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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 19.6.2009
SEC(2009)781 final

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

accompanying the

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

**Implementation, results and overall assessment of the 2007 European Year of Equal
Opportunities for All**

The 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All

A Few Facts at a glance!

{COM(2009)269}

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Key facts, figures and examples of the 2007 EYEO.....	3
2. Breakdown of EYEO actual expenditure - Budget line 04 04 12	6
3. On-going Evaluation of the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All – Towards a Just Society.....	7

1. KEY FACTS, FIGURES AND EXAMPLES OF THE 2007 EYEO

AT NATIONAL LEVEL

- 30 participating countries
- 30 National Implementing Bodies involving 100 staff members
- 434 Implemented Actions by around 1.000 Action Leaders and their Partners, which delivered 1.600 outputs, consisting of more than 1.000 meetings and events, circa 440 national-level campaigns and over 120 studies and surveys
- Over 1700 received EYEO moral support, consisting of 1226 meetings and events, 425 campaigns and 59 studies
- More than 140 networks, working groups or instances of cross-sectoral cooperation involving various branches of government, equality bodies, organisations or civil society were generated as a direct result of the EYEO

AT EU LEVEL

The EYEO produced inter alia the following:

- 530 participants in the launching conference in Berlin and over 700 in the closing conference in Lisbon
- The website was visited by overall 894.934 viewers
- The stand set up at the Eurovision Village in Helsinki, Finland, during Eurovision week (5-12 May), attracted 320.000 visitors
- At least 3.611 media clippings, largely in the form of clippings in print, which achieved over at least 370 million contacts altogether
- 700 deliveries of printed information, promotional material and stands to NIBs, national correspondents, NGOs and public authorities

LEGACY

- Many lasting processes or bodies are to be considered as directly resulting from the EYEO across the 30 participating countries, such as:
- The Flemish Centre for Equal Opportunities has soared by 77% between 2006 and 2007, with 2.917 new dossiers opened, 126 of which were on the age ground (**Belgium**)
- A National Scheme for Gender Equality has been drawn up (**Cyprus**)
- Upgrading of the radio and television programmes of the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation addressed to the Turkish Cypriot community(**Cyprus**)
- A working Group for Freedom and Religions became operational in December 2007 (**Czech Republic**)
- A new body dealing with socially excluded Roma localities, two committees on the prevention of domestic violence and reconciliation of work and family within the Governmental Council for equal opportunities of women and men (**Czech Republic**)
- Agreement of cooperation between the National Equal Opportunity Network and the Ombudsman for Minority Affairs and between the National Equal Opportunity Network and the Equal Treatment Authority” (**Hungary**)
- A support group was established for young people who identify as transgender (**Ireland**)
- Same-sex partnership legislative proposal at the Parliament (**Liechtenstein**)
- Significant increase in the membership received by the National Association of Lesbian and Gay Liberation (**Norway**)
- A woman was elected chairperson of the Norwegian Olympic Committee for the first time (**Norway**)
- LGBT NGOs now sit on the Advisory Council of the CIG (Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality). Different religions are now represented in the Advisory Council of the ACIDI (High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue) (**Portugal**)
- Incorporation of the needs of disabled persons into the economic and social development programmes of all regions (**Slovakia**)

EXAMPLES AMONG THE 434 IMPLEMENTED ACTIONS

- Support of the Roma integration principle throughout the multicultural education courses for primary and secondary school teachers (**Czech Republic**)
- Diversity in Employment - Guide for Employers on affirmative action regarding the hiring of people with disabilities (Finland)
- For the equal opportunities of Travellers in the area of Angoulême (**France**)
- Conference “Diversity as a Chance – Diversity in German businesses” (**Germany**)
- Creation of a Federal network of anti-discrimination offices (**Germany**)
- The development of a public awareness campaign on ageism and older people (**Ireland**)
- Seminar on the Participation of Black and Ethnic Minority Groups in Public Policy Development and the Delivery of Public Services (**Ireland**)
- Network of local institutions against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity (**Italy**)
- Rights for young employees - LOs (Confederations of Trade Unions) Summer Patrol (**Norway**)
- Equal Opportunities Trips walking and cycling through the diversity of Amsterdam (**The Netherlands**)
- Playground – a TV spot to address the lack of awareness of negative stereotypes and discrimination existing in society (Poland)
- Voices of Africa – Internet Radio focusing on young supporters of football teams (**Poland**)
- Inter-culturalism in Ireland, North and South, as part of intercultural week 2007, thereby accentuating the benefits of diversity (**United Kingdom**)
- As well as several studies addressing in particular discrimination based on sexual orientation carried out in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania or Poland.

