

Trainers' Digest



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New for candidate and potential candidate countries: the Programme "Civil society Dialogue"

A new Civil Society Dialogue Programme was launched in 2008 by the European Commission for the benefit of the candidate and potential candidate countries* within the framework of the enlargement package adopted in November 2007.

One of the elements of this new initiative refers to the strengthening of civil society dialogue – **"People to People" – P2P.**

Objectives

To strengthen the role of the civil society in participative democracy, by stimulating an active civil society at the regional, national and European levels.

The Programme will offer to individuals and organisations the possibility to visit the EU institutions, as well as relevant EU umbrella non governmental organisations, and other European, national and international bodies, in order to familiarize themselves with the vast set of EU policies, funding grants, initiatives and best practices.

The P2P programme will also facilitate a better mutual understanding, especially with a view to future enlargement and partnership building.

* Candidate countries are Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Turkey. Potential candidate countries are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia.

Target groups

NGOs dealing with related subjects, such as equal opportunities, non discrimination, children rights, youth, etc.; educational and linguistic fields; teachers and academics from all levels of educational cycle; human rights groups, including minority protection groups, human rights activists, legal aid offices, etc; representatives of municipalities/regions; consumer protection associations, health-related civil society organizations, etc.

Procedure

a. Selection of topics

The Directorate General will define the topics under P2P Enlargement, in accordance with the political, legislative or social priorities established in relation to the targeted region and countries.

b. Selection of participants

The selection of participants for the visits will be conducted by DG Enlargement with the assistance of the European Commission Delegations in the beneficiary countries.

Other EU institutions, such as the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), the Committee of the Regions (CoR), the European Parliament and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs), other international organisations (ILO, Council of Europe etc.), may be involved in the procedure too, on a case by case basis.

Timing and EU funding

The initial pilot phase of the programme covering approximately 200 people will start in June 2008 and it will run until the end of the year. The pilot phase will be reviewed and the programme adjusted if required so that the P2P programme can become fully operational as of 2009 with a budget currently estimated at € 2 million over a 2-year period.

Information and contacts

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