

4th Europe for Citizens NEWSLETTER

Holocaust Remembrance Day, January 30, 2017

For the 6th time the European Commission hosted the International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 30 January 2017 in its Berlaymont headquarters. The event was accompanied by an exhibition on Auschwitz-Birkenau by Mémorial de la Shoah reflecting on the history of places associated with Holocaust.

Věra Jourová, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, opened the event and welcomed the participants followed by a video (<http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player.cfm?ref=1132603&videolang=INT&devurl=http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/player/config.cfm>) message of Dimitris Avramopoulos, Commissioner for Migration, Internal Affairs and citizenship.

The historian Alban Perrin presented the exhibition on Auschwitz-Birkenau by Mémorial de la Shoah (<https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/dg/home/NewsPortal/Pages/Holocaust-Remembrance-Day-Event.aspx>). The objective of the exhibition was to remember the history and help the general public and school children remembering and documenting the past.

During the event, two Holocaust survivors from France and Belgium Mr Bloch and Mr Sobol, who both were deported in July 1944 gave their testimonies and answered questions relating to their experiences of Auschwitz and Birkenau.

Mr Claude Bloch was deported in summer 1944 together with his mother at the age of 15. Mr Claude Bloch underlined his mission, *"which is today to educate young people and to talk about the past, so that the crimes of the 'Third Reich' and the Shoah will never happen again in Europe. It is a necessity and obligation to tell the story, and to keep the memory alive, because soon we will no longer be here"*.

More than 100 participants from different organisations and social platforms, universities and museums took part in the event and listened attentive to the stirring and emotional presentations of these two survivors.

More information is available at: <http://www.memorialdelashoah.org/>



DG Home





Mid-term evaluation on Europe for Citizens Programme

Like in all other EU funding programmes, a mid-term evaluation needs to be carried out for the Europe for Citizens programme in line with the Council Regulation establishing the Europe for Citizens programme. The Regulation provides that the Commission will submit to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions a mid-term evaluation report by 31 December 2017 and a communication on the continuation of the programme by 31 December 2018.

The mid-term evaluation is a very important step in the lifecycle of the Europe for Citizens programme as it will prepare the ground for the development of the next generation of programmes after 2020.

In this context, a public consultation was carried out by the European Commission in cooperation with Deloitte and Coffey who are in charge of the external evaluation of the EAC programme. The public consultation has lasted four months and was closed on 10 April 2017.

The main goal of the consultation was to collect views and opinions on the results and impact of activities and project co-financed by the programme as well as to assess their relevance and coherence on the programme. The results of the public consultation will feed into the report on the mid-term evaluation currently under preparation.

Further Information:

https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/content/public-consultation-mid-term-evaluation-europe-citizens-programme-2014-2020_en

European Year of Cultural Heritage

The objectives of the European Year of Cultural Heritage are to bring European citizens closer together and to encourage the sharing and appreciation of Europe's cultural heritage as a shared resource. It should raise awareness of common history and values, promote contribution to the economy and to strengthen relations, not only within Europe but also between the EU and third countries. Numerous events, starting with the launch of the European Year of Cultural Heritage in December 2017 at the European Cultural Forum in Milan will afterwards take place all across Europe. With the support of EU Delegations, the Commission will also promote the EYCH in third countries. In Member States, the Year will be coordinated by national coordinators who will cooperate with the cultural heritage sector and broader civil society to carry out projects and events answering the objectives of the European Year of Cultural Heritage.

The budget of EUR 8 million will mainly be used for communication purpose, numerous events, and 10 clustered projects and policy initiatives launched by the Commission to ensure a successful implementation over the two years.

Website: https://ec.europa.eu/culture/european-year-cultural-heritage-2018_en

Follow the European Year of Cultural Heritage on twitter: [#EuropeForCulture](#)



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European Solidarity Corps

On 7 December 2016, the EU Commission launched the new initiative "European Solidarity Corps", which offers young people aged between 18 and 30 the opportunity to participate in a range of solidarity activities across the EU. The initiative builds on two strands: volunteer placements for young people for a period of two and twelve months to participate in the projects, or to undertake an internship to expand their knowledge and skills.

