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**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND  
THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**Evaluation of the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue**

# **REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

## **Evaluation of the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

2008 was designated as the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue ("EYID" or "the Year") in Decision N° 1983/2006/EC of the European Parliament and the Council<sup>1</sup>.

This report presents the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the external evaluation of the Year conducted by ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited, and the Commission's response to those findings. The evaluation can be consulted at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/evalreports/index\\_en.htm#cultureHeader](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/evalreports/index_en.htm#cultureHeader)

### **2. OBJECTIVES AND BUDGET OF THE YEAR**

The Year was a response to the increasing cultural diversity of Europe, a result of EU enlargement, labour mobility in the Single Market, old and new migration flows and globalisation. It sought to raise awareness of the principle that Europe's cultural diversity represents a significant asset and to encourage opportunities to learn from different cultural experiences, both across national borders and within communities.

The evaluators distinguished between three sets of objectives for the Year:

#### **2.1. Overall objectives**

- Demonstrate intercultural dialogue (or "ICD"), what it is, what works, and why
- Achieve an impact on the views and attitudes of a large number of people
- Achieve an impact on policy makers
- Set in motion a sustained process of activity related to intercultural dialogue
- Promote a more structured dialogue with civil society
- Help provide people living in Europe with intercultural competences

#### **2.2. Specific objectives**

- Raise awareness of the concept of intercultural dialogue among the general public, especially young people

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 412/44 of 30 December 2006

- Raise the profile of EU programmes which support intercultural dialogue
- Identify and spread best practice and innovation
- Highlight the ways in which education and the media can help develop mutual understanding between cultures

### **2.3. Operational objectives**

- Promote intercultural dialogue through events on a European scale
- Promote the objectives of the Year on national and regional levels
- Spread the key messages on the objectives of the Year and on best practice
- Assess and report on the preparation of the Year, its effectiveness and impact

In order to achieve these objectives, a budget of €10 million was earmarked for the following measures:

- National projects, one per Member State, received cofunding for activities at national and / or regional levels. These projects were typically implemented by the National Coordinating Body (NCB) for the Year in each country. Grants were allocated in proportion to the size of each country, with amounts ranging from €26,000 for Malta to €252,000 for Germany.
- European flagship projects were selected following an Open Call for Proposals. Seven projects of the three hundred proposed received cofunding for transnational awareness raising activities, involving partners in anything from five to twenty-two countries. The average grant amount was €340,000.
- A Community level information campaign was delivered through cooperation with an external communications contractor, including a website and a programme of events. Within this campaign, resources were also available to each National Coordinating Body to call on the services of the national office of the communications contractor.
- Opening and closing events for the Year were organised by the Slovenian and French Presidencies of the EU and received cofunding.

In addition, the Year logo and information materials were provided free of charge to organisations wishing to "label" their activities under the banner of the Year.

The table below summarises the budget earmarked by the Decision and the amounts actually committed.

<i>Type of activity</i>	<i>Budget allocation in the Decision €</i>	<i>Budget committed €</i>	<i>% of the budget</i>
National projects	3,000,000	2,993,830	30

European flagship projects	2,400,000	2,363,248	24
Opening and closing events by EU Presidencies	600,000	600,000	6
Information campaign, surveys and studies at Community level	4,000,000	3,922,639	40
<i>(of which, support for national communication campaigns)</i>		<i>(1,254,033)</i>	<i>(12)</i>
Total Year budget	10,000,000	9,879,717	100

In addition to the Commission, the main actors engaged in delivering the above measures were the National Coordinating Body appointed in each Member State (in many cases, this was the Ministry of Culture), the European flagship project coordinators and their partners, the external contractor for the communication campaign, and numerous civil society stakeholders.

### **3. EVALUATION**

#### **3.1. Methods**

The evaluation took place over a 15-month period from April 2008. In addition to document review, the evaluators conducted fifty interviews with Commission staff, the external communications contractor, flagship project coordinators, National Coordination Bodies and civil society stakeholders, and carried out four country case studies. Direct participants in Year events, users of the logo of the Year and the 1,000 associations or individuals who registered on the website as "partners of the Year" were also surveyed.

The evaluators examined the following five criteria, around which the present report is also structured: relevance; external coherence; efficiency; effectiveness; sustainability.

