



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG

Social Protection and Integration

Inclusion, Social Policy Aspects of Migration, Streamlining of Social Policies

Brussels, 16/11/2008

D(2008)

European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion (2010)

— Strategic Framework Document —

**Priorities and guidelines
for 2010 European Year activities**

<http://2010againstpoverty.europa.eu>

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Introduction

The European Union and its Member States are strongly committed to tackling poverty and social exclusion. The Commission's 2005-2010 Social Agenda put forward 2010 as the European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion, to reaffirm and strengthen the initial EU political commitment, at the start of the Lisbon strategy, to make “a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty”. The European Parliament's and the Council's endorsement of the 2010 European Year was published in the *Official Journal of the European Union* on L 298, on 7.11.2008¹.

The 2008 international economic and financial crisis may have long-term consequences for growth and employment in the EU, and it is the most vulnerable people in our societies who are likely to suffer most. The European Year against poverty should therefore have a crucial impact in raising awareness of social exclusion and promoting active inclusion, as no country can escape the consequences of this global crisis.

Aim of the Strategic Framework Document

Annex — Chapter II — point 2² Following the adoption of this Decision, the Commission will prepare a Strategic Framework Document, which, alongside the objectives set out in Article 2 (...), will establish the key priorities for the implementation of the European Year activities, including minimum standards in terms of participation in national bodies and actions

This Strategic Framework Document has been prepared by the European Commission for the national implementing bodies (NIBs) and all other players involved in the 2010 European Year. Its purpose is to:

- provide practical guidance on European Year activities;
- ensure that national programmes are consistent with the 2010 European Year objectives and the European Strategy for Social Protection and Social Inclusion³.

The document describes how to match 2010 activities to the European Year's objectives and principles, provides details on the management and coordination framework at national and European levels, and gives strong recommendations for financial management, monitoring and evaluation arrangements.

¹ OJ L 298, 7.11.2008, p. 20.

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/news/news_en.cfm?id=326.

²All quotations in the boxes refer to the decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010).

³For further information on this European Strategy, please refer to http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spi/the_process_en.htm.

1. Matching activities on the ground to objectives and principles

Article 2 Objectives and Guiding Principles

(a) **Recognition of rights** — recognising the fundamental right of people in a situation of poverty and social exclusion to live in dignity and to play a full part in society. The European Year will increase public awareness of the situation of people experiencing poverty, particularly that of groups or persons in vulnerable situations, and will help to promote their effective access to social, economic and cultural rights as well as to sufficient resources and quality services. The European Year will also help to combat stereotypes and stigmatisation;

(b) **Shared responsibility and participation** — increasing public ownership in social inclusion policies and actions, emphasising both collective and individual responsibility in the fight against poverty and social exclusion, as well as the importance of promoting and supporting voluntary activities. The European Year will promote the involvement of public and private actors, inter alia through pro-active partnerships. It will foster awareness and commitment and create opportunities for contributions by all citizens, in particular people with direct or indirect experience of poverty;

(c) **Cohesion** — promoting a more cohesive society by raising public awareness of the benefits for all of a society where poverty is eradicated, fair distribution is enabled and no one is marginalised. The European Year will foster a society that sustains and develops quality of life, including quality of skills and employment, social well-being, including the well-being of children, and equal opportunities for all. It will, moreover, ensure sustainable development and solidarity between and within generations and policy coherence with EU action worldwide;

(d) **Commitment and concrete action** — reiterating the strong political commitment of the EU and the Member States to make a decisive impact on the eradication of poverty and social exclusion and promoting this commitment and actions at all levels of governance. Building upon the achievements and potential of the OMC on Social Protection and Social Inclusion, the European Year will strengthen the political commitment, by focusing political attention on and mobilising all interested parties, in the prevention of and fight against poverty and social exclusion and give further impetus to the Member States' and the European Union's action in this field.

1.1. Guidelines for putting the objectives of the 2010 European Year into practice

There are many types of activities that can make a positive contribution to the 2010 European Year (see chapter II(7) of the annex to the Decision). Project developers are invited to be creative and innovative and to make their events highly visible for the targeted public and convincing in terms of the messages they put across.