Since the launch, around 30.000 (as of May 2017) young Europeans have registered with the European Solidarity Corps. The objective is to get 100 000 young people joining the Corps by the end of 2020. Currently a wide range of organizations that are willing to participate in the European Solidarity Corps can apply for funding through existing EU funding programmes. So far, eight EU programmes support the European Solidarity Corps for youth like ERASMUS+ with its European Voluntary Service, LIFE as well as "European for Citizens".

On 30 May 2017, the Commission proposed a budget for the next three years and a dedicated legal base for the Solidarity Corps (see: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-1383_en.htm).

Sources:

- <http://europa.eu/solidarity-corps>.
- http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-469_en.htm
- https://ec.europa.eu/info/content/public-consultation-european-solidarity-corps_en

EU Open Doors Day on 6 May 2017

The “Open Doors Day” of the European Commission 2017 took part on 6th May 2017, and was a big success with 12.000 visitors to celebrate Europe Day. In this context, the EU institutions opened their doors to the broad public where visitors had the opportunity to take a look behind the scenes and to have a better understanding of the activities and work that the institutions are dealing with, which influence us in our daily life.

Many interesting topics were presented to the visitors. DG Home focused its presence on the policy of prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism. Experts from the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) were present throughout the day and provided information on their work.

The DG HOME stand showed picture galleries, with drawings painted by young people from all over Europe, which were prepared specially for the occasion of the 13th Remembrance Day of Victims of Terrorism. Visitors were also invited to come to the small cinema and watch the testimony videos on prevention of radicalisation and extremism.

Information on many other issues of interest for the citizens was presented for example the Solidarity Corps, the Erasmus+ 30th anniversary, career tips and the question how to start a career within the EU institutions, or the information on how the new roaming rules will work in practice.

A list of all topics can be found here (http://ec.europa.eu/belgium/events/europe-day_en)

Civil Dialogue Meeting 2017 (28.6.2017)

The "Civil Dialogue" meeting will be organised on 28 June 2017 in Brussels. The last "Civil Dialogue" was held in Barcelona on 1 June 2016. The meeting will focus on important topics of the Europe of Citizens Programme and the preparation of the future Europe for Citizens Programme.

The "Civil Dialogue" consists of regular meetings between the Commission and organisations which have been selected to receive an operating grant under the current Europe for Citizens Programme 2014-2020 or think tanks which have expressed an interest in the Programme. Approximately 60 key European level organisations, think tanks, NGOs, umbrella organisations, platforms, different associations, networks of organisations and research centers will participate in the dialogue.

The purpose of the "Civil Dialogue" group is to discuss all matters related to the programme, for example the annual priorities, the implementation of the programme, programme results and the future of Europe for Citizens programme. Another important contribution is to encourage the exchanges of experiences and best practice in both Strands ("European Remembrance" and "Democratic engagement and civic participation") and to debate policy developments in the related fields.

http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/europe-for-citizens-programme/civil-dialogue/index_en.htm

EACEA - LIVE session – giving the floor to civil society

CEV (European Volunteer Centre)

The EACEA Unit C1 recently launched a new initiative for the staff of the Agency and the Commission, called LIVE Sessions to give selected beneficiaries the opportunity to present their activities and projects.

The first LIVE Session Meeting was organised on 16 March with Mrs Gabriella Civico, Director of the European Volunteer Centre (CEV) (<http://www.cev.be/about/>).

CEV is a network based in Brussels with 80 member organisations which are national or regional volunteer centres and volunteer support agencies across Europe with the aim to promote and support volunteering, to connect networking and partnerships and to share information about volunteering policies, programmes and practice in Europe. In 2017, CEV is celebrating its 25th anniversary supporting volunteering in Europe.

Mrs Civico highlighted that with the upcoming European Solidarity Corps (https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en) initiative, there will be an additional possibility for young people to volunteer.

CEV and the Europe for Citizens programme: Since 2014, CEV receives an operating grant from the Europe for Citizens programme in order to support and develop volunteering in Europe. This has also allowed CEV in 2017 to engage two trainees from the European Solidarity Corps to be based in the office in Brussels.

