

Europe for Citizens programme 2014-2020

2011/0436(APP) - 17/09/2013 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish for the period 2014-2020 the programme "**Europe for Citizens**".

PROPOSED ACT: Council Regulation.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: following the contacts that the Council Presidency had with the **European Parliament which contested the legal basis proposed for the programme, a new version of the text**, acceptable to all the institutions, has been formally addressed to the European Parliament with a **request for consent**.

LEGAL BASIS: **Article 352** of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

CONTENT: with this revised proposal, the Council submits a new version of the programme "Europe for Citizens" 2014-2020.

The salient elements of the new version of the text may be summarised as follows:

Subject matter and scope: under the overall aim of bringing the Union closer to citizens, the general objectives of the Programme are the following:

- to contribute to citizens' understanding of the Union, its history and diversity;
- to foster European citizenship and to improve conditions for civic and democratic participation at Union level.

Specific objectives of the Programme: the Programme should have the following specific objectives which shall be implemented through actions at transnational level or with a European dimension:

- **to raise awareness of remembrance, the common history and values of the Union and the Union's aim**, namely to promote peace, the values of the Union and the well-being of its peoples, by stimulating debate, reflection and the development of networks;
- **to encourage the democratic and civic participation of citizens at Union level**, by developing citizens' understanding of the Union policy making-process and promoting opportunities for societal and intercultural engagement and volunteering at Union level.

Structure of the Programme and supported actions: the Programme should be divided into the following two strands:

1. "European remembrance";
2. "Democratic engagement and civic participation".

The two strands should be complemented by horizontal actions for analysis, dissemination and use of project results ("Valorisation" action). In order to achieve its objectives, the programme should finance inter alia the following types of action, implemented at transnational level or with a **European dimension**:

(a) Mutual learning and cooperation activities such as:

- citizens' meetings, town-twinning, networks of twinned towns;
- projects implemented by transnational partnerships including different types of stakeholders;
- remembrance projects with a European dimension;
- exchanges based, inter alia, on the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) and/or social media;

(b) Structural support for organisations such as:

- bodies pursuing an aim of general Union interest;
- Europe for Citizens Contact Points;

(c) Union level analytical activities such as:

- studies focusing on issues relating to the objectives of the Programme;

(d) Awareness raising and dissemination activities designed to use and further valorise the results of the supported initiatives and to highlight good practices, such as:

- Union level events including conferences, commemorations and award ceremonies;
- peer reviews, expert meetings and seminars.

Union measures: Union measures may take the form of grants or public procurement contracts. Union grants may be provided through **operating grants or action grants**.

Public procurement contracts shall cover the purchase of services, such as for organising events, studies and research, information and dissemination tools, monitoring and evaluation.

Participation in the programme: the Programme shall be open to the participation of the Member States; acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates and the EFTA countries party to the EEA Agreement. The Programme may support joint activities in the field covered by it, with relevant international organisations, such as the Council of Europe and UNESCO, on the basis of joint contributions and in accordance with the Financial Regulation.

Stakeholders: the Programme shall be open to all stakeholders promoting European citizenship and integration, in particular local and regional authorities and organisations, twinning committees, European public policy research organisations (think-tanks), civil society organisations (including survivors' associations), and cultural, youth, educational and research organisations.

Implementation: in order to implement the Programme, the Commission shall adopt annual work programmes by way of implementing acts in accordance with the advisory procedure.

The annual work programmes shall set out the objectives pursued, the expected results, the method of implementation and the total amount of the financing plan.

Coherence and complementarity: the Commission should ensure the coherence and the complementarity between the Programme and instruments in other areas of Union action, especially education, vocational training and youth, sport, culture and the audiovisual sector, fundamental rights and freedoms, social inclusion, gender equality, combating discrimination, research and innovation, information society, enlargement and the external action of the Union.

Budget: the financial reference amount for the implementation of the Programme for the period from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2020 is set at **EUR 185 468 000**.

Communication, monitoring and evaluation: the Commission should provide the Member States with information on the projects which have received the Union's funding by transmitting the selection decisions to them within two weeks of their adoption.

It should ensure that the Programme is regularly monitored against its objectives using **performance related indicators**. The results of the monitoring and evaluation process shall be used in implementing the Programme. Progress of the specific objectives should be measured against indicators. Indicators shall be disaggregated by gender and age.

The Commission shall ensure that a regular, external and independent evaluation of the Programme be carried out and shall report to the European Parliament on a regular basis.

The Commission should submit the following to the European Parliament and the Council:

- by 31 December 2017, an interim evaluation report on the results obtained and on the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the implementation of the Programme;
- by 31 December 2018, a communication on the continuation of the Programme;
- by 1 July 2023, an ex-post evaluation report.

Transitional measures: transitional measures should be provided to monitor actions which began before 31 December 2013 pursuant to Decision No 1904/2006/EC. They should continue to be governed, until their completion, by that Decision.