#### **3.2. The evaluators' conclusions**

The evaluation of the Year was very positive in a number of aspects. The Year was relevant to stakeholder needs and to the challenges identified around cultural diversity in Europe. Resources were efficiently managed, a result in part of a "dual approach", which combined a strong European-level communication campaign and a small number of flagship projects with decentralised initiatives and one national project per Member State. The Year achieved increased general awareness of ICD issues through a critical mass of events, successfully mobilised stakeholders and sparked a high volume of relevant activities organised without

direct funding.

More doubts were raised concerning the degree to which the Year was able to impact on general public attitudes in this complex field. Stakeholder engagement with the Year was very strong in the culture sector and to some degree in education, but fell short of the ambitious cross-sectoral mobilisation which was the goal. The absence of more widespread structural changes (to administrations, for example) raises doubts about the solidity of the basis for sustainable follow-up activity on intercultural dialogue.

These points are covered in more detail below.

### *3.2.1. Relevance to problems and stakeholder needs*

The objectives of the Year were relevant to the problems identified and to stakeholder needs. The strong involvement of civil society, notably the Rainbow Platform (now the structured dialogue Platform for Intercultural Europe<sup>2</sup>) in the preparation of the Year is highlighted as having contributed to this accurate match between needs and objectives. Stakeholders were able to easily link the Year to specific national issues and they explicitly recognised the role which intercultural dialogue can play in addressing these issues.

The broad definition of the objectives in the Decision provided the flexibility needed by individual Member States to tailor implementation activities to their own specific contexts, while remaining within an overall framework with a common understanding of the overarching goal. Some stakeholders felt that a more precise centrally-defined set of target activities would have been helpful in structuring their preparations for implementation of the Year.

### *3.2.2. Coherence with existing programmes and policies*

The Year was coherent with existing programmes and policies, most clearly at international and European level. The concept of interculturalism is present in many European and international policy fields, even if not always expressed as a specific need for dialogue. The importance of interaction between cultures as a force for progress is widely recognised and is reflected in the policies of the United Nations, Council of Europe and OSCE. Particular synergies existed in the joint actions between the European Commission and the Council of Europe, including the Intercultural Cities<sup>3</sup> project.

At operational programme level, intercultural dialogue has achieved high visibility, even if the understanding of the term varies to some extent. Projects are funded through programmes including Youth in Action, Europe for Citizens, Culture and Lifelong Learning.

The extent to which the Year was coherent with national policies proved more difficult to assess since very few, if any, countries have specific, identifiable intercultural dialogue policies *per se*. In some countries, complementarity between the agenda of the Year and national policies was identified, while in others national policies on, for example, non-discrimination or culture, were considered at least to be non-contradictory.

### *3.2.3. Efficient use of resources*

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.intercultural-europe.org/>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/Default\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/Default_en.asp)

The Year budget was spent efficiently.

The distinction made between European transnational "flagship" projects and national projects allowed the Year to combine the benefits of a degree of decentralisation (one European-cofunded national project per Member State) with EU-wide project activity delivered through the seven flagship projects. This reflected the need for intercultural dialogue activities *between* as well as *within* countries.

A relatively large part of the budget (almost 40%) was dedicated to mostly centralised communication activities, with a focus on the Year website. The external contractor worked with the Commission to deliver a campaign coordinated at Community level but also articulated in the Member States, through a common graphic identity, shared information materials and a website section dedicated to each national campaign. Countries could access the services of the contractor's network of media partners to support their national dissemination plan.

Some stakeholders would have preferred to have had control over more substantial decentralised budgets for communication activities, but in the majority of cases cooperation between National Coordinating Bodies and the local media sub-contractor was reported to have worked well.

The evaluators conclude that a fully decentralised approach would have risked reducing the impact of the communication campaign of the Year and that the "dual approach" was the most appropriate one, combining a European-level campaign and flagship projects with a degree of decentralisation.

Member States were expected to fund complementary activities in addition to the European cofunded national project from their own resources as appropriate. The degree to which such funding was made available varied widely, with a small number of countries making available a national budget of several million euro for projects and communication activities, and others having no dedicated funding but nevertheless able to build cooperation with partner organisations.