2. BREAKDOWN OF EYEO ACTUAL EXPENDITURE - BUDGET LINE 04 04 12

Initial budget planned for the EYEO was 15 Mio€ out of which:

- 7,35 Mio€ for EU level activities (of which 5,1 Mio€ for EU-wide campaign);
- 7,65 Mio€ for Actions at national level that Member States had to match with an equal share of public or private funding.

The total planned budget for the 27 Member States was thus amounting 22,65 Mio€. The participation of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, and the planned contributions of some countries exceeding their 50% share, brought the total planned budget to more than 25 Mio€.

Activity	EYEO actual expenditure
EU-wide information and promotional campaign	5 056 513,21 €
EU-level conferences (of which the opening, closing, European Parliament, etc.)	987 021,94 €
Eurobarometer 2007	774 041,70 €
Eurobarometer 2008	491 665,00 €
Euroflash 2008	237 205,82 €
On-going Evaluation of the EYEO	377 940,00 €
S/Total EU level activities	7 546 447,82 €
EU contribution to the co-funding of the 434 Actions implemented at national level	6 790 965,14€
Grand Total of EU contribution to EYEO Actions and activities	14 337 412,96€
<i>p.m.</i> National contributions from 30 Participating countries to the co-funding of the 434 Actions implemented at national level	9 143 442,63€
GRAND TOTAL of EYEO (EU + national) funding	23 480 855,59 €

This total final expenditure of circa **23,5Mio€** thus represented a bit less than 93% of the total planned one for the 30 Participating countries.

3. ON-GOING EVALUATION OF THE 2007 EUROPEAN YEAR OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL – TOWARDS A JUST SOCIETY

Final Report¹ - Executive summary

The 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All

In May 2006 the European Parliament and the Council adopted a Decision² to designate 2007 as the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All – Towards a Just Society (EYEO).

The overarching policy objective of the EYEO at the EU level³ was to realise the full potential of the Europeans through fighting discrimination and providing equal opportunities for all, thereby stimulating economic development and creating a solid foundation for social justice and equal opportunities for all.

To pursue this global objective, a three-pronged approach was considered necessary. These three main global goals, as presented by Vladimír Špidla, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities at the Berlin EYEO opening conference, were: to better inform people about their rights to equal treatment; to move closer to achieving the objective of real equal opportunities for all; and to showcase the benefits of diversity for societies in the European Union.

These global goals were embodied in four key themes as established by the EYEO Decision. These were also termed the "4 Rs" – Rights, Representation, Recognition and Respect.⁴ The first one, **Rights**, focused on raising awareness of the right to equality and non-discrimination, and of the problem of multiple discrimination. EYEO intended to highlight the message that all people are entitled to equal treatment, and it aimed to make those groups at risk of discrimination more aware of their rights and the existing European legislation on the subject. The second one, **Representation**, intended to stimulate debate on ways to increase the participation in society of groups that suffer from discrimination and to ensure the balanced participation of men and women. EYEO intended to encourage reflection and discussion on the need to promote greater participation of these groups in society overall, as well as through Actions specifically designed to combat discrimination. The third one, **Recognition** focused on facilitating and celebrating diversity and equality. EYEO intended to emphasise that all people, irrespective of their sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, could positively contribute to society as a whole, in particular through emphasising the benefits of diversity. The last one, **Respect**, focused on promoting a more cohesive society. EYEO intended to raise awareness of the importance of eliminating stereotypes, prejudice and violence, promoting good relations between all members of society (in particular among young people), and disseminating the values underpinning the fight against discrimination.