New European Solidarity Corps team members

Two new members of the European Solidarity Corps support the CEV: Giulia, who is Italian, and has particular experience in volunteering and solidarity in a human rights context and with refugee integration & support and Helena, from Portugal who worked to promote volunteering amongst colleagues in her previous internship placement at the European Commission and in private business. Their role at CEV will be to assist in the development, communication and promotion of the European Solidarity Corps, not only to volunteering stakeholders but also to young people and organisations that contribute to solidarity in Europe in a variety of ways but may not as yet participate in EU programmes.



European Volunteering Capital Competition

Mrs Civico presented the European Volunteering Capital Competition 2019. The European Volunteer Capital competition is launched every year. This initiative promotes volunteering at the local level giving recognition to municipalities that support cooperation and partnership within volunteer centres and volunteer-involving organizations. The awarded municipality is chosen by an international jury as well as the EU institutions. The deadline for applications (http://www.cev.be/uploads/2017/02/CEV_AP_EVCapital_2019.pdf) is 30 June 2017. The winning municipality will be announced in December.

CEMR - giving the floor to civil society (CEMR)

The second LIVE Session Meeting was organised on 23 March with Mr Carlos Mascarell Vilar, Policy Officer on Governance and Citizenship of the Council of European Municipalities & Regions (CEMR). CEMR brings together the national associations from 41 countries, representing 150.000 local and regional governments. CEMR's work focuses on influencing European policy and legislation in all areas with the impact on local and regional governments. And it provides a forum for debate and cooperation for experts from 60 member associations. In the Live Session Meeting Mr Mascarell presented the objectives and policies of CEMR, providing an insight into the work and strategies carried out by the organisation to respond to the current challenges faced by the EU. A large part of the LIVE session was dedicated to the presentation of the results of the "YELAC – Young European Leaders for Active Citizenship" (<http://www.ccre.org/activites/view/36>) project, which was funded under the Strand 2: Network of Towns, of the Europe for Citizens Programme (EFC) (http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/europe-for-citizens_en).

The YELAC project focused on the reinforcement of multilevel governance on youth-related issues, aiming to empower young local and regional elected representatives to contribute to the European debate, by increasing their involvement in the democratic life of the EU.

More information about the organisation: <http://www.ccre.org/>

Meeting of the National Contact Points (ECP) on 20-21 March 2017 in Brussels

The Meeting of the National Contact Points for the Europe for Citizens Programme was organised on 20th and 21st March 2017 by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) in cooperation with DG HOME as a training session to exchange the latest information on the Europe for Citizens programme.

Mr Brian Holmes, Director of EACEA opened the meeting and was delighted to see the participation of almost all NCPs and members from non-EU countries working together in the two days event. The first part of the meeting focused on the **European Solidarity Corps**, which was presented by Mr Philippe Chantraine, (DG Home).

Ms Jutta König-Georgiades (DG HOME) informed the participants about first results of the **Mid-Term Evaluation**, which is currently prepared by DG HOME. Ms Fabienne Pondeville, from the European Parliament presented the **European Parliament's Implementation Report** on the EfC Programme that was adopted in March 2017 (See: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2017-0063+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>). She highlighted the uniqueness of the programme and mentioned the importance of increasing the financial budget of the programme as well as to make the programme even more visible not only on the regional level but also national and even international level.

Ms Marie-Helene Boulanger and Ms Katerina Dimitrakopoulou from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, Union Citizenship Rights and Free Movement reported on the **EU Citizenship Report 2017**. Every third year the Commission reports on progress and identifies priorities to make sure that EU citizens can fully enjoy their rights in their daily life, when working, travelling, studying or participating in the EU's political life. The report is based on direct feedback from citizens. The EU actions were focused on the promotion of EU citizenship rights and EU common values. One of the actions is also to simplify the daily life for EU citizens and strengthen security as well as promoting equality for their living standards in Europe. (http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item_id=51132).

After an informative first day, the second day was dedicated to the NCPs working on three different issues:

- 1) Which criteria should be used to assess the performance of ECPs?
- 2) What do you think it should be the role of ECPs in the future?
- 3) How can ECP help to support the development of the Programme and maximise the impact?

In general, NCPs felt that their role could be more expanded and that they could have a bigger, better and stronger role as promoters for the future programme. NCPs requested to be more involved in the development and improvement of the programme. NCPs also felt the need to receive adequate funding and resources to be able to perform the additional activities and to exchange information on different levels. They exchanged experience on how to reach new applicants and what on best practices of partner search.

