Basic information

2007/2222(ACI) ACI - Interinstitutional agreement procedure	Procedure completed
Communicating Europe in partnership. Political declaration **Subject** 3.30 Information and communications in general 8.40.10 Interinstitutional relations, subsidiarity, proportionality, comitology	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFCO Constitutional Affairs	LEINEN Jo (PSE)	07/10/2008

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
CULT Culture and Education	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	2896	2008-10-13
General Affairs	2864	2008-04-29

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Communication	WALLSTRÖM Margot

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
03/10/2007	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2007)0569	Summary
29/04/2008	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
25/09/2008	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
07/10/2008	Vote in committee		
07/10/2008	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0372/2008	
09/10/2008	Decision by Parliament	T6-0463/2008	Summary
13/10/2008	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		

15/10/2008	End of procedure in Parliament		
20/01/2009	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2007/2222(ACI)
Procedure type	ACI - Interinstitutional agreement procedure
Procedure subtype	Interinstitutional agreement
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 154
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFCO/6/54655

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0372/2008	07/10/2008	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0463/2008	09/10/2008	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	COM(2007)0568	03/10/2007	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2007)0569	03/10/2007	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2007)1265	03/10/2007	
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2007)1267	03/10/2007	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Declaration C2009/013
OJ C 013 20.01.2009, p. 0003 Summary

Communicating Europe in partnership. Political declaration

2007/2222(ACI) - 03/10/2007 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE: to propose a general framework specifying the axes of the Commission's communication on Europe, entitled "Communicating Europe in Partnership".

CONTENT: within the current framework of the debate on the future of Europe, the Commission proposes a communication framework aimed at reinforcing communication with European citizens. The aim is not to enable citizens to have direct contact with the Commission but to plan a comprehensive strategy involving all institutions, Community bodies and Member States.

It is in this context that the Commission proposes the current communication, with a view to establishing a framework to reinforce communication in all directions, with a shift in emphasis from a Brussels-based to a 'going local' approach, initiated by the White Paper on a European Communication Policy (see INI/2006/2087). This White Paper advocates a two-way communication, characterised by the active participation of citizens, and Plan D ("Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate", which is a communication launched by the Commission following the failure of the draft constitutional treaty, in order to encourage debate on the relationship between the democratic institutions of the EU and its citizens – see COM(2005)0494).

This Communication uses the results of these types of initiative to build on current activities and to formulate a set of concrete proposals which could serve as the basis of an enhanced EU communication policy, respecting the autonomy of the different institutions.

The overall objective is to strengthen coherence and synergies between the activities undertaken by the different EU institutions and by Member States, in order to offer citizens better access to information, and a better understanding of the impact of EU policies on national, regional and local governments.

For its part, the Commission will reinforce its communication activities by providing information and engaging in debate and discussion with citizens in national, regional and local contexts, thus promoting a real "partnership" with other EU institutions, inviting Member States and all interested stakeholders to reach this objective. To support this partnership, the Commission is proposing an **inter-institutional agreement** (IIA), to structure the EU communication process, and to invite all stakeholders to engage themselves to work within the proposed coherent and flexible institutional framework (see summary of the non-legislative initial document).

Fundamental principles of the communication: the Commission will marshal all its resources to achieve effective and integrated communication in Europe.

To realise these objectives the Commission is proposing:

- The conclusion of an inter-institutional agreement to provide a framework for better cooperation on the EU communication process, while respecting the autonomy of EU institutions and Member States;
- voluntary management partnerships with Member States as the main instrument of joint communication initiatives;
- developing a "European Public Space" within the Representations;
- identifying aspects of school education where joint action, at an EU level, can support the Member States;
- strengthening Eurobarometer;
- implementing the Pilot Information Networks (PINs) to improve communication between European and national politicians and with other opinion formers.

In addition, the Commission, within the coming months, proposes to:

- adopt a new internet strategy to support civil society networks and private or public sector websites with an EU focus which promote contact with or between European citizens;
- adopt a new audiovisual strategy to support networks of broadcasters across Europe in producing and broadcasting EU affairs programmes;
- launch a follow-up communication to Plan D, as well as a new set of Plan D civil society projects, with the overall objective of supporting the ratification process for the Reform Treaty (Lisbon Treaty) and increasing participation in the 2009 European Parliament elections;
- examine the possible consolidation and extension of recent successful experiences in reinforcing the work of the Representations.
- It should be noted that, from a budgetary perspective, this communication will have a direct impact on the human and budgetary resources of the Commission (refer to the financial factsheet in the annex).

Communicating Europe in partnership. Political declaration

2007/2222(ACI) - 03/10/2007 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: to present a proposal for an Inter-institutional Agreement on Communicating Europe in Partnership.

CONTENT: three of the key EU institutions namely, the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission have agreed to common objectives on communicating European issues to a wider audience. The main objectives of the Agreement are:

- to give everyone access to fair and diverse information on the EU;
- to enable everyone to exercise their right to express their views and to participate actively in the public debate on European issues.

The Agreement specifies that all EU public actors are responsible for pursing these objectives, observing the principles of inclusiveness and pluralism, participation and empowerment, openness and transparency. The Agreements seeks to highlight the need for, and the added value of, better coordination in the way the EU institutions and bodies communicate on EU issues. To that end it provides a framework for coordinated action.

While recognising that participation in the process is entirely voluntary, the three Institutions encourage all Member States to participate actively. The three institutions also recognise the leading role of the Inter-Institutional Group on Information (IGI) in coordinating the communication of EU issues. The IGI will have the following tasks:

- to define broad guidelines for coordinated communication on EU issues;
- to select annual EU communication priorities based on a proposal from the Commission;
- to adopt the annual common work plan on communication activities, based on actions proposed by each of the institutions; and
- to monitor the implementation and follow-up of the annual common work plan.

