

Active European citizenship: Europe for Citizens programme 2007-2013

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The proposal for the "Citizens for Europe" programme designed to promote active European citizenship for the period 2007-2013 was submitted by the Commission and was the subject of an initial exchange of views in Council.

The Presidency had suggested that the following questions for guiding the exchange of views be addressed by Ministers:

- Do you think that this programme, which is devoted to citizens, helps to make European citizenship a reality? Does it encourage citizens to realise their citizenship fully and actively at European level and make this European area, which is based both on common values and on respect for its diversity, their own?
- How do you see the European added value of the programme, which aims to focus on transnational actions and exchanges and encourage the mobility of citizens, and also of ideas, across Europe?
- What is your perception of the special attention this programme gives to the participation of citizens and organisations of all Member States, particularly those which have only recently joined the EU?

Delegations warmly welcomed the proposed programme in that it aimed to bring citizens closer to the reality of Europe, to promote their active participation in democratic life and to enhance mutual understanding between citizens of the various Member States. It was acknowledged that there was real added value to be gained from the fact that such an initiative was being taken at European level. Delegations also recognised that particular attention should be paid to those Member States which had only recently joined the European Union.