup>3</sup> Voir des exemples de bonnes pratiques à l'annexe 1.

de l'UE, au niveau national, les présidences de l'UE étant invitées à remettre un rapport annuel concernant l'évolution du dialogue civil dans les États membres.

- Les États membres devraient trouver des moyens adéquats de financer le dialogue civil et de renforcer la capacité des OSC à y participer; il convient que la CE revoie ses instruments et programmes destinés à soutenir les OSC actives dans le domaine de la participation, de la démocratie et de l'État de droit au niveau national; la CE devrait inclure la participation des citoyens et la démocratie citoyenne dans les priorités horizontales de ses programmes nationaux, en s'appuyant sur des exemples positifs de renforcement des ONG pendant la période de préadhésion.
- Soutenir de nouveaux projets, tant en termes d'informations que de contribution concrète à une meilleure prise de décision, et revitaliser et réformer les dialogues avec les citoyens de l'UE dans tous les États membres (le dialogue a repris en Lettonie en janvier 2015), en garantissant un contact accru avec la société civile par l'intermédiaire des conclusions communes et des retours d'information de chaque dialogue.

### 3.2 *Dialogue avec les associations représentatives et la société civile au niveau de l'UE*<sup>4</sup>

#### **Structure (article 11, paragraphe 2)**

Des forums adaptés à un dialogue adéquat, régulier et structuré, afin de relier chaque institution de l'UE avec la société civile tout en créant des synergies entre les institutions là où c'est possible. Les meilleures pratiques existantes devraient être étendues et renforcées pour garantir un impact effectif sur l'élaboration des politiques. Entre autres outils, on peut envisager une manifestation annuelle réunissant les institutions de l'UE représentées au plus haut niveau et des associations représentatives et organisations de la société civile ainsi que des représentants des dialogues sectoriels et des dialogues ayant cours aux niveaux local, régional, national et macrorégional (politique transnationale et politique de voisinage).

Cette réunion annuelle pourrait être structurée sur le modèle des Open Days du Comité des régions, avec des ateliers et des réunions thématiques apportant des contributions à une séance plénière de clôture et à une déclaration finale conjointe ou un plan de travail annuel et un suivi de la présente feuille de route. Un engagement plus vaste utilisant des techniques et méthodes novatrices pourrait être mis en place au fil du temps. Toute déclaration serait communiquée à l'ensemble des institutions de l'UE, qui seraient toutes tenues d'émettre une réponse officielle.

#### **Éléments sur lesquels s'appuyer**

Le Groupe de liaison des ONG du Comité économique et social européen, la Journée de la société civile du CESE et les réunions informelles du Conseil EPSCO qui, depuis 2000, ont intégré une plus large participation de la société civile par le biais de consultations — au même niveau que les partenaires sociaux — en amont de la prise de décisions lors des réunions officielles du Conseil EPSCO.

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<sup>4</sup> Voir des exemples de bonnes pratiques à l'annexe 2.

## Partenaires

Comité économique et social européen, Commission européenne, Parlement européen et Conseil européen, Comité des régions, Conseil EPSCO.

## Prochaines étapes

- Il convient de prendre des mesures appropriées pour sélectionner, développer et renforcer les meilleures pratiques existantes et rendre visibles les changements intervenus dans le processus décisionnel de l'UE qui résultent de l'engagement civique. Les domaines politiques présentant un potentiel d'amélioration doivent être identifiés et un mécanisme d'appui et de coordination de ces actions et des dialogues existants devrait être mis en place.
- Tirer parti de la riche expérience et des évaluations approfondies, par exemple celles menées à travers les projets pilotes financés par la Commission pour tester des approches de participation citoyenne dans le cadre des programmes plan D, «Debate Europe» et «L'Europe pour les citoyens» et développer des stratégies d'intensification établissant clairement un lien entre les processus de participation et les processus de prise de décision et d'autres mécanismes tels que la production participative d'idées de politiques, etc. Il est nécessaire d'améliorer les possibilités de participation en ligne. Parvenir à un accord sur le statut des associations européennes ainsi que sur des possibilités de financement appropriées et durables provenant de sources de l'Union.
- Mettre en place un groupe/une commission et un observatoire du dialogue civil comprenant des représentants de toutes les parties intéressées afin de mesurer et de suivre le dialogue civil et les degrés d'engagement des citoyens avec les institutions de l'UE et adopter un rapport annuel à ce sujet. La stratégie Europe 2020 ouvre de formidables possibilités de planification ou de pilotage de ces processus.
- Confier sans retard à un commissaire spécifique la charge de coordonner le dialogue civil et allouer les ressources humaines correspondantes afin qu'il soit possible de le mettre en œuvre. Chaque DG devrait disposer de personnel chargé du dialogue et de financements appropriés pour soutenir la participation à la prise de décision. En outre, il convient d'instituer, au sein du Parlement et du Conseil, une unité, un poste politique et du personnel qui soient spécifiquement chargés du dialogue.
- S'appuyer sur la Journée de la société civile du CESE, en lui conférant une portée plus générale allant au-delà des dialogues sectoriels et des dialogues locaux/régionaux/nationaux.

### 3.3 *Possibilités offertes aux citoyens et aux associations représentatives d'exprimer et d'échanger publiquement leurs points de vue dans tous les domaines d'action de l'Union (dialogues aux niveaux local, régional, national et de l'UE) (article 11, paragraphe 1)*<sup>5</sup>

## Structure

Tous les citoyens, par l'intermédiaire des associations qui représentent leurs intérêts ou à titre individuel, pourront avoir accès à un dialogue civil au niveau qui leur convient le mieux — que ce soit au niveau local, régional, national ou à l'échelon de l'UE. Ces dialogues devraient être organisés par les citoyens, leurs associations représentatives et les organisations de la société civile eux-mêmes,

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<sup>5</sup> Voir à l'annexe 3 deux exemples de bonnes pratiques.

avec le soutien de l'autorité publique compétente, pour agir ainsi au plus près des citoyens et contribuer à réduire le sentiment d'isolement et d'éloignement.

