



A CAMPAIGN OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY
CONTACT GROUP

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IGC

ACT4EUROPE

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EDITORIAL

Dear Friends

News about the IGC is coming around fast, thus a quick next bulletin. We are very please to announce that our IGC toolkit is published today. You can get it from our webpage act4europe.org as a whole and in two parts to make downloading easier. Please also take note of the draft programme and registration for the strategy event 7th October. Two more good bits of news: several NGOs and Unions in the UK have now formed a steering group for the campaign and France is in the process of doing the same. We are still lacking coordinators for quite a few countries, so please consider getting together now to plan your national campaign around the IGC. Time is pressing, this IGC is moving ahead fast! We also have a job vacancy at the office here after Lea Slokar left. Please spread the ad in your networks.

I wish you all a successful week
Nico Beger
coordinator

IGC

We have now received more information through our contacts in Brussels. If you find any more news through "leaks" and contacts in your country please let us know.

The Italian Presidency has promised us a daily updated webpage on the IGC. Keep checking <http://www.ueitalia2003.it/EN> for further details.

The Gymnich meeting at Riva del Garda was very uninspiring, our ministers seem much more concerned about protecting their country's right to challenge the draft than to contribute towards a decisive advance in the European project. They produced the same kinds of structures that led to the pathetic and uninspiring outcome of the previous IGCs and occasionally seemed to pretend the Convention has never existed.

The IGC will be held, in contrary to previous ones, only on the ministerial level, which means there will not be much scope to influence the process via the experts. Your Foreign and European Affairs Ministers and your Prime Ministers are the ones responsible for the whole process. Expert groups might be called in between and the Council Legal Services will clean up the text until the end of October. The latter means there is opportunity now for NGOs to input technical, legal changes that could make a difference for us. The NGO sectors in Brussels are doing this currently.

The accession States will participate fully in the IGC on an equal footing with the current Member States. The three candidate countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey) will take part in all meetings as observers. For those of you in Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, please participate. Your governments are maybe "freer" to bring up "smaller" issues since they do not vote.

The European Parliament will send official observers, but the Chairman of the Convention, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, will not be allowed to participate.

The final time-table and IGC working methods are still unclear and debated, a final decision will be published by the Italian Presidency at the end of September. The information here is collected from press and contacts in the permanent representations, the Commission, and the EP.

The EP committee on constitutional affairs has voted on the draft of Gil Robles and Tsatsos and passed it. Check their webpage. It will be voted on by the plenary in the last week of September. They call for adopting the Conventions text, name the progress made, call for more co-decision and QMV, clearer role of Council President and Foreign Minister, and for an improvement of the Commission plans, particularly the possibility for a second mandate for Commissioners. They call for the Treaty to be signed on 9 May and a referendum where possible.

The sixth IGC will be launched in Rome on 4 October and the Italian Presidency wants to conclude by the end of December. Some Foreign Ministers doubt this will be possible, but publicly most committed to try, though some think the Irish would be the better presidency to conclude this. The main issues for debate will be:

- Role of the Foreign Minister
- Presidency of the Council
- Defence and Security
- Definition of Qualified Majority Voting, voting in the Council and a strong bargaining on where unanimity will be preserved
- Mentioning of Christian heritage
- EP seats and number of Commissioners

The first three will mainly be dealt to at the General Affairs Council (Foreign Ministers, Ministers of European Affairs) and the latter at the European Council meetings (Heads of State). The IGC meetings will almost all be attached to Council meetings, plus a few extra meetings, panning out at about every two weeks. According to our informants, the policy issues of Part III will largely remain untouched and there is little scope for the so-called soft issues that are of concern to NGOs in Europe. Every country will publish a position paper, many have already done so, check your government's webpage.

Whether or not we can push through some of our concerns will depend on what is traded between whom and for what, thus, the policy part or other "soft" issues might still become part of the dealings. This emphasizes again how crucial it is to establish strong pressures in all countries, collect background information, and make our concerns public.

