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**COMMUNICATION DE LA COMMISSION AU PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN, AU
CONSEIL, AU COMITÉ ÉCONOMIQUE ET SOCIAL EUROPÉEN ET AU COMITÉ
DES RÉGIONS**

**«Debate Europe» — Exploiter les réalisations du Plan D comme Démocratie, Dialogue et
Débat**

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INTRODUCTION

En juin 2005, le Conseil européen a appelé à une période de réflexion sur la manière de faire progresser la réforme des institutions¹. En réponse à cet appel, la Commission européenne a adopté le “Plan D comme Démocratie, Dialogue et Débat” le 13 octobre 2005². Son objectif consistait à encourager les États membres à organiser un large débat public sur l’avenir de l’Union européenne, en y associant les citoyens, la société civile, les partenaires sociaux, les parlements nationaux et les partis politiques, avec le soutien des institutions de l’UE.

Les principaux leitmotiv du plan D étaient «mieux écouter», «mieux expliquer» et «agir localement» pour associer les citoyens à la réflexion. Cela a donné lieu à une forme de consultation sur l’avenir de l’Europe qui complétait les consultations des parties prenantes et du grand public sur des propositions d’actions spécifiques.

Le plan D a eu comme fer de lance six projets transnationaux de citoyens européens gérés par des organisations de la société civile (annexe 1). Ces projets avaient pour but d’expérimenter des méthodes de consultation novatrices et de permettre à des personnes appartenant à des sphères publiques nationales différentes d’entrer en relation en leur qualité de citoyens européens et de débattre ensemble de l’avenir de l’Union.

En juin 2006, le Conseil européen a salué la contribution de la Commission à la période de réflexion et pris note du fait que l’engagement de l’UE à devenir plus démocratique, transparente et efficace se poursuivrait au-delà de la période de réflexion. Le Conseil a en outre constaté qu’«un dialogue renforcé avec les citoyens requiert des moyens et un engagement adéquats»³ et recommandé de prolonger la période de réflexion en 2007.

La Commission a répondu à cet appel en novembre 2006 en tirant les enseignements de la première année dans une note d’information intitulée «Plan D — Un débat plus large et plus approfondi sur l’Europe»⁴. La Commission a réitéré son attachement aux actions entreprises dans le cadre du plan D. Elle a également décidé de cofinancer une nouvelle série de projets émanant de la société civile et mettant l’accent sur les jeunes, les femmes et sur l’action «sur le terrain».

La période de réflexion a pris fin en juin 2007, lorsque le Conseil européen s’est mis d’accord sur le mandat d’une nouvelle conférence intergouvernementale (CIG) visant à réformer le cadre institutionnel de l’Union. La CIG s’est terminée en octobre et le «traité modificatif» a été signé en décembre 2007 à Lisbonne. Ces événements ont marqué le début d’une nouvelle phase, à savoir la ratification du nouveau traité et les élections européennes de juin 2009. Le Conseil européen a souligné l’importance cruciale de communiquer plus et mieux avec les citoyens en les informant de manière exhaustive sur l’Union européenne et en les associant à un dialogue permanent⁵.

¹ Déclaration des chefs d’État ou de gouvernement des États membres de l’Union européenne sur la ratification du Traité établissant une Constitution pour l’Europe, Conseil européen des 16 et 17 juin 2005, 4^e alinéa.

² COM(2005) 494 du 13.10.2005.

³ Conclusions de la présidence du Conseil européen, 15-16 juin 2006, point 3.

⁴ SEC(2006) 1553.

⁵ SI(2007) 500.

En octobre 2007, la Commission a adopté une communication intitulée «Communiquer sur l'Europe en partenariat»⁶, dont l'objectif global est de renforcer la cohérence et les synergies entre les activités entreprises par les différentes institutions de l'UE et par les États membres de manière à faciliter l'accès des citoyens à celles-ci et à accroître leur compréhension de l'incidence des politiques communautaires aux niveaux local, national et européen.

La présente communication porte sur l'avenir de la stratégie du plan D consistant à «mieux écouter, mieux expliquer et agir localement» appliquée de 2005 à 2007. Cette stratégie sera poursuivie en 2008 et 2009, moyennant certains ajustements, au cours du processus de ratification du traité de Lisbonne et en tenant compte des prochaines élections européennes.

Elle vise à contribuer à l'un des objectifs principaux de la politique de la Commission en matière de communication: impliquer les citoyens en leur donnant l'accès à l'information pour qu'ils soient en mesure de prendre part à un débat bien documenté sur les questions communautaires.

1. ÉVALUATION DU PLAN D — RÉSULTATS ET EXPÉRIENCE

Pour favoriser la mise en place d'une sphère publique européenne, le plan D s'est efforcé de promouvoir un dialogue, tant personnel que virtuel, entre les institutions communautaires et les citoyens de l'Union. Cette démarche s'est avérée particulièrement utile dans le contexte de l'ouverture du débat sur l'avenir de l'Europe à la suite du «non» français et néerlandais au traité établissant une Constitution pour l'Europe.

Parallèlement à d'autres programmes gérés par la Commission et d'autres institutions et organes communautaires, le plan D s'est révélé un instrument indispensable permettant aux organisations de la société civile d'expérimenter des méthodes novatrices d'association des citoyens de tous horizons aux débats sur l'avenir de l'Europe, alliant:

- communication personnelle et virtuelle;
- consultation délibérative et sondage d'opinion;
- consultations aux niveaux national, transnational et paneuropéen.

Les débats virtuels ont eu lieu sur le site Internet «Debate Europe»⁷. Les représentations de la Commission et les centres Europe Direct ont connu un franc succès. Les visites effectuées par les membres de la Commission dans le cadre du plan D ont joué un rôle important dans l'établissement d'un dialogue avec les parlements nationaux, la société civile, les chefs d'entreprises, les dirigeants syndicaux et les pouvoirs publics locaux et régionaux des États membres. Cela a confirmé l'importance des contacts personnels et de la nécessité de «mettre un visage» sur l'UE.

Des projets de la société civile ont notamment été cofinancés par la Commission dans le cadre du plan D. Des citoyens choisis de manière aléatoire se sont rencontrés tant au sein de leur pays que par-delà les frontières nationales. Ils ont reçu les informations utiles (par exemple de la documentation sur les questions à débattre, sous le contrôle d'un panel représentatif de membres du Parlement européen) et les moyens nécessaires pour surmonter les obstacles

⁶ COM(2007) 568 du 3.10.2007.

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/wallstrom/communicating/conference/dialogue/index_fr.htm

linguistiques de manière à pouvoir utiliser leur langue maternelle pendant la totalité du processus de consultation. Ils ont ainsi pu mener des discussions de fond avec les décideurs et formuler des suggestions sur l'avenir de l'UE. Dans l'ensemble, près de 40 000 citoyens ont pris part personnellement aux six projets transnationaux du plan et on estime à plusieurs centaines de milliers les personnes ayant contribué au débat virtuel via Internet. Les organisations de la société civile assurant la gestion des projets ont fait office de multiplicateurs et diffusé les idées des citoyens grâce à leurs réseaux politiques et médiatiques aux différents stades des projets.

Les projets de la société civile relevant du plan D ont montré que la démocratie participative peut compléter utilement la démocratie représentative. Ils ont confirmé les réactions formulées dans le cadre des autres types de programmes menés en faveur des citoyens, à savoir que les activités de consultation offrent aux participants une expérience tant humaine que politique. Indépendamment de leur avis sur l'UE, la position des citoyens a connu une évolution significative au cours des consultations. À l'issue du processus, ils souhaitaient vivement avoir un retour d'information de la part des décideurs, en particulier des institutions et organes communautaires.

C'est la raison pour laquelle la Commission a organisé, en décembre 2007, une conférence de clôture pour les six projets des citoyens du plan D, intitulée «L'avenir de l'Europe - Un projet pour les citoyens». Pour la première fois à l'échelle européenne, les citoyens ayant pris part à un éventail de projets transnationaux de démocratie participative ont eu l'opportunité de faire la synthèse de leurs souhaits et de les soumettre directement aux décideurs.

Ils ont adressé leurs recommandations sous la forme d'une lettre ouverte aux chefs d'État et de gouvernement de l'UE, aux parlements nationaux, aux institutions de l'Union et aux partis politiques européens dans la perspective du Conseil européen de décembre (voir annexe 2). Cette lettre ouverte exhorte les partis politiques à tenir compte de ces recommandations dans leur programme et d'en débattre avec les citoyens au cours de la période précédant les élections au Parlement européen de 2009. La lettre ouverte invite en outre les chefs d'État et de gouvernement de l'UE à favoriser l'émergence d'une citoyenneté européenne active à tous les niveaux de gouvernance.

Les projets des citoyens ont mis en évidence plusieurs façons d'atteindre cet objectif en expérimentant:

- un site web européen de débats virtuels relié à un réseau de sites nationaux secondaires de débats virtuels, conjugué à des débats en face à face organisés à l'échelle nationale ou européenne;
- un site web multilingue et très interactif, dont le contenu était déterminé par les groupes d'intérêt des différents États membres de l'UE et adapté en fonction des réactions émanant des ateliers composés de représentants du public cible;
- des consultations nationales sur les mêmes questions dans tous les États membres, se déroulant quasiment en même temps, aboutissant à une synthèse européenne;
- un sondage délibératif paneuropéen, dans le cadre duquel un échantillon de la population choisi aléatoirement s'est réuni pendant trois jours pour un débat en face à face;
- des débats en face à face organisés dans plusieurs États membres de l'UE, combinés à des sondages et à des enregistrements vidéo d'idées de citoyens.

Ces projets ont prouvé que le développement de la démocratie participative sur des questions en rapport avec l'UE est possible aux niveaux local, régional, national et transnational sur le plan tant qualitatif que logistique.

Quant au fond, ces projets ont mis en évidence l'écart qui existe parfois entre les attentes des citoyens et les domaines de compétence réels de l'UE, par exemple en ce qui concerne les affaires sociales, l'éducation, la diplomatie et la défense. La participation aux consultations a permis aux citoyens de se familiariser davantage avec le processus décisionnel de l'UE. Au terme du processus, ils avaient une idée plus précise de la façon de solliciter les décideurs et de réduire, à l'avenir, le fossé entre ceux-ci et les citoyens.

Des enseignements intéressants peuvent également être tirés des projets sur le plan du calendrier, de la sélection des participants, de la formation des modérateurs, de la logistique des débats multilingues et transnationaux et du type d'informations et de compétences requises pour garantir que les citoyens de toute provenance soient en mesure de prendre part à un débat bien documenté sur les questions communautaires. Un accès aisé aux avis et à l'expertise scientifiques sont notamment indispensables dans les processus participatifs associant des intervenants profanes et des décideurs politiques.

