

Europe for Citizens programme 2014-2020

2011/0436(APP) - 14/12/2011 - Preparatory document

PURPOSE: to establish the programme "Europe for Citizens" for the period 2014-2020, succeeding the current ["Europe for Citizens" programme](#) from 2007-2013.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Regulation.

BACKGROUND: the Commission adopted a proposal for a [multiannual financial framework \(MFF\) for the period 2014-2020](#) establishing the budget for the Europe 2020 strategy. In its proposal, the Commission stresses the need to continue the programme "Europe for Citizens" 2007-2013. The latter programme has shown the need to increase citizens' understanding of the history and origins of the EU and their awareness about the EU project.

The Treaty on European Union takes a big step towards bringing the Union closer to its citizens and fostering greater cross-border debate about EU policy issues (the new rules on the [citizens' initiative](#) is part of this process.)

The Commission proposes with this programme to take action to build capacity for civic participation. The programme will build on the analysis of the strengths and the weaknesses of the current programme. It aims to address the need for more genuine debates on Union related issues at the local, regional and national levels, and, through a broad set of organisations, to reach out to the large group of citizens who would normally not seek to influence or take part in Union affairs.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: the impact assessment relating to this programme was integrated into the cumulative impact assessment of the MFF 2014-2020.

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

CONTENT: this proposal aims to establish the new programme « Europe for Citizens » 2014-2020, which builds on the preceding programme over the period 2007-2013.

Programme objectives: the programme aims to strengthen remembrance and enhance capacity for civic participation at the Union level.

More specifically, the programme The programme shall have certain specific objectives, which shall be implemented through actions on a transnational level or with a clear European dimension:

- raise awareness on remembrance, the Union's history, identity and aim by stimulating debate, reflection and networking;
- encourage democratic and civic participation of citizens at Union level, by developing citizens' understanding of the Union policy making-process and promoting opportunities for societal engagement and volunteering at Union level.

The Commission to set more firm indicators and subsequently be able to objectively, and more in detail, establish progress and impact.

Structure of the programme: the programme shall consist of the following two strands:

(a) "Remembrance and European citizenship"

(b) "Democratic engagement and civic participation".

The two strands shall be complemented by horizontal actions for analysis, dissemination and exploitation of project results ("Valorisation" actions).

In order to achieve its objectives, the programme shall finance certain types of actions, details of which are set out in the proposal and the annex. The actions will be implemented on a transnational level or with a **clear European dimension**.

The following types of action will be financed:

- in the case of "Remembrance and European citizenship", the programme seeks to support organisations to promote debate and activities on European integration and history at a transnational level or when a clear European dimension is addressed. For certain actions under "history", a European dimension suffices. Historical archives, sites of remembrance are bound by their location but have in many cases a Union-wide significance;
- in the case of "Democratic engagement and civic participation", the programme seeks to develop citizens' understanding and capacity to participate in the Union policy making process and to develop opportunities for solidarity, societal engagement & volunteering at Union level. Such a wide scope and ambition could only be addressed at a Union level;
- in the case of "Valorisation", this is a horizontal dimension of the programme as a whole. It will focus on the analysis, dissemination, communication and valorisation of the project results from the above-mentioned strands. National and regional platforms would help collecting best practices and ideas about how to strengthen civic participation but pan-European platforms and common tools are also needed to broaden the perspective and facilitate the transnational exchange.

Implementation: like its predecessor, the programme be implemented through **operating grants** and **action grants** based on open calls for proposals and through service contracts based on calls for tender. The implementation of the programme should be further simplified by recourse to lump sums, flat-rate financing and the application of unit-cost rates.

The Commission may use, on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis, an **existing executive agency** for the implementation of the programme, as provided for in Council Regulation (EC) No 58/2003 laying down the statute for executive agencies to be entrusted with certain tasks in the management of Community programmes.

In **management terms**, the Regulation aims at a more streamlined and simplified approach, resulting in increased cost-effectiveness. Economies of scale will be significant when actions of a similar nature have similar implementing rules and procedures, simplifying both for beneficiaries and for management bodies at EU and national level.

Participation in the programme: the programme shall be open to the participation of Member States, acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates, and may cover joint activities 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.

Effectiveness: the programme contains a clause on **monitoring and evaluation** so that it may be regularly monitored against its objectives using performance related indicators. In addition, there will be an interim evaluation report on the results obtained no later than 31 December 2017.

The Commission shall ensure the **coherence and the complementarity** between this programme and instruments in other areas of Union action, especially education, vocational training, culture, sport, fundamental rights and freedoms, social inclusion, gender equality, combating discrimination, research and innovation, the enlargement policy and the Union external action.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS: the Commission's proposal for a Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2014-2020 provides that **EUR 229 million in current prices** will be allocated for a "Europe for Citizens" programme.