Examples of good practice from previous European Years⁴ include:

- a clear and consistent communication strategy on projects likely to reach audiences beyond those directly involved;
- use of a single EU logo for all projects, even those not receiving financial support from the European Year national budget;
- a good mix of projects with high dissemination potential and more local, case-specific activities.

⁴ European Year of Workers' Mobility (2006), European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007), European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (2008).

Under the objective **recognition of rights**, the European Year should:

- get people to acknowledge the fundamental rights and needs of people suffering poverty;
- correct the current stereotypes of people in situations of poverty and exclusion, by way of information campaigns, media coverage, and funding for projects in mainstream cultural programmes;
- help people living in poverty to become more self-reliant, by giving them access to a decent income and services of general interests.

Under the objective **shared responsibility and participation**, the European Year should:

- facilitate debate between public and private-sector players to overcome problems that prevent people from participating: through meetings, for instance, such as the annual meeting of European people experiencing poverty;
- encourage exchanges of good practices on shared responsibility between Member States at national, regional and local levels, and between administrations and other stakeholders;
- get business and social partners involved in activities aimed at getting people back into work.

Under the objective **cohesion** the European Year should:

- run specific events and campaigns to give organisations and sectors not usually engaged against poverty the chance to talk to social exclusion experts;
- help boost the visibility and consistency of Community and national programmes and schemes for promoting social cohesion, sustainable development and solidarity between generations.

Under the objective **commitment and concrete action** the European Year should:

- strengthen the EU's and national authorities' commitment to social justice and greater cohesion. Especially the International Day against Poverty on 17 October 2010 should feature a high-profile initiative such as a Declaration on a renewed commitment to eliminating poverty;
- ensure strong commitment to the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals and the Resolution proclaiming the second United Nations decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017)⁵.

⁵ GA Resolution 62/205, 19 December 2007.

1.2. Gender mainstreaming

Article 4 — The European Year shall take into account the different risks and dimensions of poverty and social exclusion experienced by women and men. The Community and the Member States should take account of gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the European Year

Gender equality is mainstreamed throughout European Year activities. Consequently:

- action should take into account all the particular risks and dimensions of poverty and social exclusion experienced by women and men;
- bodies involved in the 2010 European Year should be heedful of gender balance;
- the gender dimension of exclusion and poverty will be reflected in the specific criteria for selecting European Year activities.

1.3. Accessibility

Article 3 (3) All actions addressed to a wider public should be easily accessible to all, including people experiencing poverty and people with disabilities

The success of the European Year will depend to a great extent on the people with direct experience of poverty and of people with disabilities. The selection of European Year activities will consider the accessibility aspect (*e.g. appropriate venue; appropriate language; clarity of information; equal access to facilities or services, etc.*).

1.4. Priority policy areas

Annex — Chapter IV

Taking into account the multidimensional nature of poverty and social exclusion and with a view to mainstreaming the prevention of and fight against poverty and exclusion within other policies, the European Year activities should aim to produce a clear added value and provide an effective complement to the OMC on Social Protection and Social Inclusion. These activities should therefore focus on a limited number of priority areas:

In line with the analysis carried out and the priorities identified in the Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion, the European Year should focus on the following themes:

- *promoting multidimensional integrated strategies to prevent and reduce poverty, in particular severe poverty, and approaches which would be mainstreamed across all relevant policy areas*
- *fighting child poverty including the intergenerational transmission of poverty as well as poverty within families, paying special attention to large families, single parents and families caring for a dependent person, as well as poverty experienced by children in institutions*
- *promoting inclusive labour markets, addressing in-work poverty and the need to make work pay*
- *eradicating disadvantages in education and training, including digital literacy training and promoting equal access for all to ICT, with particular focus on the specific needs of disabled people*
- *tackling the gender and age dimensions of poverty*
- *ensuring equal access to adequate resources and services, including decent accommodation health and social protection*
- *facilitating access to culture and leisure opportunities*
- *overcoming discrimination and promoting the social inclusion of immigrants and ethnic minorities*
- *promoting integrated approaches to active inclusion*
- *addressing the needs of people with disabilities and their families, the homeless, as well as other groups or persons in vulnerable situations*

In planning European Year activities in line with the above policy priorities, Member States should give special attention to the priorities and challenges identified in their national reports on social protection and social inclusion strategies. They should adapt these policy priorities to national, regional and local situations, and make sure they are mutually consistent.