2. LA VOIE À SUIVRE – «DEBATE EUROPE»

Pendant sa première phase, le plan D s'est concentré sur la partie «débat et dialogue» du processus. La continuation du plan D franchira une étape supplémentaire dans ce processus en mettant l'accent sur le volet «D pour démocratie», permettant davantage aux citoyens de soumettre directement leurs souhaits aux décideurs et de mieux tirer parti des médias. C'est la raison pour laquelle cette nouvelle phase prendra le nom du site web de la Commission dédié au plan D, «Debate Europe».

Debate Europe aura les missions suivantes:

1. Exposer les résultats des consultations des citoyens aux décideurs politiques. Les citoyens feront eux-mêmes la synthèse de leurs conclusions, qu'ils transmettront aux élus politiques et aux partis et fondations politiques. Un moment fort de ce processus sera un débat entre citoyens et hommes politiques sur les propositions formulées dans les synthèses des citoyens. Dans ce contexte, *Debate Europe* profitera du nouveau cadre politique et institutionnel européen, y compris le nouveau règlement⁸ relatif au statut et au financement des partis politiques au niveau européen.
2. Mettre en place une coopération étroite et, dans la mesure du possible, une action conjointe entre les institutions et organes communautaires de manière à maximiser l'incidence des efforts déployés pour promouvoir une citoyenneté européenne active (les forums de citoyens, les stratégies de communication du Parlement européen en vue des élections de 2009 et les débats de type «agora» avec des organisations de la société civile, ainsi que les initiatives du Comité des régions et du Comité économique et social).
3. Exploiter au mieux les initiatives communautaires actuelles, dont les programmes de la Commission en faveur de la citoyenneté active – par exemple le programme

⁸ Règlement (CE) n° 1524/2007 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 18 décembre 2007.

«L'Europe pour les citoyens», le Fonds européen d'intégration des ressortissants de pays tiers, les programmes de lutte contre la pauvreté et en faveur de la cohésion sociale, les autres initiatives uniques lancées dans le cadre de l'Année européenne du dialogue interculturel 2008 et de la future Année européenne de la créativité et de l'innovation, ainsi que l'action préparatoire et les activités connexes d'e-Participation et l'initiative e-Inclusion. Ce faisant, *Debate Europe* renforcera les efforts entrepris par la Commission pour expliquer la valeur ajoutée des politiques communautaires aux citoyens (par exemple les réussites du marché intérieur telles que la réduction des frais d'itinérance des téléphones portables, les vols d'avion à bas prix, la réduction des inégalités en matière de développement régional, la protection de l'environnement et la lutte contre le changement climatique).

4. Poursuivre les autres actions probantes du plan D (débats sur Internet qui rapprochent les citoyens des fonctionnaires européens, coopération entre les bureaux d'information de la Commission et du Parlement européen, exploitant les relais d'information communautaire pour «agir au niveau local»).

2.1. Mettre en relation les débats des citoyens avec les instances politiques représentatives

On constate un souhait unanime de combler le fossé entre les politiques décidées aux niveaux national d'une part et européen de l'autre. Les partis politiques européens doivent être soutenus dans leur volonté de prendre part aux débats se déroulant dans leur sphère publique nationale. C'est notamment pendant les campagnes en vue des élections européennes que les questions communautaires doivent occuper le devant de la scène et que les citoyens doivent percevoir les effets, dans leur vie quotidienne, des choix politiques qu'ils opèrent au niveau européen.

Debate Europe fera office de catalyseur au renforcement des initiatives actuelles lancées par la Commission pour combler le fossé évoqué plus haut. *Debate Europe* cofinancera un projet paneuropéen de consultation des citoyens géré par des organisations de la société civile en collaboration avec des laboratoires d'idées, des organisations de recherche, des universités et des partis et fondations politiques. Cette initiative soutiendra en outre des actions aux niveaux local et régional permettant aux citoyens de toutes conditions de débattre, de synthétiser leurs idées, d'en discuter avec les décideurs et de mobiliser les médias.

Debate Europe bénéficiera du nouveau règlement communautaire sur les partis et fondations politiques, qui est l'une des mesures concrètes découlant de la première phase du plan D. Le règlement élargit le champ d'activité des partis politiques européens et soutient la création de fondations politiques européennes, qui contribueront de manière importante à associer les citoyens à un dialogue politique permanent, véritable et bien documenté.

En 2007, ces fondations ont présenté à la Commission des plans d'action visant à lancer une série d'actions pilotes en 2008: sensibiliser les citoyens aux futures élections européennes par des formations, des actions de communication ciblées, des sites Internet, des brochures et la création de réseaux avec des fondations nationales et des laboratoires d'idées. Les fondations politiques seront subventionnées de manière permanente à compter de septembre 2008.

Debate Europe complétera ces activités en invitant les fondations politiques à contribuer aux consultations des citoyens organisées par la société civile.

2.2. Renforcer la coopération avec le Parlement européen

La conférence de décembre 2007 sur le plan D intitulée «L'avenir de l'Europe - Un projet pour les citoyens» a démontré que les institutions communautaires ont une plus grande efficacité lorsqu'elles *unissent leurs forces* et participent *ensemble* à des dialogues avec les citoyens, qui constituent pour elles une occasion de mettre en évidence l'éventail complet de la démocratie de l'UE et qui permet aux citoyens de mieux comprendre le processus décisionnel de l'UE. Cette forme de coopération interinstitutionnelle sera inscrite dans les projets de *Debate Europe* aux niveaux local, régional et européen.

Dans sa stratégie de communication relative aux élections, le Parlement européen appelle de ses vœux une coopération étroite entre les institutions communautaires. *Debate Europe* contribuera à répondre à ce besoin. En effet, la coopération avec le Parlement européen, mais aussi avec le Comité des régions et le Comité économique et social européen, est primordiale lorsqu'il s'agit d'encourager la citoyenneté européenne active. Chaque institution ou organe a acquis une expérience considérable dans l'organisation de forums de citoyens.

La Commission est disposée à collaborer avec les futures présidences européennes désireuses d'organiser des sommets de citoyens avec le concours des différents institutions et organes communautaires, offrant ainsi une plate-forme qui donnera aux décideurs européens un point de vue citoyen sur des questions concrètes.

2.3. Créer des synergies entre les programmes de la Commission

Debate Europe fonctionnera en synergie et de manière complémentaire avec les autres programmes de la Commission destinés à promouvoir une citoyenneté européenne active. Les projets entrepris dans le cadre de *Debate Europe* se distingueront par leur dimension interinstitutionnelle, politique et médiatique – les consultations organisées aux niveaux régional, national et paneuropéen aboutiront à un débat public bien documenté entre les citoyens et les décideurs des États membres et de l'ensemble des institutions de l'UE.

Les cahiers des charges des appels de propositions relatifs à *Debate Europe* feront en sorte que les projets retenus tiennent compte de l'action politique globale de la Commission en faveur de la citoyenneté européenne active, et en particulier:

- le programme «L'Europe pour les citoyens», qui encourage la citoyenneté européenne active en accordant un soutien à toute une série d'acteurs (autorités locales, société civile, organisations professionnelles et associations de consommateurs, citoyens) pour leur permettre d'agir, de débattre, de discuter et de nouer des contacts de différentes manières, tant traditionnelles (jumelage de villes, projets transnationaux de la société civile) qu'innovantes (par exemple les panels de citoyens);
- l'Année européenne du dialogue interculturel en 2008, à laquelle la totalité des institutions et organes de l'UE sont associés, et l'Année européenne de l'innovation et de la créativité en 2009;
- les fondations et partis politiques européens qui s'efforcent, avec l'aide financière de la Communauté, de sensibiliser les citoyens aux prochaines élections européennes;
- le Fonds européen d'intégration des ressortissants de pays tiers. L'intégration des immigrants est un processus qui a vu la mise sur pied de partenariats solides entre les autorités publiques de tous niveaux et des acteurs non gouvernementaux tels que les

employeurs, les syndicats, les organisations religieuses, la société civile, les associations de migrants, les médias et les ONG œuvrant en faveur des migrants;

- l'action préparatoire e-Participation, qui vise à accroître la participation des citoyens aux processus législatif et décisionnel au niveau européen à l'aide des nouvelles technologies. De nouvelles formes d'interaction entre les citoyens et les institutions européennes font actuellement l'objet d'un certain nombre d'essais;
- des activités de recherche et initiatives connexes financées par le septième programme-cadre de recherche dans les domaines de la gouvernance et de la citoyenneté (programme de travail sur les sciences sociales et humaines) et de l'engagement du public en faveur de la science (programme de travail sur la science dans la société)⁹.

2.4. Poursuivre le développement des autres initiatives relevant du plan D

Debate Europe fonctionnera concurremment avec les initiatives en cours dans les États membres, dont beaucoup possèdent un potentiel intéressant en vue d'une coopération interinstitutionnelle, parmi lesquelles:

- les réseaux d'information pilotes (RIP) — ils font déjà l'objet d'une passation de marché. Ils réuniront des parlementaires européens, nationaux et régionaux, des journalistes et d'autres faiseurs d'opinion européens dans le but de partager des informations, des connaissances et des idées sur l'UE. Les RIP rapprocheront le débat européen des parlements nationaux. Ils se serviront d'Internet et d'autres supports et réunions en ligne pour constituer des «réseaux d'idées» et contribuer à mettre en relation les hommes politiques et les médias avec les projets novateurs de la société civile;
- les espaces publics européens — les représentations de la Commission et les bureaux d'information du Parlement européen de Madrid, Tallinn et Dublin ont élaboré conjointement des espaces publics européens qui accueillent des expositions, des débats, des séminaires et des formations sur des questions communautaires. Il est envisagé d'étendre ce projet pilote à d'autres capitales, à commencer par Rome, Londres, Copenhague et Berlin;
- les forums de citoyens — le Parlement européen, le Comité économique et social européen et le Comité des régions organisent des forums de citoyens dans les États membres. *Debate Europe* encouragera les membres des différentes institutions et organes communautaires à se réunir et à intervenir ensemble dans ces forums, conformément au concept de «Table ronde européenne sur la démocratie» instauré par le plan D¹⁰;
- les visites dans les États membres — les visites effectuées par les commissaires européens dans les États membres dans le cadre du plan D ont permis l'établissement d'un dialogue avec les parlements nationaux, les autorités locales et régionales, les médias et la société civile. Des fonctionnaires de la Commission ont été encouragés à rendre visite à leurs anciennes écoles. *Debate Europe* poursuivra le développement de ces contacts «personnels directs», conformément à la stratégie d'adhésion du personnel de la Commission¹¹ qui encourage son personnel à jouer un rôle actif dans le domaine de la communication en qualité d'ambassadeurs de l'institution. Citons par exemple l'opération «Retour à l'école»

⁹ Décision n° 1982/2006/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil, décisions 2006/971/CE et 2006/974/CE du Conseil.