For the first time ever a Community activity, within one initiative, had to deal equally with the six grounds of discrimination covered by Article 13 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, that are sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age

¹ The full report is available at:
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=483&furtherNews=yes>

² Decision N°771/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006.

³ The policy context is described further in chapter 2.1 of the full report.

⁴ Cf. Decision N°771/2006/EC, reproduced in a slightly abbreviated version.

and sexual orientation⁵. At the same time the EYEO represented a multi-faceted concept, which emphasised transversal issues such as multiple discrimination⁶ and gender mainstreaming. Moreover, the EYEO Decision emphasised a balanced treatment of these different grounds of discrimination.

Another significant feature of the EYEO was its largely decentralised approach; while co-ordinated at EU level, EYEO was implemented via initiatives originated at the national level and supplemented by EU-wide activities. The 30 Participant Countries⁷ were thus required to designate a **National Implementing Body** (NIB) that had the responsibility for planning and implementing the EYEO⁸. As part of the preparation and planning of the EYEO, the NIBs were given the responsibility of designing **National Strategies** (NS), including the identification of the existing challenges according to each ground of discrimination and the setting up of national priorities for the EYEO⁹ in close co-operation with civil society.

The overall budget planned for the EYEO amounted to 15 million € more than half of which (7.65 million €) was allocated to the 27 Member States with the condition that each one of them must contribute an equal share of national public or private funding. The remaining 7.35 million € were allocated to Community-wide measures, including 5.1 million € set aside for an EU-wide information and promotional campaign. This brought the total planned budget for activities in the 27 Member States during the EYEO to 22.65 million €¹⁰

Evaluation of the EYEO¹¹

The task of the evaluation team was to determine whether the EYEO was a success both at the European level and at the level of the Participant Countries; this means that every Action or activity implemented has not been evaluated individually but at an aggregated level.

The evaluation process addressed seven different evaluation issues, which also mirror the structure of the report, that are **Relevance**: the extent to which the EYEO and its objectives were justified in relation to the challenges identified at the EU and national levels; **Complementarity**: the extent to which the EYEO's objectives complemented other EU objectives; **Implementation**: the extent to which the implementation process and delivery mechanisms supported the attainment of the objectives; **Effectiveness**: the extent to which the various EYEO Actions and instruments were implemented or applied and helped to achieve the specific objectives of the EYEO; **Efficiency**: the extent to which the desired effects (outputs and outcomes) were achieved at a reasonable cost; **EU-added value**: the extent to

⁵ See Decision N°771/2006/EC, Article 5.

⁶ Multiple discrimination refers to the fact that people are discriminated against on more than one ground at a time

⁷ The 27 Member States of the European Union as well as the EEA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway).

⁸ A list of National Implementing Bodies can be found in Annex A to the full report.

⁹ DG EMPL ensured that the National Strategies and Actions were in line with the objectives of the EYEO by evaluating and (if necessary) requesting modifications to the National Strategies; paying particular attention to the proper involvement of civil society; ensuring that all grounds of discrimination were dealt with fairly; and that a gender perspective was also included.

¹⁰ With Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway participating in the EYEO and some of the countries planning to contribute more than the required 50%, the total planned budget was eventually over 25 million €. For a detailed analysis of the actual budget spent (circa 23,5 Mio€), see chapter 4.3 on the efficiency of the EYEO of the full report.

¹¹ The evaluation was carried out by a consortium comprising of Eureval and Focus Consultancy and led by Rambøll Management.

which the EYEO produced results which could not have been satisfactorily achieved through national initiatives alone; **Sustainability**: the extent to which the results obtained through the EYEO were likely to last beyond 2007.

The evaluation report relied on nine different sources of information for evaluating the EYEO. These, first of all, included documents such as National Strategies and Final Activity Reports from the 30 Participant Countries. Secondly, 10 country case studies from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom were carried out. The report also includes information from sources such as Summary Information Sheets filled in by Action Leaders for each planned Action, questionnaires from Action Leaders, questionnaires from NIBs, interviews with EU level NGOs active in the anti-discrimination field and the European Commission, surveys from Eurobarometer from 2007 and 2008 and from Euroflash 2008¹². It also built upon the final report presented by Media Consulta, the contractor responsible for executing -on behalf of the Commission- the EU-wide information and promotional campaign, and on the participation of the evaluation team in the EYEO opening and closing conferences.