1.5. Partnerships with civil society and stakeholders

Annex — Chapter IV — In the light of the objectives set out in Article 2 of this Decision, the issue of participation should be mainstreamed throughout all the priorities.

EU Member States and European Commission have consistently regarded the participation of stakeholders, including people and organisations representing the people facing exclusion, as one of the central objectives of social inclusion policies. Member States are asked to report on what they are doing to this end in their reports on national social protection and social inclusion strategies.

The 2010 European Year should stimulate the use of participation techniques and help develop participative models and instruments for disadvantaged groups.

As a minimum standard the Commission believes that consultation processes should:

- provide the right level of clarity and information about the goals of the European Year and the way it is prepared and run, including articles in magazines and social inclusion websites;
- start as early as possible to enable stakeholders to consult their membership within an acceptable timescale;
- put forward appropriate working methods and techniques to ensure open dialogue between the various groups.

2. Management and coordination at national level

2.1. The National Implementing Bodies (NIBs)

Article 6 (1) — Each Member State shall appoint a “National Implementing Body” to organise its participation in the European Year and ensure coordination at national level (...).

The National Implementing Bodies have a dual role: to manage European funding under the centralised indirect management set-up, and to run the European Year at country level, including the creation of partnerships with institutional and civil society players.

Some countries may have difficulties in appointing a NIB with both these attributes, in which case ad-hoc cooperation between two public bodies can be put in place.

2.1.1. Budget management

The Decision provides for a system of indirect centralised management which will be implemented at national level through the NIBs. This type of procedure is

particularly appropriate for the broad-based programmes which require proximity to final beneficiaries and, in the case of simultaneous measures at national level, using coordinated arrangements. This form of management also makes better use of existing resources in the Member States. This should boost the complementarity between Member States' action and the work of EU institutions, and help develop stronger synergies between the two levels.

In order to avoid a cumbersome assessment procedure, the Commission considers that Member States appoint an NIB already in charge of the management of EU funds.

By appointing an NIB, the Member States assure the Commission that they undertake to protect the financial interests of the Communities, prevent any irregularities affecting Community funds and, if necessary, take appropriate measures for the complete reimbursement of any Community funds unduly paid.

The tasks delegated to the NIBs will mainly consists in:

- preparing and launching calls for proposals/tenders;
- evaluate and select grant applications and offers;
- Award grants and contracts;
- signing grant agreements and contracts;
- monitoring the implementation of the contractual obligations;
- executing payments and issuing any recovery orders;
- reporting to the Commission.

2.1.2. *Practical organisation of the Year*

The NIBs' main tasks are to define, implement, monitor and evaluate the national programmes for the 2010 European Year, ensuring that action is well adapted to country level. This part is crucial to make the Year a success for the targeted people.

Different types of experience and expertise need to be provided. Experience in the fight against poverty and social exclusion will be an important element. Close relations with media organisations would be an advantage.

2.2. The national programmes (NPs)

The aim is to apply the objectives of the European Year to the reality and needs of each country, based on an analysis of the challenges facing each country in respect of social inclusion priorities. The participating country should indicate how it intends to respond to these challenges, in accordance with the guiding principles and objectives of the 2010 European Year.

The decision establishing the 2010 European Year requires NIBs to draw up national programmes for the European Year in close cooperation with stakeholders.

The proposed structure for the national programme may be found in Annex 1.

2.2.1. Guidelines for the programme

The Commission proposes that the following guidelines apply to the NPs.

- Consistency with national strategies for social protection and social inclusion.

Annex — Chapter II — point 3 — *In response to the Strategic Framework Document, each National Implementing Body will produce, after consulting civil society, a National programme for implementing the European Year, in close coordination and consistency with the National Strategies on Social Protection and Social Inclusion*

National programmes should be closely aligned with the national Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion, and in particular with the national action plans for social inclusion (NAPs). The new triennial cycle 2008-2010 gives Member States an ideal opportunity to indicate how they intend to integrate the European Year's objectives into their triennial strategies.

- Mobilise political attention and encourage broad participation.