¹⁰ COM(2005) 494, point 4.1.5.

¹¹ SEC(2007) 912.

et le réseau «Enterprise Europe Network». *Debate Europe* encouragera en outre les membres et fonctionnaires des autres institutions et organes communautaires à se joindre à cette initiative;

- une action encore plus locale — les centres Europe Direct, en collaboration avec les représentations de la Commission, ont organisé des débats, des manifestations et des séminaires avec des citoyens dans des localités et villes autres que les capitales des États membres. *Debate Europe* continuera à développer ces activités, en tenant compte du lancement de centres Europe Direct «de deuxième génération» en 2009;
- l'optimisation des sondages Eurobaromètre — ces enquêtes d'opinion de la Commission tiendront compte des résultats des projets de la première phase du plan D, qui ont expérimenté des techniques de sondage délibératives sur l'avenir de l'UE à l'échelle paneuropéenne;
- des débats sur Internet — le site web «Debate Europe» consacré au plan D a été réaménagé en janvier 2008 de manière à renforcer son potentiel de débat interactif avec les internautes sur des questions communautaires d'actualité, avec la participation des représentations de la Commission. Le récent redémarrage des discussions sur Internet sera suivi par des discussions en ligne du même type dans le courant de 2008 et en 2009.

3. APPEL DE PROPOSITIONS ET ACTIONS DÉCENTRALISÉES

Debate Europe veillera à ce que l'action globale de la Commission visant à promouvoir la citoyenneté européenne active devienne une partie intégrante des mesures interinstitutionnelles s'adressant aux décideurs à tous les niveaux de gouvernance.

Une stratégie à deux niveaux, soutenue par un budget de 7,2 millions d'euros, est proposée:

- le niveau paneuropéen: un appel de propositions centralisé pour cofinancer un projet transnational couvrant les 27 États membres et doté d'un budget de 2 millions d'euros;
- le niveau national et régional: des appels et actions décentralisés soutenant financièrement des projets locaux à concurrence de 5,2 millions d'euros au total¹².

Au niveau paneuropéen, le cahier des charges indiquera que, compte tenu de l'expérience acquise lors de la première série de projets transnationaux de démocratie participative, *Debate Europe* assurera les tâches suivantes:

- organiser des consultations de citoyens dans chaque État membre;
- formuler un ensemble commun de conclusions à l'échelle européenne et les transmettre aux organisations politiques européennes;
- engager les citoyens dans un dialogue avec les représentants élus et les organisations politiques européennes, en coopération étroite avec le Parlement européen, le Comité économique et social européen et le Comité des régions.

Au niveau national ou régional, les représentations de la Commission:

- ont programmé quelque 140 actions en 2008 pour stimuler le débat public sur l'UE;

¹² Décision de la Commission C(2008) 924 sur le programme de travail annuel dans le domaine de la communication pour l'année 2008, adoptée par la Commission le 12 mars 2008 (tableau 2.6.2).

- cofinanceront des actions répondant à des besoins spécifiques (ciblant par exemple des écoles et centres de jeunesse, expositions, foires et festivals, conférences, séminaires, manifestations avec des ONG, etc.) par des appels de propositions locaux;
- réaliseront ces actions avec le concours d'autres institutions et organes communautaires, par exemple au travers des espaces publics européens, de l'Année européenne du dialogue interculturel, de l'Année européenne de la créativité et de l'innovation encore en projet et des institutions culturelles nationales de l'UE.

Selon le contexte national, un financement même modeste accordé à des ONG nationales peut engendrer un dialogue constructif sur des questions communautaires. Les représentations de la Commission, en collaboration avec les bureaux d'information du Parlement européen, renforceront le retentissement de ces activités axées sur le dialogue en y associant les autorités locales et régionales.

Ces initiatives pourraient dynamiser les réseaux locaux et régionaux, nouveaux ou existants, et faciliter la diffusion des bonnes pratiques à l'aide des instruments d'e-Participation¹³. Elles pourraient également intéresser les hommes politiques se présentant aux élections européennes, car ils pourraient utiliser ces débats comme base de dialogue avec leurs électeurs.

4. CONCLUSION

Participation des citoyens

L'adhésion du public à l'UE ne peut se construire que par un débat ouvert et animé et par la participation active des citoyens aux questions européennes. Outre les nombreuses consultations des parties prenantes et du grand public organisées sur des sujets spécifiques par la Commission, l'Union a besoin d'une prise de conscience et d'un débat politiques plus larges si elle veut atteindre ses objectifs et mener à bien les politiques appropriées. Tel est l'un des objectifs majeurs de la politique de la Commission en matière de communication¹⁴: *impliquer les citoyens en encourageant la citoyenneté européenne active.*

Mise en relation avec les décideurs politiques

Les partis politiques et leurs élus sont les mieux placés pour aborder les questions européennes dans le débat national et susciter un débat public transnational à travers l'Europe. Il convient de mettre en place des voies de communication transnationales pour promouvoir le débat et le dialogue sur les questions d'intérêt commun figurant parmi les priorités de l'Europe. La Commission a contribué à créer ces vecteurs de communication par des propositions législatives visant à faciliter l'émergence de partis politiques européens, par une série de programmes destinés aux citoyens et d'activités de sensibilisation des ONG ainsi que par le plan D.

À la suite de la série de projets pilotes réalisés, le défi consiste à s'assurer que leurs résultats viennent alimenter le processus de décision politique. La première phase du plan D a confirmé qu'il existe une demande manifeste en faveur de mesures visant à renforcer et

¹³ Tels que ceux décrits par la communauté e-Participation à l'adresse www.epractice.eu.

¹⁴ COM(2007) 568 du 3.10.2007.

élargir le dialogue politique sur les questions européennes et que la démocratie participative peut compléter utilement la démocratie représentative.

Au cours de la prochaine phase, qui couvrira les années 2008 et 2009, et au lendemain des élections européennes, *Debate Europe* procurera un cadre opérationnel permettant de nouer des contacts, d'entrer en relation et d'agir en partenariat. Mais il convient également d'envisager son utilisation à long terme: *Debate Europe* s'efforce de modifier le point de vue selon lequel les questions communautaires sont trop abstraites et déconnectées de la sphère publique nationale pour intéresser les citoyens et il constitue une occasion de briser le cloisonnement souvent artificiel entre les questions nationales et européennes.

- Annexe 1: Descriptions des projets réalisés dans le cadre du plan D
- Annexe 2: Lettre ouverte / recommandations des participants à la conférence de clôture des six projets des citoyens du plan D
- Annexe 3: Projet d'appel de propositions centralisé
- Annexe 4: Projet d'appel de propositions décentralisé

ANNEXE 1

Citizens' consultations projects co-funded by the Commission in the framework of Plan D in 2006-2007 projects

Speak Up Europe

- Co-ordinator: European Movement International
- Amount of the project: EUR 1,039,310.63
- Grant from the EU budget: EUR 719,375.70
- Pan-European
- An integrated approach combining virtual and face to face communication, both on a European level and on a national level.
- Virtual: each partner created a national web site. Web animation (e.g. cartoon "What has Europe ever done for us?").
- Face to face: a series of local, national and European events.
- 27 000 people had taken part physically in the project by the end of September 2007.
- Specific multimedia site targeting youth, called "European Vibes".
- Specific site launched by one of the partners, Euractiv, called "EU debates and opinions" to promote the outcome of Speak Up Europe had received 110 000 viewers by end of September 2007.

European Citizens' Consultations

- Co-ordinator: King Baudouin Foundation
- Amount of the project: EUR 2.715.376,60
- Grant from the EU budget: EUR 1.895.751,95
- Pan-European.
- Deliberative consultation of citizens on a national level, on the basis of an agenda set at European level by a sample of citizens.
- European synthesis of the outcome of the national consultations and a European web site.
- 1 800 citizens participated in the project altogether.
- Feedback from 1 000 out of the 1 800 citizens involved via an evaluation survey.

Tomorrow's Europe

- Co-ordinator: Notre Europe
- Amount of the project: EUR 1.352.500
- Grant from the EU budget: EUR 849.500
- Pan-European
- Europe-wide deliberative poll.
- 3 550 citizens polled on the future of the EU.
- 362 of them were randomly selected to deliberate for three days in Brussels, with the help of experts.

- They filled in a questionnaire at the beginning of the deliberative phase and were polled at the end to measure the evolution of their views.

Our message to Europe

- Co-ordinator: Deutsche Gesellschaft e.V.
- Amount of the project: EUR 358.000,00
- Grant from the EU budget: EUR 250.000,00
- Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland.
- 4 000 participants altogether.
- 70 intensive dialogue events (54 in Germany, 4 in Austria, 4 in Slovakia, 4 in Czech Republic, 4 in Poland) with panel discussions.
- Opinion polls carried out during those events: 2600 people polled altogether, under 21 and over 21.
- In 20 of the events people had the opportunity to have their individual "message to Europe" recorded on video - 300 audiovisual messages collected altogether.

Radio Web Europe

- Co-ordinator: CENASCA-CISL
- Amount of the project: EUR 794.475,03
- Grant from the EU budget: EUR, 556.132,50
- Italy, Lithuania, Austria, UK, Spain, Portugal, Malta.
- Creation of a multimedia and interactive website targeting 18-35 years old. Content determined by face to face meetings with target audience through focus groups (two per country). At a second stage, workshops to collect feedback.
- National reports served as a basis for a synthesis report.
- Users can view and download audiovisual products and post their own (comments, videos, interviews, games, cartoons...). At the end of the project, website hosted 200 multimedia products. Average number of monthly visits: 5 000.

Our Europe-Our Debate-Our Contribution

- Co-ordinator: European House Budapest
- Amount of the project: EUR 364.000
- Grant from the EU budget: EUR 254.500
- Hungary, Austria, Italy, Slovakia and Slovenia.
- Fostering debate at grass-root level by meeting people in the streets and public transport, asking them to reply to a questionnaire (also posted on the project's English-language website).
- A "regional events" dimension (face to face meetings).
- A European bus touring the five countries, displaying a "European labyrinth" at every stop which people were invited to enter with a "European passport". People's views were recorded on video at every stop.
- The aim was to collect 2 500 people's views on Europe either through the questionnaire or by video.