In the last point of the meeting the EACEA staff members answered questions on Remembrance, Town Twinning, Networks of Towns, and Civil Society Projects and provided the participants a short overview of their daily work in the Agency.



Opening of the House of European History

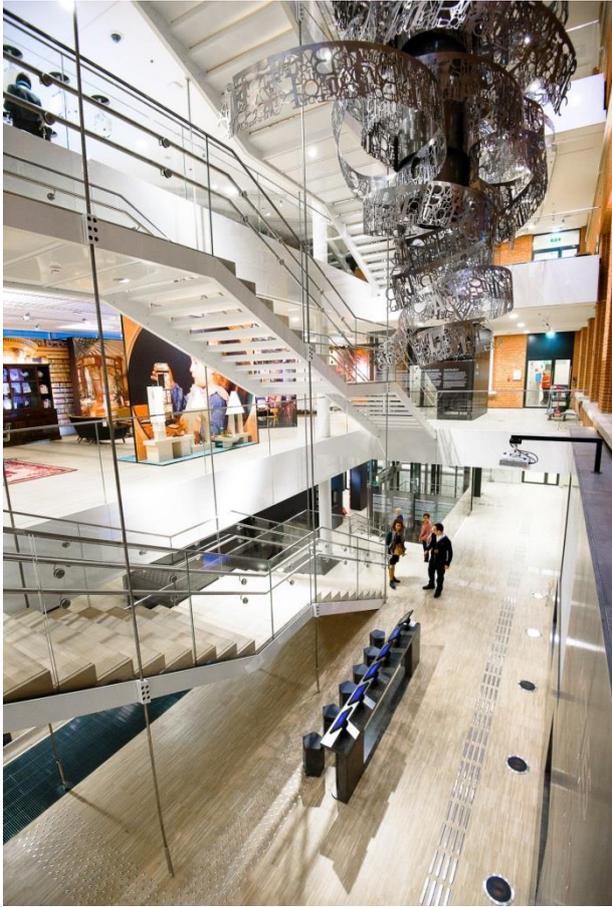
On 5th May 2017 the House of European History, which is an initiative of the European Parliament, was opened. The museum has over 1.500 original items from 35 countries displayed on six floors and it takes its visitors on a journey of a special kind.

The purpose of the exhibition is to offer visitors an outline of European history. The visitors experience a journey through the most important historical moments of European history, discovering the effects of different political, social, economic and cultural influences on Europe up to its present formation. The exhibition offers different topics showing main processes and phenomena that have united and divided Europeans through time. The history of European unification is one of many interesting topics which showing how the history is influencing our lives today or what does the past tells us when looking ahead.

In addition, visitors are encouraged to think about today's Europe and to shape their role for the future in a positive and open way. The house continues to provide new and inspiring insights into the convergence of our continent.

The House of European History is located in Brussels. The exhibition is available in 24 languages and is open seven days a week. The admission is free.

Further information: www.historia-europa.ep.eu



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ECP Projects from Austria

The third year of the implementation of the Europe for Citizens programme 2014-2020 has been successfully implemented in Austria.

In this newsletter we present three Austrian projects selected in 2015 and 2016 under the 'Europe for Citizen' programme, dealing with migration, solidarity and the future of Europe which have an impact on citizen's daily life.

Project # 1: Europe 2038 – Voice of the youth

This project was initiated by the University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria (Linz, Austria). It was supported under the measure 'Civil society' in 2015 and started in 2016.

The main goal of the project was to find out the visions for a future Europe from the perspective of young persons aged 16 to 25 years and to collect their suggestions how to achieve these visions.

The following questions were addressed by in the project:

What will Europe look like in 2038? What visions do young citizens of today have for a future Europe? What are their answers for today's major societal challenges like ageing, financial crisis, clean energy, mobility/migration, freedom and security? Which measures do young citizens suggest to overcome terrorism and violence, inequalities and social exclusion, prejudice and discrimination?

The project "**Europe 2038 – Voice of the youth**" brought together young European citizens, teachers, social workers and volunteers from seven countries, in order to attract more young people to become actively involved for European topics. Their existing knowledge and skills play a major role in promoting the participation of young people at EU level.