Recital 20 — *Key to the successful impact of Community action to fight poverty and social exclusion is the extent to which it enjoys broad popular and political support. (...) It should help to focus political attention and mobilise everyone concerned in order to drive forward and strengthen the OMC on Social Protection and Social Inclusion as well as to promote further actions and initiatives at Community and national level in that field, in association with the people affected by poverty and their representatives.*

The NPs should have a high profile, helping to promote social cohesion. The 2010 European Year can also bring out more clearly the role of the representative bodies, including national and regional parliaments and assemblies.

The European Year should stress the role of the European Union (“*The EU can make a difference*”) and publicise the impact it has already had on key priority areas. Taking advantage of good practices in other parts of the EU is strongly encouraged, as are the lessons learned from peer reviews held within the social open method of coordination.

- Mainstreaming the fight against poverty within other policies.

Annex — Chapter IV — *Taking into account the multidimensional nature of poverty and social exclusion and with a view to mainstreaming the prevention of and fight against poverty and exclusion within other policies, the European Year activities should aim to produce a clear added value and provide an effective complement to the OMC on Social Protection and Social Inclusion.*

A multi-dimensional and mainstreamed approach to poverty and social exclusion, e.g. links with equal opportunities, anti-discrimination, including Roma people, gender and age dimension, financial and economic policies, health etc. is strongly encouraged. The NPs can play a key role in placing social inclusion at the heart of national policy agendas.

2.2.2. *Complementarity*⁶

Article 10 The Commission together with the participating countries shall ensure that (...) the European Year fully complements the existing Community, national and regional initiatives and resources, where they can help to attain the objectives of the European Year

In accordance with the 2010 European Year's objectives, the NIBs will ensure that appropriate links are established with other policy areas and actors, including national programmes under the Lisbon Strategy 2008-2010, Structural Funds, and sustainable development and development cooperation.

2.2.3. *Communication strategy and target groups*

Each NP will set out an overall communication strategy for the 2010 European Year. The target groups will be the general public, people facing poverty and exclusion, and other social groups and institutions in a position to shape or make an impact on social inclusion policies (e.g. social partners, policy makers, national, regional and local authorities, business leaders, employers, media organisations and civil society organisations), with particular emphasis on those who are not usually directly engaged in the poverty issue.

NPs should also develop and strengthen dialogue with the media.

NPs may focus their activities on particular groups or issues in accordance with their national action plan for social inclusion and the priorities set out in the Decision. It is however important that the NPs clearly designate the target group(s) for each action or group of actions.

2.3. **Consultation on and monitoring of the national programmes**

Article 6 (3) In carrying out its tasks, in particular when drawing up the national programme and whenever appropriate during the implementation of the European Year, the National Implementing Body shall closely consult and cooperate with a broad range of relevant stakeholders, including civil society organisations and organisations defending or representing the interests of those who experience poverty and social exclusion, the social partners, and regional and local authorities

National civil dialogue standards for consultation, where they exist, should be used as a point of reference.

Players might include:

- relevant public bodies; representatives of national, regional and local government authorities;
- civil society organisations and organisations defending or representing the interests of those who experience social exclusion, including their direct participation;
- the social partners, social services providers;

⁶ These include: the PROGRESS programme, the Structural Funds, in particular the European Social Fund, and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), action to combat discrimination and to promote gender equality and fundamental rights, and action in the areas of education and training, culture and intercultural dialogue, youth, citizenship, immigration and asylum, and research.

- users' associations, voluntary sector.

NIBs can request advice or contacts from the key European level networks active in combating poverty and promoting social inclusion with proven experience with people living in poverty.

Criteria for selection of stakeholders will be made public, along with the list of stakeholders involved. These criteria could — as at EU level — include:

- the capacity of these organisations to represent, promote and defend the rights and interests of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion;
- their capacity to gather and mobilise members from different countries;

One essential criterion against which the Commission will assess the national programmes presented by the NIBs will be an appropriate level of consultation according to the standards set in section 1.5. In line with the objectives of the 2010 European Year, there will be regular consultation and cooperation at all stages from planning, during the implementation proper and finally at the evaluation phase to ensure effective impact at national and sub-national levels.