Projects co-funded by the Commission Representations in the framework of Plan D in 2007-2008

Representation	Project
Bulgaria	Regional Dialog Open Forum: Women for Social Inclusion
	The Tender Europe: targeting more marginalised social groups – meetings and debates in schools, youth organisations, municipalities, chambers of commerce etc.
	An Investment for Creating Qualified and Internationally Educated Young People Corresponding to the Requirements of the European Single Market: Advertise the possibilities provided through European funding under the ERASMUS Program.
	No to Discrimination in United Europe: Let us Talk about the Different! Civic debate on issues related to discrimination and dissemination of EU best practices in the field of anti-discrimination measures in the cross-border region Svishtov (BG) - Zimnitch (RO).
Czech Republic	Gender Studies OPS: Flexicurity/labour market/ professional-private life - survey, video, discussions, leaflets, audit of pre-school establishments.
	Klub mladých Evropanu, o.s.: Generation EU: Target group - young people 15-19years. Workshops on labour market, education, security, freedom, future, European social model, European identity/values, 1 national conference.
Denmark	Your Europe
	Food Safety in the Consumers' EU
	Gender Divided Labour Market and Violence against Women
	Global Citizen and EU
	The Model Parliament
Estonia	Federation of Estonian student unions - Estonia in the EU's higher educational system (seminars, conference, articles in student press, discussions on internet forums, publication).
	Junior Achievement Estonia - Youth Entrepreneurship Conference on gender equality Project activities.
	NGO umbrella organisation in Viljandi - promotion of equal opportunities of local level citizens in the EU (conference, seminars, youth forum, study visit to Finnish rural areas).

France Paris	Europe , the future and citizenship in the Aquitaine region.
	Brittany youth's contribution to a European strategy to limit the scale of climate change.
	Know more about Europe to understand it better.
	Young European prize.
	Les Eurois, citizens of Europe.
	Europe for and by the young.
	A silent majority: women in the EU. Awareness raising among women, a major stake for the future of Europe.
	Etats généraux de l'Europe.
	Etats généraux de l'Europe.
	Deedale – Vendée region.
Hungary	Launch of the Hungarian chapter of the European Youth Parliament (Pillar Foundation)
	National consultation of women (Partners Hungary Foundation)
	Climate Change Youth Campaign (WWF Hungary)
Ireland	Institute of European Affairs (Future of Europe including immigration; crime and terror; climate change; Reform Treaty; Citizens Europe; EU@50; What has Europe done for citizens; use of overall theme "Europe 2.0". Use of web based products to widen and deepen the debate; meetings and debates across colleges, and other centres; production and dissemination of publications; explaining the new Treaty to different groups and especially the target groups; specifically target young professionals. Virtual tools and meetings, debates, high visibility events; dedicated Europe 2.0 website; podcasts; production of "6 Pack" information items for use with the target groups; production of a book "What the Reform Treaty Means", pamphlets; Young Professional network; high profile discussions and debates.
	Irish Countrywomen's Association (ICA) : legal rights in Europe; Irish farm Families; Quality of Life in Europe; Migration; Social Reality. Regional Seminars; training of co-ordinators; use of co-ordinators for training and organisation of seminars; use of expert speakers. Focus is on 16,000 families.
Latvia	Regional debates on social reality
	Youth observers in local and district authorities on cohesion and regional policy
	Training of multipliers - schoolchildren and teachers - on corruption and transparency issues

Malta	Fondazzjoni Temi Zammit
Portugal	Porto, Coimbra, Santarém, Évora and Faro Environment protection / Energy- Youth
	National: Future of Europe; Europe in the world; Migrations; Security - Youth
	All islands of the archipelago of Azores European integration; Future of Europe; Europe in the world
	Vila Real district Prosperity; Solidarity; Security and Freedom e Liberdade; Future of Europe; Europe in the world
	Beira Interior Solidarity – European Year Equality; European Year of Intercultural Dialogue; Cohesion and Rural Development Sept.2007 to August 2008
Spain Madrid - Barcelona	Fundación Ciudadanía Euro activos. ex:talleres para jóvenes que quieren darle la vuelta a Europa
	Europa Action and Lobby Development of a multilingual forum.
	Infocentro de Zaragoza Europa Joven, 50 años de logros
	Casal d'Europa de Sabadell Euroaptive,T
The Netherlands	Communicado Foundation Le Camping: Development of a pilot episode for six broadcastings for NL school TV. EU is visualised as a campsite; Member States are tents with their habitants. EU cooperation issues (enlargement, environment etc..) are explained through interaction of the actors in a comprehensible and educational way.
	ETV NL Europe is Fun! : Production of an educational project for secondary education scholars. A competition for digital EU stories, study materials and teachers training.
	Stichting Eggietalk (io) Eggietalk. Communication translation programme: pupils can communicate in their own language with pupils in other EU languages.
	Click on Europe. "Debatainment" with website and educational material for lower secondary education. Organisation aims at stimulating hard-to-reach target group to debate Europe in a competitive way.
	Nationaal oorlogsmuseum/ CHO Consultants Freedom and Democracy: Fundamental rights in Europe. Creating awareness and stimulating debate among youth in the national war museum. Electronic info pillars will be placed in the museum (including a voting system), and a website will be launched with small clips on 4 basic rights.

	<p>Passage Christelijk-Maatschappelijke Vrouwenbeweging Living together in Europe: Project proposed by the 4 largest woman movements in NL combined. The target group is approximately 120.000 female members, including many housewives. Newsletter, symposium, study days and an EU crafts contest. spin-off through family, friends etc. Create awareness of European issues among the members and to promote woman participation (use of voting right) in the 2009 European Parliament elections.</p>
	<p>Nationale Jeugdraad All about Europe.nl: website aiming at providing youth with a complete overview of the EU, to facilitate a structured dialogue. Bundle all relevant info for youth in one website. Nationale Jeugdraad (National Youthcouncil) portal website: Allesovereuropa.nl. This portal will bundle all relevant EU information for youth and youngsters in an understandable manner. Advertising campaign.</p>
	<p>CED Groep Europe in the news: 8 special topics on the EU. Communication with pupils in other EU countries. EU section added to existing website. Website is part of "learning by discussing/debating" teaching method.</p>
<p>United Kingdom London</p>	<p>Women in Northern Ireland – Connecting to Europe. Northern Ireland Women's European Platform. The platform aims to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of women in Northern Ireland including the advancement of their education and development.</p>
	<p>My Voice in Europe The Community Development Foundation is a leading source of intelligence, guidance and delivery on community development in England and across the UK. The overall aim of the European and International Unit of CDF is to link and feed into practice and policy within the European and International arena by acting as a bridge between the UK and relevant international mechanisms.</p>
	<p>Voicing young people's views on climate change Inspire, support and celebrate young people as agents for change in society. Their aim is to create a generation of young, active citizens, drawn from all sectors of the UK population who will be a force for change in achieving global social and environmental justice.</p>
	<p>Flexicurity: young workers' views in a cohesion region Bevan Foundation, at the forefront of new thinking about achieving a fair and just Wales by carrying out research, organising conferences and debates, and by publishing articles and reports.</p>
	<p>Fem e-U Link, FATIMA Women's Network Innovation Centre. Fatima is a socially responsible minority ethnic-led organisation supporting the social and economic empowerment of all women through inter alia personal development, education and training, networking and engagement, as well as research and consultation.</p>
	<p>Forward Ladies Limited Non-profit business support network for women -networking opportunities, inspirational speakers, training, mentoring, coaching, business support and facilitates international trade missions.</p>

People and Politics Day-Europe: promoting democracy and active citizenship. Research, conferences, reports, promotion of democratic change.

Decentralised communication actions planned by Commission Representations in 2008

Plan D decentralised actions planned for 2008					
Action type		Member State	Associated communication priority	€	
1. Local calls	Programmed	UK	Energy & CC	150 000	
		Italy	Intercultural Dialogue	150 000	
		Netherlands	None	142 000	
		Austria		203 000	
		Germany		200 000	
		Sub-total			845 000
	To be programmed	Amounts confirmed	Netherlands	None	258 000
			Malta		150 000
			Germany		100 000
			Slovakia		50 000
			Czech Rep.		50 000
			Lithuania		20 000
		Sub-total			628 000
		Amounts TBC	Latvia	None	TBC
			Slovenia	Reform Treaty	TBC
Total				1 473 000	
2. Other actions				3 429 867	
Total Plan D	Allocated			5 200 000	
	Requested			4 902 867	

ANNEXE 2

Open letter / recommendations from the participants at the concluding conference of the six Plan D citizens' projects

The future of Europe-the citizens' agenda

Open letter to the EU Heads of State and Government, the National Parliaments, the European Union Institutions and European political parties

Brussels, 9 December 2007

Next week, the Heads of State and Government of the European Union will sign the Lisbon Treaty. The EU celebrated its 50th Anniversary this year. Since 1957, the European Union has progressed from economic cooperation to a political union that affects the lives of almost 500 million citizens. This evolution also brings responsibilities for the political leaders of Europe. The permissive consensus that existed at the beginning has to be turned into an actively earned consensus in dialogue with the European citizens.

Associating citizens to the European construction is more than ever a fundamental issue. If we do not want the citizens to desert once more the European elections in 2009, political leaders need to regain the citizens' trust and confidence in the European project and show they care about citizens' involvement in the decision-making machine.

Plan D launched by Commission Vice-President Margot Wallström responded to this challenge in a novel manner. It co-financed a series of projects to learn how ordinary citizens can be involved in the EU decision-making and how they view the EU's future. This exercise responds to a basic value of the EU in the 21st century: active citizenship.

The European Movement International, the King Baudouin Foundation, Notre Europe, Deutsche Gesellschaft, European House Budapest and CENASCA-CISL, with a large network of partners across Europe have engaged actively in Plan D. A series of grass roots debates, consultations, polls and events aimed at consulting citizens on their visions of Europe have been carried out in a number of Member States, while deliberative polling and consultation has taken place on a pan-European scale.

Thousands of citizens took part in those projects throughout the European Union in 2007. Over 250 of them have assembled in Brussels on 8 and 9 December to debate on the major concerns which have emerged through Plan D. There was a clear consensus among participants that more opportunities of this kind should be provided to involve citizens in the debate over Europe's future.

They have structured these concerns into three themes:

1. The human aspects of globalisation
2. Enlargement, political integration and EU citizenship
3. The EU's role on the world stage.

They have consolidated their conclusions into a single set of recommendations (annexed to this letter).

They have debated those recommendations with decision-makers representing the EU institutions as well as the present Portuguese and future Slovenian Presidencies of the EU:

- Mrs. Margot Wallström, Vice-President, European Commission.
- Mrs Jillian van Turnhout, Vice-President, European Economic and Social Committee.
- Mr. Ivo Opstelten, Mayor of Rotterdam, Member of the Committee of Regions,

- Mr. Pierre Jonckheer, Member of the European Parliament
- Mr. Valter Lemos, Portuguese Secretary of State for Education,
- Ambassador Igor Sencar, Permanent Representative of Slovenia.