A logic for the EYEO intervention was developed and its causal links were tested through analysis of data available. Where possible the evaluation team has based the analysis on the cross-checking of at least three different data sources. However, it must be noted that most of the data sources consisted of opinions, statements or assessments expressed by people directly involved in the EYEO's implementation. Therefore, to enhance the validity of the data, special weight has been given to statements that have been substantiated by concrete examples.

As part of the overall evaluation of the EYEO, four thematic reports were produced, focussing on three grounds of discrimination that are (young and older) age, racial and ethnic origin and sexual orientation as well as on gender mainstreaming. These reports examined how and to what extent the four issues have been addressed during the EYEO both at EU and national level.

Relevance and Complementarity

In general, the stakeholders believed that **the type of intervention** represented by the EYEO was an appropriate way of addressing the challenges of equal opportunities. Whereas some stakeholders were initially sceptical about the positive contribution of having to address all six of the grounds of discrimination at once, the evaluation shows that this stimulated an increased cooperation between stakeholders and impelled some countries to address some particularly sensitive grounds of discrimination, sometimes for the very first time. The key objectives of the EYEO (the 4 Rs) were found to be relevant to the national and European-level challenges and they provided a relevant framework for the NIBs to develop the national EYEO, while allowing wide margins to set their own and respective national objectives.

The EYEO both complemented well and mutually reinforced other EU initiatives in the field of equal opportunities, such as those implemented by the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, including PROGRESS, EQUAL, Community Action Programme to combat discrimination, and elsewhere in the Commission

¹² The Special Eurobarometer 263, "Discrimination in the European Union", published in January 2007, the Special Eurobarometer 296, "Discrimination in the European Union – Perceptions, experiences and attitudes", published in July 2008 and the Euroflash 232, published in February 2008, including a question on the level of awareness of Europeans of the EYEO 2007.

(Lifelong Learning, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue).

Implementation

Overall, it is the assessment of the evaluator that the implementation process and delivery mechanisms fully supported the attainment of the objectives of the EYEO.

The management of the EYEO by the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities was generally very positively assessed by the NIBs. The relatively late signature and conclusion of grant agreements between the Commission and the NIBs was however seen as a major obstacle to starting the process of implementation at the national level, despite the fact that all Participant Countries were entitled to claim expenses from the start of the year.

A substantial majority of the stakeholders thought that the decentralised approach was both appropriate and effective. Without a doubt, this was the implementation element that produced the highest satisfaction among the stakeholders. A majority of national stakeholders considered that the overall management structure of the NIB had helped to achieve effective National Strategies and Actions. The direct communication with the NIB rather than with the EU level was greatly appreciated by several Action Leaders for both linguistic and coordination-related reasons.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

The fact that 30 Participant Countries took part in the EYEO and that each of them designed for the first time a National Strategy, presenting in particular national challenges around the six grounds of discrimination covered by the Article 13 of the EC Treaty, represents the most fundamental success of the EYEO. Relevant civil society stakeholders representing all six grounds of discrimination took part in the design of the National Strategies, and thanks to this high level of participation across all countries, coupled with the commitment of all the actors involved in implementing activities, EYEO managed to cover all six grounds of discrimination in a balanced way, thus creating an increased understanding of the need to join forces. **434 Actions** were successfully implemented by **434 Action Leaders** involving **556 additional partner organisations**. **1,710 further implemented activities** received moral support across the 30 Participant Countries. The 434 Actions produced more than 1,600 concrete outputs, consisting of more than 1,000 meetings and events, circa 440 information and promotion campaigns and over 120 studies and surveys.

Most of the Actions were implemented at national level and by national authorities, often with the NIB as principal Action Leader. Although the importance of the involvement of the local level was strongly emphasised by the Participant Countries, it appears that the decentralised approach may not have been completely realised beyond the national level.