The Commission suggests that NIBs take inspiration from the “actor involvement variables” set up during a peer review on “The NAP Social Inclusion Forum” held in Ireland in November 2007⁷.

3. Management and coordination at European level

3.1. The role of the Commission

The Decision creating the 2010 European Year has settled on a mix of centralised and decentralised activities as the most appropriate option, whilst maintaining the flexibility to accommodate national specificities.

It is important though for the 2010 European Year to retain a strong EU dimension and identity. In this regard, the Commission will:

- act as a catalyst to encourage involvement and political commitment from the EU and the Member States;
- facilitate the most appropriate participation, including the most vulnerable groups;
- manage an information and media campaign, including helping NIBs with their own communication strategy;
- provide NIBs with technical assistance and advice;
- monitor the coherence of all activities, both in the preparation and the implementation of the 2010 European Year;
- run an ongoing evaluation exercise.

⁷ <http://www.peer-review-social-inclusion.net/peer-reviews/2007/the-napinclusion-social-inclusion-forum/pr-ie-synthesis-report-en>.

3.2. The Consultative Committee

In the management and coordination of the 2010 European Year activities, the Commission will be assisted by a Consultative Committee, composed of Member States' representatives appointed by each NIB and chaired by a representative of the Commission (Article 7(2) of the Decision).

The Commission will organise the committee meetings. Five meetings could be scheduled: two in 2009, two in 2010, and a final meeting in 2011.

The principles and conditions of public access to documents applicable to the Commission will apply to the committee. The European Parliament will be informed regularly by the Commission of committee proceedings.

3.3. Association of the Social Protection Committee and other committees

The Social Protection Committee (SPC) will be associated in the preparation and implementation of the 2010 European Year by means of a regular exchange of views.

The Commission and the Member States — in consultation with the Consultative Committee of the European Year — will keep the SPC informed about the main activities (media campaign; main events, etc.) to help ensure the greatest possible consistency with the NAPs/Inclusion and the most effective impact of these activities.

The Commission will also identify other relevant committees which should be informed or involved in the planning of activities.

3.4. Partnerships at European level

European institutions — and in particular the European Parliament, the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee — and agencies are invited to play an active role in the Year.

The Commission will also develop partnerships with EU non-governmental organisations active in the field and other key stakeholders at EU level on the main initiatives and decisions. EU stakeholders meetings precede each meeting of the Consultative Committee.

4. Funding and non-financial support

4.1. Funding

A total of €17 million has been allocated to the 2010 European Year from the EU budget, of which a maximum of €9 million will be used for activities in the Member States. The latter amount must be complemented by equal co-funding or more by the Member States. Therefore around €18 million should become available for national activities.

Each Member State's share has been provisionally calculated on the basis of its voting rights in the Council and adjusted to guarantee a minimum support of €120 000 to all Member States. Consequently, budgets vary from €120 000 to some €750 000 (see annex 2). The final amount may vary somewhat since additional participation from other countries listed in Article 11 of the Decision will modify both the budget and the breakdown.

EU funding will cover a maximum of 50% of the total eligible costs. National co-funding should match EU funding by at least 50% and may come from either public or private sources (e.g. private foundations or business).

The 50% co-funding rule will apply to the total consolidated eligible costs, i.e. to all NP projects (including the NIBs' administrative costs) taken as a whole and not individually.

At European level, funding (€ million under direct management) will be in the form of:

- the purchase of goods and services (e.g. the information and communication campaign; the external evaluation of the European Year);
- grants awarded for the organisation of special events at European level to highlight and raise awareness of the European Year. Such grants shall not exceed 80% of the total eligible costs of the events.

The Commission underlines the importance of facilitating access for all NGOs, including small and medium-sized organisations. With a view to ensuring the widest possible access, the NIBs may decide not to request any co-financing from NGOs responsible for the implementation and instead to fully fund certain individual actions.

4.2. Non-financial support

Activities which do not receive any funding may be permitted and encouraged to use the 2010 European Year logo if they fully meet the objectives of the European Year.

At national level this support will be granted by the NIBs for initiatives taken by public or private organisations at national, regional or local level, in so far as the promoters of these initiatives demonstrate that the activities:

- are carried out during the period of the 2010 European Year (between 1 January and 31 December 2010);
- will help achieve one or more of the European Year's objectives;
- are in line with the national strategy, as defined in the NPs.