They call on the European political parties to address those recommendations in their programmes and to discuss them with citizens in view of the elections to European Parliament in 2009.

They call upon the EU Heads of State and Government, both in their capacity as European but also as national leaders, to heed those recommendations and thereby encourage the development of active European citizenship, without which there cannot be a truly political Union.

They call for the dialogue with citizens on European issues to be continued and deepened in the future.

The participants to the conference on "The future of Europe-the citizens' agenda

Twenty–seven recommendations

1.

As work is considered a crucial dimension for individual emancipation, the **welfare systems** should protect citizens' life conditions during periods of transition for example by providing people with an unemployment indemnity when changing jobs.

2.

Citizens expect more action from the EU in the area of **social policy and social cohesion** in order to fight the black market, reduce salary gaps, promote gender-equality, ease unemployment and to make it attractive to work longer before retiring.

3.

The EU should promote **equal rights, comparable standard of living** in all EU member states and foster equal opportunities through harmonised social and economic policies and a welfare model for all member states.

4.

*The Member States and the EU should make sure that **migrants** enjoy equal rights and opportunities and have access to education and work if they observe the laws, rules and values of the host country and commit to learning the language.*

5.

The **European migration policy**, so far based only on restrictive measures, should adopt a more sophisticated approach aiming at the social and economic development of the involved countries. The EU needs to clarify its approach to economic refugee status.

6.

Migration needs to be acknowledged as one of today's most pressing issues, and cannot be tackled without a coherent development aid strategy.

7.

*The EU should ensure that part of each country's national curriculum, in both **schools and universities**, requires a section on Democracy and European Citizenship, to ensure a greater understanding of the EU, its history, and its opportunities.*

8.

The EU should show more commitment to educational promotion in general but also specifically regarding European issues, e.g. through the expansion of existing educational EU programmes or the

establishment of new EU programmes as well as the incorporation of the European integration process as a central topic in the national school curricula.

9.

Exchange projects need further support to encourage young people to recognise the importance of their EU citizenship in the global context.

10.

The EU should help preserving, appreciating and respecting the **diversity** of peoples, knowledge, customs and languages identities - while recognising common and shared European values.

11.

Integration strategies such as the **educational policy** incorporating the EU into school curricula will favour the development of a European identity.

12.

The EU should prioritise creating and communicating a **new ‘memory’ about Europe**, to move away from the stereotypes associated with certain countries and history, so that all citizens can be valued and we can understand each other better.

13.

*The EU should increase opportunities for a more active, **direct participation of European citizens** from all walks of life in policy-making through regular citizen Plan D-type participatory projects, debates, public hearings, etc. at EU but also at regional and national levels. More transparency-more influence for European citizens!*

14.

*The EU should make sure that the **current citizen recommendations** are considered and discussed not only by the EU but also national policy-makers or become part of existing policy-making processes (e.g. impact assessments, public consultations). The EU should not only listen but also learn.*

15.

The EU should become more interactive, citizen friendly and inclusive, recognising the growing significance of regional approach and identity. New and innovative information technique should be used to improve communication with citizens especially young people. Specific attention has to be paid to the frequently neglected gender issues.

16.

***Climate change and energy security** cannot successfully be dealt with at the national level alone. The EU should be given stronger powers to develop a common energy policy and ensure that Member States live up to the commitments they have made at European level.*

17.

In a global world, it makes sense for the EU to take greater responsibility than today in the fields of **military action, foreign aid and diplomatic relations**. The EU should be able to speak with one voice on a global level to defend its values.

18.

The EU can be more efficient than national governments in **security, police and struggle against drugs traffic and cartels**.

19.

The EU should lead the world in **protecting the environment** and promoting clean energy.

20.

Europe should develop a strong voice on the global stage with **common foreign and security policies that promote peace**, security in regional conflicts democracy and the respect for human rights providing for a strong role model across the world, whilst recognizing the importance of the nation state.

21.

The EU should show **a united front in international affairs**; the current practice is influenced too much by national short-term interests and considerations.

22.

The EU should tackle the impact of Europe's energy use on both the economy and the environment and foster the transition to environmentally clean, safe and sustainable energy sources.

23.

European citizens want the EU to **take the lead when it comes to social, energy and environmental standards** on a global level.

24.

The EU should develop **specific educational and action-oriented programmes for citizens on global issues** such as trade, energy and the environment.

25.

The EU should **coordinate its aid programmes with NGOs** engaged in humanitarian work to bring timely and efficient relief to crisis regions or to promote sustainable development.

26.

The EU should **lower barriers to international trade** as, overall, freer trade benefits developed and developing countries.

27.

The EU should show **more commitment in the fields of international peacekeeping** as well as humanitarian aid during catastrophes.

ANNEXE 3

CENTRAL CALL FOR PROPOSALS - DG COMM No < A2-1/2008 >

Financial support for an initiative emanating from organisations with a significant trans-national dimension as provided by the European Commission's Debate Europe Communication

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

On 13 October 2005 the Commission approved its Communication to the Council, to the European Parliament, to the European Economic and Social Committee and to the Committee of the Regions: Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate.

This was a listening exercise so that the European Union can act on the concerns expressed by its citizens. The Commission aimed to stimulate debate and widen recognition for the added value that the E U provides.

It was a two-way process which:

- informed the public about the EU's role, with examples of its projects and achievements,
- identified their expectations for the future in return.

On 29 November 2006 Vice President Wallström presented an information note to the College of Commissioners on Plan D – Widen & deepen the debate. The purpose of this was to take stock and further widen and deepen the debate in the period of reflection.

On 2 April 2008, the Commission adopted a Communication to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled "Debate Europe-building on the experience of Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate". It noted that the first phase Plan D focused on the "debate and dialogue" part of the process. The next phase of Plan D will take this process one step further and focus on "D for democracy", further enabling citizens to articulate their wishes directly to decision-makers and making better use of the media in the process. This new phase has been named "Debate Europe".

In October 2005 the Commission launched a series of Europe-wide civil society projects for 2006, which it co-financed. In 2007, it promoted a further series of initiatives, targeting young people and women in particular.

2. OBJECTIVES

One of the key lessons from this first round of projects and the concluding conference of Plan D is that the interface between citizens and EU decision-makers needs to be strengthened to ensure that issues of interest and concern Europe-wide are debated and addressed at a European level. There is a need to communicate those Europe-wide issues and concerns which affect to a large degree all of Europe's citizens identified from consulting on a pan-

European basis and to communicate these to European political decision-makers and media especially in view of the June 2009 European elections.

As a result, the Commission wishes to strengthen the existing debate about the future of Europe and its impact on citizens' daily lives by launching one or more pan-European projects with the following objectives:

In a first phase;

- Carry out a Europe-wide dialogue between citizens, political decision-makers and other key opinion formers through a series of debates/conferences/consultations and other events, with a view to ascertaining citizens' principal issues and concerns at a European level which touch their daily lives. This dialogue will ensure a close involvement of the other EU institutions (EP, EESC, COR) and European political parties' foundations.
- The conclusions arising from these events should be synthesised and made public. At a concluding event they should be presented to European decision makers to give them the opportunity to react and take into account the concerns of the European electorate. This phase of the project should be completed ideally before the June 2009 European elections.

In a second phase, the contractor could continue with a series of meetings with newly-elected MEPs and representatives from the principal European media (television, radio, press).

In carrying out both phases, the contractor will take into account the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue and on-going Commission programmes such as Europe for Citizens and e-Participation.

The resulting projects will involve consortia of civil society organisations with a view to replying to these objectives on a Europe-wide scale. These consultations will complement those planned to be held at local level designed to address concerns focused on European issues with a more local impact.

3. TIMETABLE

3.1. Submission of applications

Publication of call beginning April 2008.

Applications must be submitted by end June 2008 at the latest.

Contracts will be signed September 2008.

Please read carefully section 10 of this call for proposals concerning the procedures for submitting applications.

3.2. Duration of projects

The project should begin between 1 September and 1 October 2008 and will be in two phases as described above.

The first phase will be completed by mid-May 2009 (before the European elections) and the second phase by 1 November 2009.

Applications must clearly state the project's starting and finishing dates (dd/mm/yy).

The maximum duration of projects is 14 months.

However, if, after the signing of the agreement and the start of the project, the beneficiary observes that, for fully justified reasons beyond his control, it becomes impossible to complete the project within the scheduled period, an extension to the eligibility period may be granted. A maximum extension of 3 months will be granted, provided that this is requested before the deadline specified in the grant agreement. The maximum duration will then be 18 months.

The period of eligibility of expenditure resulting from implementation of a project will begin on the day of signature of the grant contract by the last of the parties. If the nature of the project requires the project to start before the contract is signed, expenditure may be considered eligible before the signature of the contract. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application.

3.3. Information on the results of the selection

It is planned that applicants will be informed of the outcome of the selection procedure in July 2008.

The lists of selected projects will be published on the following website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/communication/grants/index_en.htm

Applicants whose applications have not been selected will be informed in writing.

4. FINANCING

The budget initially available for part-financing projects is estimated at € 2 000 000.

If during the 2008 budget year, additional amounts are allocated to boost the initial budget for this call for proposals, they might be allocated to co-financing projects which were adopted at the selection phase but not given priority for co-financing in the overall budget initially available. The Commission therefore reserves the right to set up a “reserve list” of proposals evaluated positively in order to take account of the resources actually available in the 2008 budget.

The grant awarded may not exceed 70% of the total eligible project costs.

Community contributions are meant to facilitate the implementation of a project which could not otherwise be implemented easily without the support of the European Union. They are based on the co-financing principle.

Consequently, a minimum of 30% of the total estimated eligible expenditure of the project must come from sources other than the European Union budget. Applicants must include evidence that co-financing is available (secured) for the remainder of the total cost of the project.

The Commission intends to finance 1 to 2 projects for a budget of € 1 or € 2 million in total..

The European Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

The amount allocated by the Commission may not in any circumstances exceed the amount requested. Moreover, the Commission reserves the right to award a grant lower than the amount requested by the applicant.

An organisation is not entitled to receive more than one grant from the Commission for the action covered by the selected project.

After approval by the Commission, a “grant contract”, a draft of which is reproduced at Annex VI, expressed in euros and specifying the conditions and the financing level, will be concluded between the Commission and the beneficiary. The originals of the finance contract must be signed and returned to the Commission immediately for signature. The Commission will be the last party to sign.

The payment methods are detailed in the draft contract (Article I.4), with a list of eligible and ineligible costs (Article II.14 of the general conditions and Article I.3 of the special conditions of the grant contract).

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applications which comply with the following criteria will be the subject of an in-depth evaluation.

5.1 Eligible countries

Grant applications are eligible if they are presented by organisations having a legal status and established in one of the 27 Member States.

Organisations established in countries other than the countries listed above are not eligible.