#### 3.2.4. *Effectiveness*

Activities funded, both by the budget of the Year and by Member States using complementary resources, matched the objectives of the Year. The European flagship projects achieved cooperation through partnerships across a large number of countries. Creativity was the main vehicle to bring people together, so project outputs typically included cds, dvds and use of new media spaces. National project activity was more diverse. Activities in countries with relatively less experience of multiculturalism primarily aimed to raise awareness of and celebrate diverse cultures. Member States with a longer history of immigration and / or greater civil society or government capacity to deliver projects often sought to provide specific opportunities for dialogue and to exploit existing networks.

The role of national context is a determining factor when attempting to measure the effectiveness of the Year. Very varied cultural and demographic backgrounds, institutional structures and public administration and civil society capacity mean that the starting point of each Member State was quite different. The evaluators underline the significant "distance

travelled" during the Year by some Member States whose national contexts meant that the concept of intercultural dialogue was relatively recent, with fewer structures in place to support implementation.

A great deal of activity took place during the Year which was not directly funded by its budget. Based on estimates provided by National Coordinating Bodies, a range of 8,000 to 10,000 activities took place, of which around half were organised by NCBs with an element of public funding, and half were outwith their control.

The high number of events helped generate media interest and facilitate media cooperation. Over 11,500 press clippings reported on the Year. Member States' media cooperation ranged from national tv and newspapers (typically in smaller Member States) to specialised publications or programmes. Logo use by Year-related initiatives also contributed to raising visibility, with an estimated 2,700 instances of use. The website of the Year, including a section for each Member State, received 800,000 visits and over 5 million page views.

The following main effects of the Year were identified:

- Increased general awareness. The Year was most successful in raising awareness of intercultural dialogue, above all through artistic and cultural activities. Activities demonstrated to a reasonably wide audience, and especially to young people, the different ways in which intercultural dialogue could contribute to strong economies and cohesive communities. Feedback from direct participants in Year events was positive, underlining the "re-invigoration" which can result from taking part in these activities. Almost 70% of respondents said their participation would lead to them taking ICD into account in a different way when developing policies and strategies. The degree to which the Year had an impact on the *attitudes* to ICD of a large number of people proved much harder to measure.
- Increased participation and engagement by stakeholders, stimulating links across different sectors of civil society and public administration. This was most successful in those Member States which focused on working with or building on existing networks or on a specific sector, often education. Arts and culture organisations predominated, with the education sector in second place. Other fields in which ICD might be expected to be a high-profile theme, notably sport and religions and beliefs were relatively less involved, at least in most countries. The original goal of a fully cross-sectoral Year proved hard to achieve.
- Policies and approaches which establish or reinforce measures which explicitly take account of ICD. Examples are found above all in school education and include: changes to language teaching; reform of school curricula to include intercultural competences; teacher training initiatives; and dialogue with wider school communities, notably families. Other effects include a more integrated strategy across education, youth, sport, and in several Member States the continuation of funding instruments launched during the Year to support ICD initiatives by artists and culture professionals.
- In the run-up to the Year, each Member State prepared a national strategy<sup>4</sup>, providing the national context and priorities and setting out actions to involve civil society and the

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<sup>4</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/archive/dialogue/strategies\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/archive/dialogue/strategies_en.html)



communication sector in order to reach young people and other target groups. Preparation of such a strategy was a first in many countries, and proved an especially useful exercise in Member States where intercultural dialogue had been lower down the policy agenda.

- Structures. Evidence of changes in structures is not widespread, but some interesting examples include new ICD units or organisations within public administrations; inter-ministerial committees to facilitate cross-sectoral cooperation; working groups with key stakeholders, including civil society. Progress was recorded in several countries on the setting in motion of a more structured dialogue with civil society, but not across all Member States.

### 3.2.5. *Sustainability*

Different national contexts means that a mixed picture emerges as to whether the positive effects of the Year are likely to last. In some Member States, the legacy of the Year includes policies and structures, typically in countries where an ICD framework or action plan was in place before the Year. In others, the effects of the Year were more often immediate impact on individuals and so are likely to be short-lived. The strongest prospect for continued activity is in the school education field; new teacher training initiatives, curriculum reform and awareness raising are firmly on the agenda in several countries.