Il convient que les citoyens, leurs associations représentatives et les organisations de la société civile décident eux-mêmes du format, de l'ordre du jour et des sujets de discussion abordés. Les rapports adoptés et les représentants désignés viendraient contribuer au processus de dialogue au niveau national et à celui de l'UE.

### **Éléments sur lesquels s'appuyer**

Les réseaux d'ONG, les conseils, les initiatives, les alliances nationales constituées pour l'Année européenne des citoyens 2013.

### **Partenaires**

Autorités publiques à différents niveaux, ministères des affaires européennes des États membres, conseils économiques et sociaux (le cas échéant), plateformes de la société civile.

### **Prochaines étapes**

- Les pouvoirs publics concernés devraient créer et favoriser un environnement propre à faciliter le dialogue civil au niveau européen, national et infranational.
- Il convient de mettre à disposition des ressources et des instruments appropriés, en accordant une attention particulière à la formation de coalitions, à l'approche consensuelle et à la durabilité en tant que base pour une contribution de qualité en vue d'une amélioration du processus décisionnel, tout en garantissant la qualité de l'accès.
- Mettre un accent particulier sur le potentiel des nouveaux médias. À cet égard, tant les organisations que les individus peuvent développer des synergies nécessaires dans leur travail et rechercher des possibilités adéquates de participation, par exemple en lançant une stratégie 2.0 de la participation au niveau de l'UE, pour permettre l'échange d'exemples prometteurs entre tous les niveaux d'intervention (local, régional, national et européen), fixer des objectifs et envisager les étapes en vue de la création d'un système numérique de participation des citoyens, qui recourrait à un discours respectueux au sein d'un cadre éthique strictement défini.
- En se fondant sur la Charte des droits fondamentaux et la reconnaissance de la liberté d'association, promouvoir la participation à la prise de décision par un suivi régulier de la situation existante, l'établissement de rapports y afférents et la diffusion de bonnes pratiques.
- Améliorer la prise de conscience de la dimension européenne en ce qui concerne les situations aux niveaux national et infranational, et accroître la motivation pour ce qui est de l'accès à l'échange de vues.

**ANNEXES**  
**BONNES PRATIQUES ET EXEMPLES**

*Ci-dessous une liste de quelques bonnes pratiques en rapport avec les différents dialogues évoqués aux points 3.1 à 3.3 de la présente feuille de route. L'annexe 1 concerne le «Dialogue avec les associations représentatives et la société civile au niveau national», l'annexe 2 se rapporte aux «Dialogues avec les associations représentatives et les organisations de la société civile au niveau de l'UE», et l'annexe 3 recense des exemples de «Possibilités offertes aux citoyens et aux associations représentatives d'exprimer et d'échanger publiquement leurs points de vue dans tous les domaines d'action de l'Union (dialogues aux niveaux local, régional, national et de l'UE)».*

## 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”<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup>.

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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<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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](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”<sup>8</sup>.

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”<sup>9</sup>.

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.

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<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> 2013 CSO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia, 17<sup>th</sup> 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<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup>.

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"<sup>13</sup>.

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

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. quotes in *For a Democratic Europe Now*, Final Report of the "Real Civil Society Democracy in Europe", paragraph on the United Kingdom.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* above.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* above.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* above.

### 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.

#### 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)<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup>.

What's more, a number of significant reforms were introduced starting in 2003<sup>16</sup>, 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.

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<sup>14</sup> 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.

<sup>15</sup> A. Del Rio Rosello, "Updating Policymaking and Participation in Europe", Thesis, University of Milan, July 2014.

<sup>16</sup> *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<sup>17</sup>. 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<sup>18</sup>.

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)<sup>19</sup> 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.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> 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

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<sup>17</sup> 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

<sup>18</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/dialogue\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/dialogue_en.htm)

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.netzwerk-ebd.de/aktivitaeten/politik/civil-dialogue-in-germany/>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.netzwerk-ebd.de/>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.b-b-e.de/> as an example for a network of "civic involvement" CSOs

polymaking, 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.

## **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](http://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](http://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](http://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".



## Bibliography

1. 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, 10. 2011.

[http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/19357/EUDO\\_Report\\_2011\\_04.pdf?sequence=1](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/19357/EUDO_Report_2011_04.pdf?sequence=1)

2. *For A Democratic Europe Now*, Final Report of the “Real Civil Society Democracy in Europe” project led by Civil Society Organisations CSV (UK), Solidar (EU network), La Ligue de l’Enseignement (FR), Forum for International Cooperation Denmark (DK), IDEAS Institute (IR) and Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (IT), November 2014. [http://www.solidar.org/IMG/pdf/for\\_a\\_democratic\\_europe\\_web.pdf](http://www.solidar.org/IMG/pdf/for_a_democratic_europe_web.pdf)

3. 2013 CSO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia, 17<sup>th</sup> Edition, June 2014.

<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1863/E&E%202013%20CSOSI%20Final%2010-29-14.pdf>

4. A. Del Rio Rosello, “Updating Policymaking and Participation in Europe”, Thesis, University of Milan, July 2014.

## **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](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](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/dialogue_en.htm)

European Youth Portal: [http://europa.eu/youth/sd\\_en](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<sup>22</sup> 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.

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<sup>22</sup> 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)

#### **2.4.4. Links**

[How to establish an effective dialogue between the EU and civil society organisations](#)

## 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](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.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](http://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.