5.2 Types of cooperation eligible

The types of cooperation eligible include partnerships. The term partnership/partners implies full or partial active intellectual collaboration in the execution of the project. In no case will financial support alone (sponsorship) be deemed to constitute a partnership. However, any financial support accompanied by active intellectual collaboration in the execution of the project will be accepted as a partnership. In all cases, the purpose of partnership is to add value to the project.

6. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants must certify on their honour, by signing the application form, that they are not in one of the situations mentioned in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002), which are listed below.

Applicants will be excluded from participating in this call for proposals if they are in one of the following situations:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of res judicata;
- c) they have committed serious professional misconduct recorded by any means that awarding authorities can justify;
- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

Applicants will not receive financial support if, during the grant allocation procedure:

- a) they are subject to a conflict of interests;
- b) they are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the European Commission as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure, or fail to supply this information.

In accordance with Articles 93 to 96 of the Financial Regulation, administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants who are guilty of misrepresentation or are found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations under a previous contract award procedure.

To respect these provisions, the applicant and his partners must provide evidence that they are in none of the situations listed in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation.

7. SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria are designed to demonstrate the applicant's capacity to see the project through to a successful conclusion.

Applicants must provide evidence of stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain the activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out and/or grant-aided,

as well as evidence of their financial participation. The applicant must also provide evidence of professional competencies, qualifications and/or experience relevant to the proposed project.

7.1 Technical capacity

Candidates must show that they have the operational (technical and management) capacity needed to complete the proposed action and provide evidence of their capacity to direct a large-scale activity corresponding to the dimension of the project for which the grant is requested. Particular attention will be devoted to the capacity for integration in society in the Member States, to the mobilisation of the public and to the analysis of their contributions. The capacity to operate in a large number of Member States (ideally in all of them) would be an advantage.

Applicants must attach to the grant application a curriculum vitae for the project leader and for the personnel of their organisation who will actually do the work. They must also enclose a recent activity report .

7.2 Financial resources

In order to permit assessment of this criterion, applicants must submit with their application the following documents:

- annual accounts for the last complete financial year;
- the “financial identification” form (bank details) (Annex III), completed by the beneficiary and certified by the bank (with original signatures).

If, on the basis of the submitted documents, the Commission assesses that the financial capacity of the applicant is not sufficient, it may:

- reject the request for a Community grant;
- ask for further information;
- ask for the deposit of a guarantee;
- propose a grant agreement without a pre-financing payment.

7.3 Audit

Where the cost of the project to be financed exceeds €300 000, the grant application must be accompanied by an external audit report produced by an approved auditor.

This report must certify the accounts for the last year available and give an assessment of the applicant’s financial viability.

8. AWARD CRITERIA

Account will also be taken of other Commission programmes such as the European Year for Intercultural Dialogue in 2008, Europe for Citizens and INTI (Integration of Third-Country Nationals).

Eligible projects will be evaluated on the basis of:

- a) the consistency of the overall concept of the project with the objectives of Debate Europe, as described at point 2 of the call for proposals;
- b) the quality of the work programme and the *modus operandi*;
- c) the dynamics of networking and the establishment of pan-European cooperation;
- d) the capacity of the project to:
 - act in the largest number of Member States as possible, and ideally in all 27;
 - involve the largest number of citizens as possible;
 - ensure their diversity of origin and their representativeness;
 - provide for the use of the largest number of national languages possible;
 - generate transnational results;
- e) the likely multiplier effect through the media and civil society networks, as calculated on the basis of the measures proposed to give visibility to the project and its outcomes;
- f) the system of feedback to European political decision-makers and citizens involved, as recommended by Debate Europe;
- g) the mechanism for evaluation of the objectives pursued by the project.

9. PUBLICITY

Provided the successful tenderer agrees (unless the publication of information is likely to endanger the successful tenderer's safety or harm his interests), the Commission will publish the following information in whatever form and on whatever medium it wishes, including the Internet:

- the name and address of each beneficiary;
- the subject of the grant;
- amount awarded and rate of funding.

10. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

10.1 Publication

The text of the call for proposals, the annexes and, for information purposes, a copy of the standard agreement can be obtained from the Europa website at the following address:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/communication/grants/index_en.htm

10.2 Application form

Applications must be presented in one of the official languages of the EU.

Since the call is addressed first of all to organisations operating in several Member States, DG Communication would, however, appreciate it if grant applications (which must be made out on the 2006 form devised for the purpose) are accompanied by a version in one of the European Commission's working languages (French, English or German).

This form can be downloaded from the above Internet address.

Only grant applications submitted on the application forms attached to this call for proposals and comprising all the necessary documents mentioned in Annex D will be considered.

Applications must be:

- typed; hand-written applications will not be accepted;
- duly dated, filled in and signed by the legal representative of the organisation;
- sent in quadruplicate (the original, which must be identified as such, plus three copies).

10.3 Submission of the application

Deadline for the submission of applications: end May/early June 2008

Applications submitted after will not be considered.

Applications may be submitted in one of the following ways:

Proposals must be submitted on paper:

- by registered post to the following address, for which purposes the relevant date is to be the date of dispatch by post, as evidenced by the postmark or the registered delivery receipt issued by the postal services:

European Commission
Directorate-General COMMUNICATION
Unit A2 (Communication: planning and priorities)
Debate EuropeOffice BERL 5/234
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

- by hand delivery or courier service.

For security reasons, applications submitted personally or conveyed by a courier service can be presented only to the Commission's Central Mail Department (Rue de Genève 1, 1140 Evere, Belgium), and envelopes must be marked " DG COMMUNICATION, Unit A2 (Communication: planning and priorities), BERL 05/234 – Debate Europe Project". In the event of hand delivery, the submission date is the date of receipt. In the event of delivery by a courier service, the submission date is the date of receipt by the mail department.

Applications submitted by fax or e-mail will not be considered.

No modification of the application will be authorised after the submission of the application and its annexes. However, the Commission reserves the right to request any additional information needed for it to take a final decision on the award of financial support.

Applicants will be informed in writing when their application is received.

Only applications complying with the eligibility and exclusion criteria will be considered for the possible award of a grant.

Applicants whose applications are judged to be ineligible will be notified by mail, with an explanation as to why they were judged ineligible.

Tenderers will be informed, as soon as possible, of the decision taken by

the Commission on their grant application. No information will be released until the Commission's decision on project selection has been taken.

All selected applications will be subject to technical and financial analysis. In this connection the Commission may ask the applicant organisation for supplementary information, or possibly for guarantees.

Any applicant whose application for a Community grant is not accepted will be informed in writing.

10.4 Legal framework

- European commission Communication datedMarch 2008 (Comm): "Debate Europe-building on the experience of Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate".
- European Commission Communication dated 13 October 2005 (COM(2005) 494 final): The Commission's contribution to the period of reflection and beyond: Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate
- European Commission Communication dated 03 October 2007 (COM(2007) XXX final): Communicating Europe in Partnership
- OJ L 248, 16.9.2002 (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities)
- OJ L 357, 31.12.2002 (Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities)

10.5 Contacts

The Commission department responsible for the implementation and management of call for proposals DG COMM No A2-1/2006 is Unit A2 (Communication: planning and priorities) of Directorate-General Communication (COMM).

Additional information can be obtained by electronic mail or by fax, either at the electronic address COMM-A2@cec.eu.int , or by fax number from ++ 32 2 295 24 69 , indicating clearly the reference of this call for proposals.

Annexes:

Annex A: Daily allowance scale

Annex B: Contractual obligations

Annex C: Text of the banking guarantee to be completed (only on request)

Annex D: Application checklist

Annex I: Application form (parts A and B)

Annex II: Budget form

Annex III: Financial identification form

Annex IV: Financial capacity form

Annex V: Legal entity form

Annex VI: Draft contract (for information)

Annex VII: Acknowledgement of receipt of the application

ANNEXE 4

CALL FOR PROPOSALS MANAGED BY EUROPEAN COMMISSION REPRESENTATIONS IN EU MEMBER STATES (LOCAL CALL)

- DG COMM No xxxxxx, EC Representation xxxxxxxx

**Grants for local and national civil society initiatives
to promote public debate about European issues
- part of the European Commission's "Debate Europe" initiative**

1. BACKGROUND

On 13 October 2005 the Commission approved its Communication to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled "Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate".

This was a listening exercise to enable the European Union (EU) to act on citizens' concerns. The Commission aimed to stimulate debate and widen recognition for the added value that the EU provides.

It was to be a two-way process which:

- informed the public about the EU's role, with examples of its projects and achievements,
- identified their expectations for the future in return.

On 29 November 2006 Vice President Wallström presented a note to the Commissioners entitled, "Plan D – Widen & Deepen the Debate". Its purpose was to take stock and further widen and deepen the debate in the period of reflection. The note is publicly available and has been sent to Member States and other EU institutions.

On 2 April 2008, the Commission adopted a Communication to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled "Debate Europe - Building on the Experience of Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate". It noted that the first phase of Plan D focused on the "debate and dialogue" part of the process. The next phase of Plan D will take this process one step further and focus on "D for democracy", further enabling citizens to articulate their wishes directly to decision-makers and making better use of the media in the process. This new phase has been named "Debate Europe".

In October 2005 the Commission launched a series of Europe-wide civil society projects¹⁵ for 2006, which it co-financed. In 2007, it promoted a further series of initiatives, targeting young people and women in particular.

¹⁵ "Tomorrow's Europe" introduced by the foundation "Notre Europe" (Paris)
<http://www.notre-europe.eu/>
"European Citizens' Consultations" introduced by the "King Baudouin Foundation" (Brussels)
<http://www.european-citizens-consultations.eu>
"Speak up Europe" introduced by the "European Movement International" (Brussels)
http://www.europeanmovement.org/emailing/newsletter/speakupeurope_briefing_nonote.pdf

Drawing on this experience, the Commission, through its Representations in EU Member States, will offer grants in each Member State for civil society initiatives focusing on "Debate Europe" priority issues¹⁶. These are:

- Priority issue 1: involvement of citizens with political decision-makers;
- Priority issue 2: joint action between EU institutions and bodies to promote active citizenship.

Differences in economic, social and other aspects of national life greatly affect the public's attitudes to the EU and to particular European issues. So the new round of local calls will therefore be **tailored to each Member State's needs**.

The Commission's Representations will help define the content, and manage and follow up the calls. Depending on the national context, even limited funding for country-level NGOs could result in a fruitful debate **on EU issues**.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1. General

The Commission wishes to help fund national and regional initiatives by civil society organisations to:

- solicit citizens' views on European issues which have a direct impact, locally and nationally, on their daily lives; and
- encourage citizens to become more informed about these issues, and to discuss and debate them with local opinion-formers.