The activities included a pan-European survey that was filled in by 3.774 young people aged 16 to 25 years located in Albania, Austria, Germany, Italy, Romania, Spain and UK. The top 5 priorities for the future of Europe were education, human rights, health care, freedom and security. The top 5 worries were terrorism, war in Europe, racism, unemployment and violence.

A pan-European declaration will be formulated including the perspectives of the young citizens, professionals and youth and education NGO's. The Declaration "Europe 2038" will be presented to EU representatives, including representatives of the European Parliament. The project runs until June 2017.

More information about this project <http://www.europe2038.eu/>



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Project # 2: Flucht europäisch erzählen. Being refugee: a European narrative

Flight and expulsion, although present in European societies for over centuries and deeply rooted in family histories and present in local narrative communities, have so far been neglected as a topic in official memory places even though they are clearly part of the shared European history and should enter into the common European narrative.

The project “Flucht europäisch erzählen! Being refugee: a European narrative” conducted by the Austrian Academy of Sciences, under the Remembrance strand in 2016, focuses on the 20th and 21st century, with the aim to present the history (histories and stories!) of the refugees in Europe exactly at those places where the history has traditionally being conveyed: at the museums. Thereby the project will raise awareness that “*being refugee*” is a common European experience that should be made visible as a shared European narrative.

The project foresees activities like exhibitions on refugees' life stories in European museums, a new scientific publication on the topic, work with school classes offering educative materials, a website targeting professionals, decision makers and experts regarding the refugee narrative and other common European narratives.

By gathering partners from European Union and EU candidate countries (Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Germany, Poland, Slovenia and Serbia) and working together on a common European narrative for the future, this project connects diverse target groups in Europe around the new narrative of being a refugee in Europe with the aim to share, to research and to remember.



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Project # 3: GEMS inteGration and solidarity European Models for Sustainability

The project GEMS coordinated by the Alpine Pearls Association, taken under the measure "Networks of Towns" in 2016, aims to define and test innovative models for Alpine local development. Common challenges of the current European scenario will be discussed at a local level. The project establishes a pilot action for civic engagement in the Alpine Region, which will be promoted among all municipalities of the Alpine Pearls Network.

Five Alpine towns (Werfenweng/Austria, Bad Reichenhall/Germany, Bled/Slovenia, Forni di Sopra/Italy, Moena/Italy) are involving their citizens in networking activities within the GEMS project. More than 400 representatives of civil society organisations and interested citizens are selected and sent by their municipalities to represent their communities in conferences and seminars hosted across the network.

The five participating towns will have the opportunity to exchange best practices of civic engagement and sustainability and to debate on their applicability at network level, in fields such as sustainable tourism, soft mobility, volunteering and solidarity, intercultural and intergenerational dialogue.

At the end of the project, partners will establish the Alpine Award for “solidarity and integration initiatives”, which will reward the alpine organisations, citizens and local authorities engaged in the promotion of solidarity actions that contribute to local development.

More information about the project: www.gemsproject.eu



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European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) (26-27.6.2017)

Civil Society Days 2017 – "The Europe we strive for"

In 2004, the European Economic and Social Committee set up a Liaison Group with European civil society organisation and networks in order to build a bridge between citizens and European institutions. The most important objectives are to strengthen the cooperation and communication, to provide a forum for political dialogue, as well as to offer to European organisations and network a forum for discussion on relevant topics, which are of concern to civil society stakeholders at European level.

The Annual Civil Society Day is the major Liaison Group initiative, which will be organised between 26th and 27th June 2017 by the European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels. It will bring together key players in European and national civil society organisations, entrepreneurs, academics, EU policy makers and stakeholders.

The event will be organised under the motto: "**The Europe we strive for**", to collect new political impulse and to relaunch the EU on the basis of our values.

The event will focus on four themes:

- *Populism* and how to develop a counter-narrative through education and culture;
- *Technological revolution*: transforming work, minds and society
- *Empowerment of civil society organisations*, rights and the shrinking space for civil society;
- *Urban and rural* dimensions, moving towards more social and territorial cohesion.

Programme:

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-civil-society-days-2017-programme>

For more information please consult the website:

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-civil-society-days-2017>

