

# EU Civil Society Contact Group

## 2009-2011 Strategic plan

December 2008

This three year strategic plan has been developed in September-October 2008 following a brainstorming discussion on the vision for the Civil Society Contact Group that took place during 2008. It was adopted by the steering group on 2 December 2008. The progresses made in achieving the objectives laid down in this document will be discussed in a mid-term discussion in summer 2010.

### Our vision

The EU Civil Society Contact Group defends a vision of the European Union that is an advocate for and guarantor of peace, solidarity, justice, equality for all, equality between women and men, non discrimination, sustainable development, protection and improvement of the environment, the eradication of poverty and observance of human rights to ensure a high quality of life and well-being for present and future generations within the EU and globally.

In order to achieve this we promote a European Union that

- Rejects the dominance of economic considerations and opposes the drift to purely economic goals
- Defends a sustainable model of development that promotes solidarity between people and countries
- Respects and reflects the diversity and equality of all people living in Europe
- Builds an institutional framework which is truly effective, democratic, transparent and accessible and allows for meaningful participation of civil society
- Develops the role of Europe in the world as a positive and stabilizing force

### Our mission

#### *Civil society organisations to be strong political actors in the European Union*

We aim at enhancing the political role of European civil society platforms by building on their individual and collective strengths. By bringing together European platforms acting in the public interest in different but interlinked societal spheres we contribute to increase mutual understanding of each other domains and build trust among the platforms.

#### *European institutions to be well equipped to cooperate with civil society organisations*

On the basis of long lasting experience of working with the European institutions we advocate for better infrastructure in the European institutions for the cooperation with civil society organisations. Civil dialogue is necessary to improve policies and to reach our vision of a more coherent and inclusive Europe. We promote transparent and structured civil dialogue that is accessible, properly facilitated, inclusive, fair, and respectful of the autonomy of civil society organisations. We promote lasting access to information, access to justice, consultation, and integration of all levels of civil society in the European project.

#### *European citizens to be engaged in discussing and shaping the EU*

Through the development of cross-sector civil society positions, briefings and campaigns we encourage the participation of European citizens in policy discussions. Through this work we aim at ensuring that the experience of our members is influential in shaping the future direction of the EU.

# EU Civil Society Contact Group

## Our goals 2009-2011

Based on its mission the Civil Society Contact Group during the three years to come will work towards achieving the following three goals:

- The members of the Civil Society Contact Group share information and skills and engage in campaigns on issues of common interest.
- The EU institutions strengthen civil dialogue and participatory democracy infrastructures on the basis of Civil Society Contact Group recommendations
- The continuity of the cross-sector cooperation in the Civil Society Contact Group is guaranteed through effective working structures and adequate funding of a secretariat

The following pages lay down more specific objectives and proposed actions for the period 2009-2011 that shall contribute to achieve the goals listed above. This three year strategic plan will be complemented by annual work programs.

# EU Civil Society Contact Group

Goal 2009-2011	The members of the Civil Society Contact Group share information and skills and engage in campaigns on issues of common interest	
Objectives 2009-2011	Proposed activity	
1 Members share information and skills	<p>Exchange regularly on policy issues and members activities during steering and working group meetings</p> <p>Promote invitations between members</p> <p>Work with members' communication officers to improve communication between members</p>	
2 Members and their members reinforce their collective identity as civil society actor	<p>Cross-sector lunch debates are regularly organised</p> <p>Organise large events on a topical issue that concerns all sectors</p> <p>Write and disseminate a weekly monitoring mail</p>	
3 Members engage in activities and campaign(s) on issue(s) of common interest	<p>Develop toolkits and briefings on topical political issues relevant to all sectors</p> <p>Develop and lobby on common positions of interest to all sectors</p> <p>Facilitate the development of common campaigns under the label of 'supported by Civil Society Contact Group'</p>	

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Goal 2009-2011	The EU institutions strengthen civil dialogue and participatory democracy infrastructures on the basis of Civil Society Contact Group recommendations	
objectives 2009-2011	Proposed activity	
<p>4 Formulate clear recommendations on how EU institutions can strengthen their relations with civil society organisations</p>	<p>Develop a position on participatory democracy and civil dialogue (Article 11 of Lisbon Treaty) and what is needed to make the EU more participatory</p> <p>Common campaign on the new Commission in 2009</p> <p>Set up regular meetings with European Commission Secretariat General</p> <p>Develop a working relationship with relevant partners in the European Parliament</p> <p>Lobby for an effective and transparent EU register for interest representatives</p>	
<p>5 Engage EU institutions in a debate on how to implement the Civil Society Contact Group recommendations</p>		
<p>6 Promote transparency of EU institutions and decision-making</p>	<p>Monitor and when needed develop common actions on the inter-institutional work on a common register of the three EU institutions: Parliament, Council and Commission</p>	

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Goal 2009-2011	<b>The continuity of the cross-sector cooperation in the Civil Society Contact Group is guaranteed through effective working structures and adequate funding of a secretariat</b>	
Objectives 2009-2011	Proposed activity	
7 Ensure sustainable funding for the activities of the Civil Society Contact Group	Develop and implement a sustainable fundraising strategy  Develop an evaluation and performance reporting system	
8 Ensure the successful operations of the Civil Society Contact Group through regular review of its working structures	In the context of the development of the annual work program review working structures	