"Our message to Europe" introduced by the Deutsche Gesellschaft (Berlin)

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/grants/index_fr.htm

"Radio Web Europe" introduced by CENASCA (Rome)

<http://www.cenasca.cisl.it/entra.htm>

"Our Europe – Our Debate – Our Contributions" introduced by the European House (Budapest)

<http://www.europeanhouse.hu/>

All data on the 6 Plan D projects are summarized at the following address:

http://europa.eu/debateeurope/paneurope_en.htm

¹⁶ Priorities specified in the Commission's communication entitled "Debate Europe - Building on the Experience of Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate"(2 April 2008) and in its 2008 annual work programme.

These initiatives will:

- facilitate dialogue between citizens, national and/or local political decision-makers and opinion-formers through debates, conferences, consultations and/or other events;
- closely involve local members of:
 - the European Parliament, European Economic and Social Committee, and Committee of the Regions, and
 - European political parties, and those parties' foundations
- collate and publish these events' conclusions to:
 - identify specific European issues which matter to people in their particular local/national environment;
 - raise local media and politicians' interest in the debate on Europe;
 - increase understanding of the EU's impact on citizens' everyday life;
- create networks of participatory democracy which integrate the European dimension of local/regional/national debates;
- complement:
 - Commission Representations' other initiatives to target local constituencies;
 - current EU programmes with similar goals, including:
 - the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (EYID) 2008
 - Europe for Citizens
 - e-Participation
 - Integration of Third Country Nationals (INTI).
- be tailored to meet each Member State's specific needs.

2.2. Detailed

2.2.1. Form

Projects can:

- take many different forms – from public debates to online fora.
- be combined with events targeting the public
 - schools and youth centres,
 - exhibitions,
 - fairs and festivals,
 - conferences and seminars

2.2.2. Content

They should:

- define specific issues to be addressed around the overarching topic of debating the relevance of the EU to ordinary citizens lives;
- be accessible to the public and provoke their interest;
- link in with current issues:
 - of local/regional/national interest
 - at EU level.

- allow a variety of opinions to be expressed, without excluding any opinions
- include:
 - dialogue with local, national or EU political authorities;
 - participation by members of the European Parliament, European Economic and Social Committee and Committee of the Regions;
- use the internet to promote the project and facilitate debate.

2.2.3. Impact

As a result, projects should:

- make a lasting contribution to the debate on the EU;
- promote genuine local and national participation in debates on the EU;
- lead to the creation of regional and local networks or strengthen existing ones with a view to continuing and deepening the involvement of citizens in the debate on Europe;
- identify those issues at EU level of greatest local concern and how best they can be addressed on an ongoing basis.

2.2.4. Action plan

To allow the Commission to assess whether proposals meet these criteria, the applicant will need to present an action plan setting out:

- the issues which the project will address;
- the project's overall concept and the tools it will use;
- measures to attract the awareness and involvement of the:
 - media - through partnerships and press relations activities;
 - target audience
- actions to follow up the debate including the preparation of a structured summary of citizens' concerns and describe how these will be brought to the attention of local decision-makers including Members of the European Parliament;
- a detailed schedule which respects the deadlines in section 3.1 below.

3. TIMETABLE

3.1. Submission of applications

Applications must be submitted by end June 2008.

Please read carefully section 12 of this call for proposals concerning the procedures for submitting applications.

3.2. Duration of projects

The project should begin before 1 September 2008.

The project must finish no later than 01 November 2009.

Applications must clearly state the project's starting and finishing dates (dd/mm/yy).

The maximum duration of projects is 14 months.

The period of eligibility of expenditure resulting from implementation of a project will begin on the day of signature of the grant contract by the last of the parties. If the nature of the project requires the project to start before the contract is signed, expenditure may be considered eligible before the signature of the contract. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application.

3.3. Information on the results of the selection

It is planned that applicants will be informed of the outcome of the selection procedure [deadline needs to be no later than Jul. 2008]

The lists of selected projects will be published on the following website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/communication/grants/index_en.htm &

<http://xxxxxxxxx>

Applicants whose applications have not been selected will be informed in writing.

4. FINANCING

The budget available for this call for proposal is € [to be filled by each Representation].

The grant awarded may not exceed 70% of the total eligible project costs.

Community contributions are meant to facilitate the implementation of a project which could not otherwise be implemented easily without the support of the European Union. They are based on the co-financing principle.

Consequently, a minimum of 30% of the total estimated eligible and final expenditure of the project must come from sources other than the European Union budget. Applicants must include evidence that co-financing is available (secured) for the remainder of the total cost of the project.

Indicatively, the amount of the grant from the EU will be between 50 000 and 100 000 EUR per project.

The European Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

The amount allocated by the Commission may not in any circumstances exceed the amount requested. Moreover, the Commission reserves the right to award a grant lower than the amount requested by the applicant.

An organisation is not entitled to receive more than one grant from the Commission for the action covered by the selected project.

After approval by the Commission, a “grant contract”, a draft of which is reproduced at Annex VI, expressed in euros and specifying the conditions and the financing level, will be concluded between the Commission and the beneficiary. The originals of the finance contract must be signed and returned to the Commission immediately for signature. The Commission will be the last party to sign.

The payment methods are detailed in the draft contract (Article I.4), with a list of eligible and ineligible costs (Article II.14 of the general conditions and Article I.3 of the special conditions of the grant contract).

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applications which comply with the following criteria will be the subject of an in-depth evaluation.

5.1. Eligible organisations

Grant applications are eligible if they are presented by organisations having a legal status and established in one of the 27 Member States¹⁷.

6. EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Applicants must certify on their honour, by signing the application form, that they are not in one of the situations mentioned in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002), which are listed below.

Applicants will be excluded from participating in this call for proposals if they are in one of the following situations:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of *res judicata*;
- c) they have committed serious professional misconduct recorded by any means that awarding authorities can justify;
- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;

¹⁷ Based on the organisation's registered place of business or its place of main activity.

- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

Applicants will not receive financial support if, during the grant allocation procedure:

- a) they are subject to a conflict of interests;
- b) they are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the European Commission as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure, or fail to supply this information.

In accordance with Articles 93 to 96 of the Financial Regulation, administrative and financial penalties may be imposed on applicants who are guilty of misrepresentation or are found to have seriously failed to meet their contractual obligations under a previous contract award procedure.

To respect these provisions, the applicant and his partners must provide evidence that they are in none of the situations listed in Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation.

7. SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria are designed to demonstrate the applicant's capacity to see the project through to a successful conclusion.

Applicants must provide evidence of stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain the activity throughout the period during which the project is being carried out and/or grant-aided, as well as evidence of their financial participation. The applicant must also provide evidence of professional competencies, qualifications and/or experience relevant to the proposed project.

7.1. Technical capacity

Candidates must show that they have the operational (technical and management) capacity needed to complete the proposed action and provide evidence of their capacity to direct an activity corresponding to the dimension of the project for which the grant is requested. Particular attention will be devoted to the capacity for mobilising the public and to analyse of their contributions. The capacity to involve organisations from other EU countries would be an advantage.

Applicants must attach to the grant application a curriculum vitae for the project leader and for the personnel of their organisation who will actually do the work. They must also enclose a recent activity report.

7.2. Financial resources

In order to permit assessment of this criterion, applicants must submit with their application the following documents:

- annual accounts for the last complete financial year;
- the “financial identification” form (bank details) (Annex III), completed by the beneficiary and certified by the bank (with original signatures).

If, on the basis of the submitted documents, the Commission assesses that the financial capacity of the applicant is not sufficient, it may:

- reject the request for a Community grant;
- ask for further information;
- ask for the deposit of a guarantee;
- propose a grant agreement without a pre-financing payment.

8. AWARD CRITERIA

Commission Representations will evaluate eligible projects against four criteria:

- a) consistency – is the project's overall concept consistent with the:
 - i. objectives of Plan D?
 - ii. general and detailed objectives of the call (see point 2 above)
- b) quality – are the work programme and working methods of sufficient quality?
- c) feasibility – is the project feasible, based on the action plan?
- d) visibility – what is the likely effect of the project's actions to raise awareness?

9. ELIGIBLE COSTS

For all projects, the eligibility period for expenditure relating to the implementation of a project will be stipulated in the grant agreement and will, except as described in the next point, be no earlier than the signature of the agreement by the Commission.

A grant may be awarded for a project which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the project before the agreement is signed. In such cases, expenditure eligible for financing may not have been incurred before responding to the call for proposals.

The eligibility period for expenditure will not exceed the time allowed under each type of action, and **may not go beyond**.

Only the categories of expenditure listed below are eligible, provided that they are properly accounted for and evaluated in accordance with the market conditions, and that they are identifiable and verifiable. **They must be direct costs** (i.e. generated directly by the project and indispensable for its implementation, having regard to the cost/benefit principle):

- **personnel costs** incurred exclusively for the purpose of implementing the project are eligible only where the accounting systems of the applicants in question can clearly isolate and demonstrate the percentage of staff time devoted to the implementation of the project within the period of expenditure eligibility, and therefore the percentage of personnel costs which can be attributed to the project;
- **travel / accommodation / subsistence costs** associated with the project. Organisations must use their own daily scales to calculate these costs. However, these may not exceed the maximum amounts set by the Commission¹⁸;
- **the cost of organising and running conferences and seminars** (rental of rooms, welcoming and reception services, interpretation, speaker fees);
- cost of **hire or depreciation of technical equipment and services** (only the depreciable element of durable goods can be considered);
- **information dissemination** costs (production, translation, distribution and dissemination costs, etc.);
- cost of **consumables and supplies**
- costs entailed by **other contracts awarded** by the beneficiary for the purposes of the project (also see Section 10);
- costs arising from **requirements imposed by the agreement**;
- **general costs** (or "**eligible indirect costs**": office supplies, sundry consumables, depreciation of computer equipment, etc.). These costs may be eligible if incurred by the beneficiary for the purpose of implementing the project, but **may not exceed 7% of total eligible direct expenditure**.

N.B.: indirect costs will not be eligible if the applicant already receives an operating grant from the Commission during the lifetime of the project.

10. NON-ELIGIBLE COSTS

Non-eligible expenditure

The following expenditure cannot be considered eligible **under any circumstances**:

- costs of invested capital;
- general provisions (e.g. for losses, possible future liabilities);
- debts;
- interest owed;
- doubtful debts;
- exchange losses;
- expenditure on luxuries;

¹⁸ Commission Decision C(2004) 1313 of 7 April 2004: General implementing provisions adopting the Guide to missions for officials and other servants of the European Commission.

- the production of material and publications for commercial purposes; however, monographs, books, journals, discs, CDs, CD ROMs and videos will be taken into consideration if they are an integral part of the project;
- VAT, unless the beneficiary proves that he cannot recover it;
- contributions in kind.