In order to communicate effectively, the three institutions encourage each Member State to nominate a high-level contact person as "**national communication director**" on matters relating to communication on EU issues. The three Institutions agree to organise, at least twice per year, meetings of all national communication directors in order to share information and disseminate best practices, thereby encouraging and supporting the involvement of the Member States in communicating on EU issues. An electronic EU Information Network (EU-Infonet) will be developed in order to facilitate the permanent monitoring of communication on EU issues. Results will be assessed annually by the IGI as well as the three institutions. This debate will take place in the European Parliament.

The functioning of the Inter-institutional Agreement will be reviewed at the beginning of the term of office of the incoming Commission and Parliament.

Communicating Europe in partnership. Political declaration

2007/2222(ACI) - 09/10/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 493 votes to 48, with 30 abstentions, a European Parliament decision on the approval of the joint declaration on "Communicating Europe in Partnership".

The own-initiative report had been tabled for consideration in plenary by Jo **LEINEN** (PES, DE) on behalf of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs.

The resolution emphasises that communication is an important element of both representative and participatory democracy. The experience gained from past European elections and referendums suggests that those who are aware of, and interested in, EU issues are more likely to participate, while those who are not as well informed are less likely to do so. This was once again confirmed by research done following the Irish referendum.

Convinced that communicating on the European Union requires the political commitment of EU Institutions and Member States at all levels, the European Parliament approves the joint declaration on Communicating Europe in Partnership annexed to this decision and decides to annex the declaration to its Rules of Procedure. It calls for the declaration to be published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

The European Parliament, Council and the European Commission attach the utmost importance to improving communication on EU issues in order to enable European citizens to exercise their right to participate in the democratic life of the Union, in which decisions are taken as openly as possible and as closely as possible to the citizens, observing the principles of pluralism, participation, openness and transparency.

The three Institutions wish to encourage the convergence of views on the communication priorities of the European Union as a whole, to promote the added value of an EU approach to communication on European issues, to facilitate exchanges of information and best practices and develop synergies between the Institutions when carrying out communication relating to these priorities, as well as to facilitate cooperation among the Institutions and Member States where appropriate.

The three Institutions believe that information and communication activities on European issues should give everyone access to fair and diverse information about the European Union and enable citizens to exercise their right to express their views and to participate actively in the public debate on European Union issues. The three Institutions promote the respect of multilingualism and cultural diversity when implementing information and communication actions.

Communicating Europe in partnership. Political declaration

2007/2222(ACI) - 22/10/2008 - Final act

PURPOSE: to reinforce cooperation between the EU institutions and the Member States in the area of communication regarding the Union, inter alia by annual identification of common communication priorities.

ACT: Communicating Partnership in Europe.

CONTENT: the European Parliament, the Council and Commission adopted the text of a political statement entitled "Communicating Europe in partnership". The statement follows upon the Commission White Paper on a European communication policy, submitted in February 2006, and the communication "Communicating Europe in partnership", presented by the Commission in October 2007.

It is intended to reinforce cooperation between the EU institutions and Member States in the area of communication regarding the Union, inter alia, by annual identification of common communication priorities.

1) Principles: the European Parliament, Council and the European Commission wish to encourage the convergence of views on the communication priorities of the European Union as a whole, to promote the added value of an EU approach to communication on European issues, to facilitate exchanges of information and best practices and develop synergies between the Institutions when carrying out communication relating to these priorities, as well as to facilitate cooperation among the Institutions and Member States where appropriate. They recognise that communicating on the European Union requires a **political commitment of EU Institutions and Member States**, and that Member States have their responsibility to communicate with citizens about the EU.

They believe that information and communication activities on European issues should give everyone access to fair and diverse information about the EU and enable citizens to exercise their right to express their views and to participate actively in the public debate on EU issues. The three Institutions promote the respect of multilingualism and cultural diversity when implementing information and communication actions.

2) A partnership approach: expanding on the partnership approach, the statement notes that the three institutions recognise the importance of addressing the communication challenge on

EU issues in partnership between Member States and the EU institutions. They wish to develop synergies with national, regional and local authorities as well as with representatives of civil society. They would like for that purpose to foster a **pragmatic partnership approach**, and recall the key role of the **Inter-institutional Group on Information (IGI)** serving as a high-level framework for the Institutions to encourage political debate on EU-related information and communication activities in order to foster synergy and complementarity. The IGI will meet twice a year.

3) A framework for working together: the Institutions intend to cooperate on the following basis:

- whilst respecting the individual responsibility of each EU institution and Member State for its own communication strategy and priorities, the three Institutions will, in the framework of the IGI, identify yearly a limited number of common communication priorities;
- these priorities will be based on communication priorities identified by the EU Institutions and bodies following their internal procedures and complementing, where appropriate, Member States' strategic efforts in this field, taking into account citizens' expectations;
- the three Institutions and the Member States will endeavour to promote appropriate support for communication on the priorities identified;
- the services responsible for communication in Member States and EU institutions should liaise with each other to ensure successful implementation of the common communication priorities, as well as other activities linked to EU communication, if need be on the basis of appropriate administrative arrangements;
- the Institutions and Member States are invited to exchange information on other EU related communication activities, in particular on sectoral communication activities envisaged by the Institutions and bodies, when they result in information campaigns in Member States;
- lastly, the Commission is invited to report back at the beginning of each year to the other EU Institutions on the main achievements of the implementation of the common communication priorities of the previous year.

This political declaration was signed on 22 October 2008.