The EYEO produced concrete effects in terms of raised awareness about discrimination issues, about the six grounds of discrimination and the issue of multiple discrimination, as well as about the right to non-discrimination and equal treatment. The effects of the EYEO on valuing the benefits value of diversity and the need for positive representation were more limited.

The effects resulting from the EYEO on cooperation involving the key stakeholders, such as administrative authorities, NGOs, trade unions, civil society organisations, organisations representing those in risk of being discriminated against, etc. were one of the most interesting effects of the EYEO, as they introduced behavioural changes and also opened the door to new developments in the future.

Although the Participating Countries had identified national challenges concerning discrimination in employment, reaching the business sector seems to have been particularly difficult and only a limited number of Actions targeted the businesses and employers. Similarly, attracting media attention was a concern of all NIBs and Action Leaders, but in practice it proved very difficult to mobilise the media to report on social issues, in particular when other more attractive events occurred such as national elections.

The overall conclusion with regard to the efficiency of the EYEO is that the expected outputs of the EYEO were achieved at a reasonable cost. All the Participant Countries matched the EU grant at the national level and some supplied additional funding. Overall 15,934,407.77 € were spent on national Actions during the EYEO, representing an execution rate of 86%. The budget covered the four objectives of the EYEO equally, whereas the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, gender and disability benefited from higher budgets than the three other grounds.

However, there are limitations to these conclusions. For example, the budget for the EU-wide information and promotional campaign is not considered excessive, but the campaign had limited effectiveness due to design and timing issues, which subsequently reduced its efficiency.

According to the NIBs the majority of Actions delivered more outputs than expected at the expected cost. Less than a quarter of the Actions delivered less than expected. Furthermore, the Eurobarometer surveys provided a valuable source of information concerning discrimination issues in Europe by measuring attitudes about discrimination before and after the EYEO. It is deemed to have been very efficient.

EU-added value

The EYEO produced a number of results, which could not have successfully evolved through national initiatives alone. This includes in particular the outcomes achieved by the National Strategies and the requirement to cover all grounds of discrimination. The design of the National Strategies was also especially important. These programming documents would not have been developed, especially not with the intense process of civil society consultation, had they not been explicitly requested by the European Commission. The requirement to cover all grounds of discrimination in a balanced manner led some countries to increase their focus on grounds of discrimination that had not previously been a key focus. This was especially the case for discrimination based on sexual orientation or for the emergence in some Member States of new realities, such as the one of transgender people.

The EU-wide information and promotional campaign contributed the least added value to the EYEO implementation at the national level. Issues of *“too little, too late and not well enough adapted to the national context and the needs of the NIB”* were all raised regarding the contribution of the EU-wide activities. While some NIBs reported receiving good support from these activities, others stated that especially the resources of the EU-wide information

and promotional campaign could have been used more effectively and efficiently, had they been distributed directly to the Participant Countries.

Sustainability and legacy

Overall, it is the assessment of the evaluation team that the results obtained by the EYEO were sustainable and likely to continue beyond 2007.

According to the Action Leaders, almost 75 per cent of the 434 Actions were expected to be sustained following the end of the EYEO. In particular, the concepts and materials, which were developed as components of the 1600 activities implemented throughout the EYEO, were expected to remain in use after the EYEO came to an end. The more than 140 new networks and co-operations created during the EYEO were also very likely to continue after the end of the EYEO.

The strong involvement of not only the European Commission, but also the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers, in the European Year is also worth highlighting. This supportive inter-institutional process led to the adoption of Council conclusions and a Resolution on the follow-up of the EYEO, which invited Member States and the Commission to continue their efforts in the field of equal opportunities and anti-discrimination – mainly by sustaining the governance mechanisms established during the EYEO, plugging the legislative gaps in Article 13's anti-discrimination legislation, continuing their efforts to raise awareness, and engaging all civil society actors and Social Partners in these processes, as well as by promoting the benefits of diversity. The expected long-term impacts of the EYEO were thereby indeed pursued by its legacy.