Contributions in kind

Part of the contribution from project sponsors to the project costs may be in kind. These contributions in kind must be included in the provisional budget under the "receipts" section, expressed as a financial equivalent of the services or materials provided, and for an identical amount in the "expenditure" section, but separately from the rest of the budget. In fact, they cannot be considered as eligible costs.

Contributions in kind refer in particular to the provision of durable capital goods, raw materials and unpaid voluntary work by a private individual or corporate body.

The amount declared by the beneficiary as contributions in kind must be valued either on the basis of objective factors or on the basis of official scales laid down by an independent authority or by an outside independent professional.

The cost of private charity work must be valued in accordance with the national rules regarding the calculation of hourly, daily or weekly labour costs.

Contributions in kind will not be accounted for as eligible costs but rather as an increase in the grant in terms of value or as a percentage of the eligible costs.

The Community contribution is subject to a ceiling relating to the total eligible cost (70% maximum of the total eligible cost), excluding the value of contributions in kind.

Subcontracting and calls for tender

Where the implementation of subsidised actions requires a subcontract or the launch of a call for tender, the beneficiaries of the grant must award this contract to the tender offering the best value for money, respecting the principles of transparency and equal treatment of potential contractors and ensuring there is no conflict of interests. None of the basic activities of the project may be subcontracted, et subcontracting must account for only a limited part of the project.

For all contracts, beneficiaries must keep evidence that the selection of subcontractors was competitive, involving at least three offers, unless it can be shown that only one supplier exists in a given market. Grants may only be awarded after a project's start date (given in the application) upon prior written approval from the Commission.

11. PUBLICITY

The Commission will publish the list of successful applicants (unless the publication of information is likely to endanger the successful applicant safety or harm his interests). The Commission will publish the following information in whatever form and on whatever medium it wishes, including the Internet:

- the name and address of each beneficiary;
- the subject of the grant;
- amount awarded and rate of funding.

12. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

12.1. Publication

The text of the call for proposals, the annexes and, for information purposes, a copy of the standard agreement can be obtained from the Europa website at the following address:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/communication/grants/index_en.htm &

<http://xxxxxxx> (Website of the Representation)

12.2. Application form

Applications must be presented in one of the official languages of the EU.

This form can be downloaded from one of the above Internet addresses.

Only grant applications submitted on the application forms attached to this call for proposals and comprising all the necessary documents mentioned in Annex D will be considered.

Applications must be:

- typed; hand-written applications will not be accepted;
- duly dated, filled in and signed by the legal representative of the organisation;
- sent in quadruplicate (the original, which must be identified as such, plus three copies).

12.3. Submission of the application

Deadline for the submission of applications: 30 June 2007

Applications submitted after will not be considered.

Applications may be submitted in one of the following ways:

Proposals must be submitted on paper:

- by registered post to the following address, for which purposes the relevant date is to be the date of dispatch by post, as evidenced by the postmark or the registered delivery receipt issued by the postal services:

European Commission
EC Representation XXXXXXXX

- by hand delivery or courier service.

For security reasons, applications submitted personally or conveyed by a courier service can be presented only to the Commission's Representation xxxxxx, and envelopes must be marked "DG COMMUNICATION, EC Representation xxxxxxxx - Plan D Project". In the event of hand delivery, the submission date is the date of receipt. In the event of delivery by a courier service, the submission date is the date of receipt by the mail department.

Applications submitted by fax or e-mail will not be considered.

No modification of the application will be authorised after the submission of the application and its annexes. However, the Commission reserves the right to request any additional information needed for it to take a final decision on the award of financial support.

Applicants will be informed in writing when their application is received.

Only applications complying with the eligibility and exclusion criteria will be considered for the possible award of a grant.

Applicants whose applications are judged to be ineligible will be notified by mail, with an explanation as to why they were judged ineligible.

Tenderers will be informed, as soon as possible, of the decision taken by

the Commission on their grant application. No information will be released until the Commission's decision on project selection has been taken.

All selected applications will be subject to technical and financial analysis. In this connection the Commission may ask the applicant organisation for supplementary information, or possibly for guarantees.

Any applicant whose application for a Community grant is not accepted will be informed in writing.

12.4. Legal framework

- European Commission Communication dated 2 April 2008 - COM(2008) 158: "Debate Europe-building on the experience of Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate"
- European Commission Communication dated 13 October 2005 - COM(2005) 494: The Commission's contribution to the period of reflection and beyond: Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate
- **Information note from Vice President Wallström to the Commission – Plan D, Wider and deeper debate on Europe - SEC(2006) 1553, 24.11.2006.**
- OJ L 248, 16.9.2002 (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities)
- OJ L 357, 31.12.2002 (Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities)

12.5. Contacts

The Commission department responsible for the implementation and management of the call for proposals is EC Representation XXXXXXXX

Additional information can be obtained by electronic mail or by fax, either at the electronic address xxxx@ec.europa.eu, or by fax number from ++ xx xx xx xx xx , indicating clearly the reference of this call for proposals.

Annexes:

Annex I: Application form (parts A and B)

Annex II: Budget form

Annex III: Financial identification form

Annex IV: Financial capacity form

Annex V: Legal entity form

Annex VI: Draft contract (for information)

Annex VII: Acknowledgement of receipt of the application

Annex VIII: Application checklist

FICHE D'IMPACT BUDGÉTAIRE

Communication de la Commission: «Debate Europe» — Exploiter les réalisations du Plan D comme Démocratie, Dialogue et Débat

DOMAINE POLITIQUE: COMMUNICATION

ACTIVITE: ACTIONS SPECIFIQUES SUR DES THEMES PRIORITAIRES, DONT PRINCE

PROGRAMME DE TRAVAIL POUR L'ANNEE: 2008

1. LIGNE(S) BUDGÉTAIRE(S) CONCERNÉE(S) ET INTITULÉ(S)

16.03.04 - Actions spécifiques sur des thèmes prioritaires, dont PRINCE

2. BASE JURIDIQUE

Tâches découlant des prérogatives de la Commission sur le plan institutionnel, comme prévu par l'article 49, paragraphe 6, du règlement (CE, Euratom) n° 1605/2002 du Conseil du 25 juin 2002 portant règlement financier applicable au budget général des Communautés européennes (JO L 248 du 16.9.2002, p.1), tel que modifié en dernier lieu par le règlement (CE, Euratom) n° 1995/2006 du 13 décembre 2006 (JO L 390 du 30.12.2006, p. 1).

3. DONNÉES CHIFFRÉES GLOBALES DE L'EXERCICE (EN EUROS)

■ 3.a – Exercice en cours

	CE
Dotation initiale pour l'exercice (budget)	12 830 000
Transferts	0
Crédit supplémentaire	0
Total du crédit	12 830 000
Crédits déjà réservés par un autre programme de travail	0
Solde disponible	12 830 000
Montant de l'action proposée	7 200 000¹⁹

¹⁹ Le montant de l'action (7 200 000 EUR) fait partie des crédits du budget 2008 pour la ligne budgétaire 16.03.04 (Actions spécifiques sur des thèmes prioritaires, dont PRINCE). Par conséquent, aucune

■ 3.b – Reports

Sans objet.

■ 3.c – Exercice suivant

Sans objet.

4. DESCRIPTION DE L'ACTION

Debate Europe prolongera le plan D en 2008 et 2009. Cette initiative veillera à ce que l'action globale de la Commission visant à promouvoir la citoyenneté européenne active soit menée à l'échelle interinstitutionnelle dans le cadre des priorités politiques et de communication des institutions de l'UE s'adressant aux décideurs à tous les niveaux de gouvernance.

Une stratégie à deux niveaux, soutenue par un budget de 7,2 millions d'euros, est proposée:

- un appel de propositions centralisé pour cofinancer un projet transnational global doté d'un budget de 2 millions d'euros;
- des appels et actions décentralisés soutenant financièrement des projets locaux à concurrence de 5,2 millions d'euros au total.

Au niveau paneuropéen, le cahier des charges de l'appel de propositions indiquera clairement que, compte tenu de l'expérience acquise lors de la première série de projets transnationaux de démocratie participative cofinancés au titre du plan D, *Debate Europe* soutiendra une initiative de la société civile qui vise à organiser des consultations de citoyens dans chaque État membre, à formuler un ensemble commun de conclusions ou propositions à l'échelle européenne et à engager les citoyens dans un dialogue avec les représentants élus et les organisations politiques européennes, en collaboration avec les fondations politiques européennes.

Au niveau national, compte tenu des résultats des projets de la société civile cofinancés par les représentations de la Commission dans certains États membres, *Debate Europe* cofinancera des actions décentralisées répondant à des besoins spécifiques (ciblant par exemple des écoles et centres de jeunesse, expositions, foires et festivals, conférences, séminaires, manifestations avec des ONG, etc.). Ces activités seront menées grâce à des appels de propositions locaux et à d'autres actions définies dans le cadre de *Debate Europe* (par exemple les débats sur Internet, les visites des commissaires européens, les activités réalisées dans le contexte des espaces publics européens et des réseaux d'information pilotes, les actions locales par l'intermédiaire des centres Europe Direct, etc.).

ressource supplémentaire n'est demandée.

La ventilation détaillée de ce montant est décrite dans la décision de la Commission C(2008) 924 sur le programme de travail annuel en matière de subventions et de marchés dans le domaine de la communication pour l'année 2008, adoptée par la Commission le 12 mars 2008 (cf. tableau 2.6.2).

5. MODE DE CALCUL ADOPTÉ

Le budget de 7,2 millions EUR alloué à *Debate Europe* est réparti comme suit:

- comme indiqué plus haut, un appel de propositions sera lancé par la DG COMM elle-même pour un montant estimé à 2 millions EUR dans le but de cofinancer un projet transactionnel global.

Les représentations lanceront en outre des appels de propositions décentralisés pour un montant de l'ordre de 3,1 millions EUR. Il y aura vraisemblablement un appel de propositions par État membre, le budget moyen se situant entre 100 000 et 200 000 EUR.

Ces chiffres ont été estimés sur la base des réalisations antérieures (les appels de propositions du plan D de 2007 s'élevaient à 2,4 millions EUR pour 13 États membres).

- concernant les 2,1 millions d'euros restants, outre les marchés en cours, les représentations prévoient de lancer approximativement 136 appels d'offres (131 d'une valeur inférieure ou égale à 60 000 EUR et 5 d'un montant supérieur à 60 000 EUR).

6. ÉCHÉANCIER DES PAIEMENTS (EN EUROS)

Ligne 16.03.04	2008	2009	2010	Total
Engagements	7 200 000	0	0	7 200 000
Paievements	3 600 000	1 800 000	1 800 000	7 200 000