The timing of the 6th IGC is expected to run as listed in the table.

Date	Event
5/6 September	Informal General Affairs and External Relations Council – Riva del Garda (the IGC will be discussed)
mid September	The European Commission and The European Parliament Constitutional Affairs Committee issue their reports on the IGC (according to the Article 48 of the EU Treaty)
4 October 2003	General Affairs Council Rome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inauguration of the IGC in Rome • Provisional Agenda of the IGC meetings is being issued
13 October	General Affairs Council Luxembourg
16/17 October	European Council in Brussels
26/27 October	General Affairs Council, Brussels
17 November	General Affairs Council Brussels
28/29 November	Conclave on the IGC Rome
8 December	General Affairs Council Brussels
10 December 2003	The IGC is expected to have completed its work
12/13 December	European Council Brussels
December 2003 – late April 2004	Translation of the Treaty
Early May 2004	The Treaty is signed together with the enlargement
June 2004	Possibility of referenda in some EU Member States together with the European Parliament Elections (Annex)

Campaign coordination event 7 October 2003

The Civil Society Contact Group and the act4europe campaign invite you to an important strategy meeting to coordinate European and national NGO sectors for a joint campaign around the IGC. Much of the strategy meeting in June has been implemented and this will be the occasion to share information from national and European level and design the joint way ahead.

Draft Programme:

13:30 Welcome by the Chair of the Civil Society Contact Group

13:45 IGC and act4europe actions

14:30 The NGO sectors' demands and strategy

15:30 Coffee Break

16:00 National campaigns and experiences

17:00 Strategy Session

18:00 End

Venue: Chambre Française de Commerce et d'Industrie de Belgique
Artemis Square, 8, avenue des Arts, B-1210 Bruxelles

Registration: Please send e-mail to portable@socialplatform.org by 29th September.

We have funding available for some NGO participation of Member States and Accession Countries. Please contact us for further information.

Job vacancy at the Civil Society Contact Group/act4europe office

Stage as Information and Policy Assistant

The Civil Society Contact Group and the act4europe campaign are seeking an assistant for 6 months in our Brussels office for a paid internship.

Job description:

- Gather and compile information on the Intergovernmental Conference and the European Parliament elections
- Maintain the act4europe webpage and the campaign network
- Assist the coordinator in drafting campaign calls and bulletins
- Prepare and follow-up meetings, conferences, and training sessions
- Assist the coordinator in organizational and administrative tasks
- Assist the coordinator in lobbying
- Assist the coordinator in public relations work
- Attend meetings at the EU institutions and other NGO events as appropriate

Person specification:

- Good knowledge of the EU and the debate on the Future of Europe
- Experience in NGO work and campaigning

- Some knowledge of public relations, press work etc.
- Very good knowledge of English and French, accession country languages are an asset
- Independent worker who takes initiative and develops ideas
- Keen to learn
- Passionate about and basic knowledge of social, environmental, developmental and human rights in Europe
- Good teamplayer
- Very good IT skills

Start date: 1 November if possible

Application: Send a CV and a 2-3 page letter of motivation covering the areas of the person specification by **FRIDAY 3rd OCTOBER 2003** to coordinator@act4europe.org

Toolkit on the IGC published

Since the strategy meeting in June decided that a toolkit on the IGC would be a very useful tool for national campaigning, we are now happy to announce its publication. You can find it on our webpage act4europe.org. It consists out of two parts, toolkit and appendix. The former gives you an introduction from the Civil Society Contact Group, an overview of the Convention and the IGC process, a lobby guide and sample letter for the campaign, as well as an overview over the assessment of the draft text by NGO sectors and the ETUC. The latter includes a large contact list per country for the IGC. There are many links in the document, but we have also written background documents for those who want more information. You can find them on our webpage. We will translate the toolkit into French, Spanish, and German soon. We would be grateful if you can help us with other translations. The English version will also be updated in the IGC part fairly regularly.