At European level, one clear effect of the Year was to demonstrate the relevance of ICD to a wide range of policy areas and increase understanding of the need for coherence and complementarity in fields including intercultural competences, the education of children of migrants, and integrated policy initiatives at city level. Beyond the culture field, the need for and benefits of intercultural dialogue were highlighted in policies including education, employment, justice and security, external relations and regional development. The formal and informal networks of policymakers created through these efforts are likely to prove durable, making sustained support at European level for intercultural dialogue more likely.

One clear message is that follow-up activity is essential if the progress made during the Year, whether at local, national or European level, is not to be lost. Two main recommendations made in this respect are to make sure that the materials and experiences of the Year continue to be used and disseminated, and that EU-level follow-up takes place, through funding support and / or a forum of interested Member States.

#### **4. MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS – COMMENTS BY THE COMMISSION**

The evaluators addressed eleven recommendations to the Commission and six to Member States. These will be followed up in discussion with Member States during the second semester of 2010 on the definition of the next Workplan for Culture, to run from 2011. One of the means by which the Workplan is implemented is cooperation between Member States through the Open Method of Coordination (expert groups), comparing experience and formulating policy proposals for action at European and / or national level. The discussion of the next Workplan will be the occasion to identify which of the recommendations below can be effectively addressed through cooperation of this type.

##### **4.1. Support dialogue with civil society**

*Provide continuing support for structured dialogue with civil society, through platforms for example.*

The Culture Programme offers support for this structured dialogue through its Strand 2, "policy support structures for the Culture Agenda". In this context, the Platform for Intercultural Europe currently receives a contribution to its operating costs. This type of dialogue in candidate and potential candidate countries is supported by the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance ("Civil Society Facility").

##### **4.2. Use the outputs and results of the Year**

*Take steps to ensure continuing and systematic dissemination and exploitation of the outputs and results of the Year, for example by supporting the continuation of relevant features of the EYID website and building on the success of the photographic competition "Cultures on My Street" through identifying opportunities to use the images in connection with a range of EU and national activities as appropriate.*

The Year website remains accessible. The transfer of certain of its features to the culture and education webpages of the European Commission is ongoing. The outputs (teaching materials, dvds, handbooks etc) which have been brought together in the "resources" section of the Year website are also being transferred to the Commission's education and culture pages. The "Culture on My Street" images have already been used for several Commission publications and remain available also for use by Member States and the culture sector on ICD-related topics.

##### **4.3. Research the impact of intercultural dialogue in schools**

*Consider commissioning further research in particular on the impact of ICD in schools, given the strong focus on this during the Year and the likelihood of longer-term impacts in a number of countries.*

The impact of ICD in schools will be further examined in the framework of the various sub-programmes of the Lifelong Learning Programme or the Framework Programme for research and development.

##### **4.4. Further work in the education field**

*In particular consider measures to maintain the momentum achieved in the education field*

*during the Year, for example by promoting and facilitating transfer of knowledge on the pedagogy of ICD, curriculum development and teacher training.*

Cooperation between Member States will continue through work on the thematic priorities set in the Education and Training 2020 strategic framework, in particular within the work on the implementation of the 2006 Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning. Transfer of knowledge through peer learning activities is at the heart of this process. Follow-up of the 2008 Council Conclusions on Intercultural Competences will be one important element of Member State cooperation.

#### **4.5. Transfer learning**

*Consider ways to promote and stimulate the transfer of learning from the Year between Member States, through working groups at EU level including representatives of governments, civil society and other stakeholders for example.*

Expert groups in the fields of education and of culture will continue to work together through the "open method of coordination" on peer learning and on formulating policy recommendations where appropriate. The Commission will explore ways of facilitating dialogue between all stakeholders concerned, for example through thematic seminars.

#### **4.6. Monitor and report on progress**

*Establish a monitoring and reporting framework to allow benchmarking of progress on ICD in Member States, for example through existing monitoring and reporting processes in the fields of education and integration of migrants.*

In the field of education, the Commission intends to further develop its monitoring of the achievement gap between migrant and native students, following the invitation of the Education, Youth and Culture Council of Ministers of 26 November 2009.

#### **4.7. Strengthen Community programmes**

*Consider strengthening the ICD strand within Community programmes through the process of annual calls for proposals in order to better support co-funding of thematic projects, notably those with an emphasis on cross-sectoral cooperation between education, culture and youth on one hand and public services and/or active citizenship on the other.*

The possibility of targeted support for cross-sectoral cooperation through Community programmes will be further explored during 2010 in the public consultation on the next generation of programmes.

#### **4.8. Cooperate across policy sectors**

*Work with other relevant parts of the European Commission (within and outside DG EAC), including in the field of youth, lifelong learning, employment and education to ensure ICD is operationalised more explicitly and systematically in EU programmes; including making available to other parts of the Commission learning from the design and implementation of the Year.*

The 2010 consultation and subsequent design of Commission proposals for the next generation of Community programmes will explore ways in which the priority for

intercultural dialogue can be made more clearly operational, for example through a more consistent definition.

#### **4.9. Cooperate with international organisations**

*Continue to work with key international organisations, in particular the Council of Europe and UEFA, building on the current effective strategic partnerships.*

Cooperation with key international cooperation continues, notably with the Council of Europe, including the Intercultural Cities project and in the context of cooperation with and between the European Neighbourhood countries.

#### **4.10. Include less visible areas**

*Consider ways to improve progress in some of the areas which lacked visibility during the Year – sport, disadvantaged communities and public services – including identifying appropriate partners in government and civil society with which to work.*

The Commission will explore ways in which to more closely involve under-represented sectors in future initiatives, including transfer of learning between sectors in the framework of the next generation of Community programmes.

#### **4.11. Learn for future European Years**

*In terms of future European Years, consider the following:*

- How a systematic three-year cycle for European Years could be embedded in the process (preparation-implementation-follow-up), to ensure maximum preparedness and momentum.
- How the objectives of future years could be made more measurable.

Experience of preparing for and implementing the Year has been shared with other relevant Commission services, notably DG Employment and Social Affairs, coordinating the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion and DG Communication, coordinating the 2011 European Year of Volunteering.

The evaluators also addressed six recommendations to Member States, given that lead responsibility for many of the policies concerned lies at national, or in some cases regional and local, level. These recommendations propose that each Member State should:

- develop a national action plan for ICD, underpinned by an evidence base of research and statistics;
- develop guidelines to help formulate ICD strategies in fields such as sport, public services and active citizenship;
- take better account of ICD across different fields, including public service design and delivery, in order to promote community cohesion and social inclusion;

- help increase capacity of civil society organisations able to address ICD, especially where the NGO base is weak, in particular by mapping the sector, developing networks and providing training;
- contribute to EU-level fora and working groups which share knowledge, steer policy development and increase the profile of ICD in national and EU policy-making;
- consider establishing a national system for monitoring and reviewing progress on ICD, together with appropriate indicators.

## 5. THE COMMISSION'S CONCLUSIONS

The Commission agrees with the overall assessment of the Year made by the evaluators. The Year was most successful in raising *awareness* of ICD issues, notably among policy makers, and in mobilising stakeholders, above all in the arts and culture sector. Its impact on *attitudes* towards ICD proved harder to measure, given the much longer timeframe needed for profound societal changes to occur and the complex set of factors which influence these attitudes.

Follow-up to the Year requires the combined efforts of the European Commission, other EU institutions, Member States and civil society. The Commission will give priority to the evaluators' recommendations listed in chapter four above and will concentrate its follow-up on:

- Encouraging cooperation and transferring learning between Member States and between experts in different policy sectors relevant to ICD. The Open Method of Coordination will be a main vehicle for this type of cooperation and for using the results and the outputs of the Year. Learning will also be shared with sectors which were under-represented in the Year. Projects such as Intercultural Cities, a joint initiative with the Council of Europe, or the proposed network of Romani Studies experts are opportunities to foster precisely this learning transfer and cooperation.
- Providing funding support for projects and initiatives on intercultural dialogue. Preparation of the next generation of EU programmes will be the opportunity to consult widely on options for supporting ICD, including through support for cooperation between policy sectors. The Commission will also aim to ensure that the priority given to ICD in certain Programmes is made clearly operational.
- Furthering work in the education field, where initiatives on key competences for lifelong learning and on teacher training, for example, are closely related to ICD.

The recommendations which have been put forward should help ensure that ICD remains high on the EU policy agenda. The promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue is one of the strategic goals of the European Agenda for Culture and joint efforts for its achievement by EU institutions, Member States and civil society will continue. The increased awareness and understanding of the need for a coherent cross-sectoral approach generated by the Year is a sound basis on which to build further cooperation towards reaching this objective.