Activities or events at EU level which have a strong EU dimension or a transnational character, or take place in non-participating countries, could also be eligible for non-financial support. They will receive written authorisation to use the logo and may request material associated with the 2010 European Year, provided they abide by the same rules mentioned above.

5. Practicalities

5.1. National programmes in practice

5.1.1. Proposed structure for the national programme

The proposed structure to be followed when designing the NPs may be found in Annex I.

The NP — of maximum 10 pages — should describe:

1. The national context and challenges to be met: the key issues in the country as regards combating poverty and social exclusion, priorities of the national strategy for social protection and social inclusion (NAPs incl). This could

include a brief description of the administrative structures in place for the European Year and the expected impact and related outputs of the planned activities.

2. National priorities for the 2010 European Year and how they meet the four key objectives (recognition of rights, shared responsibility and participation, cohesion, commitment and concrete action). Creative action involving people suffering poverty should be encouraged.
3. The complete communication strategy, including the national opening event and a dedicated website in each country.
4. Consultation of civil society and stakeholders: those who were consulted in designing the programme, how and when they were consulted and how they will be involved in implementing, monitoring and evaluating the programme.
5. The main arrangements for implementation: call for proposals, selection procedure, award criteria etc, and an indicative timetable.
6. Indicative budget with EU and national co-financing.
7. Monitoring and evaluation of activities of the European Year.

5.1.2. *Assessment of the national programmes*

The Commission will assess the NPs against the principles laid out in the Decision, as well as against the guidelines laid down in the present document. In particular they should:

- accord with the agreed structure and guidelines in the Strategic Framework Document;
- be consistent with the objectives (recognition of rights; shared responsibility and participation; cohesion; commitment and concrete action) in the Decision;
- take account of the gender dimension and the accessibility of planned activities, including for people experiencing poverty and people with disabilities;
- be preceded by consultation of relevant stakeholders;
- mainstream the participation element in all the chosen priorities;
- provide information on the complementarity of proposed initiatives foreseen with existing EU, national and sub-national initiatives and resources.

The Commission will then accept, or make approval conditional on amendments.

The NP will constitute the framework for the detailed actions in the a proposal for an EU contribution under the delegation agreement sent by the NIB to the European Commission for co-funding.

(Recital 22) The varying levels of progress made at national level and the differing national socio-economic and cultural contexts and sensitivities call for a considerable part of the activities of the European Year to be decentralised at national level, through a system of indirect centralised management

5.1.3. *Practical arrangements*

See the roadmap, annex 3

- *Submission date*: the NPs should be submitted to the Commission by the NIBs by 15 May 2009.
- *Language*: in order to facilitate the examination, adoption and dissemination process across Member States and all interested stakeholders, the Commission requests that the national programme be provided in the national language(s) together with an English or French version.
- The Commission will either approve (with or without remarks) or reject in part or fully the programme within one month of receipt. The Commission may request additional information from NIBs. It will fix the deadline for replying or contesting comments.
- Delegation agreements will be signed between the Commission and each NIB in January 2010, on the basis of a specific funding request detailing the individual actions to be co-funded.
- *Publication*: once adopted, each NP will be published on the 2010 European Year website. In addition, each participating country is encouraged to foster transparency and visibility by publicising the NP as appropriate at national level. The NPs will be expected to feature on a website created for the occasion, or at least a webpage dedicated to the 2010 European Year be featured on the national website.

5.2. **Financial and administrative management**

5.2.1. *The management procedure*

The Decision provides for a system of indirect centralised management to be used at national level. This procedure will be run by NIBs, in compliance with:

- Art 54(2) c and 56(1) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (Financial Regulation)⁸ and
- Art 35 to 41 of Commission Regulation (EC, EURATOM) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No1605/2002 on the Financial

⁸ (OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1) as last amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1525/2007 (OJ L 343, 27.12.2007, p. 9).- <http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/consleg/2002/R/02002R1605-20070101-en.pdf>.

Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (Implementation rules)⁹.

In practice, for budget share to be managed in indirect centralised way, the Commission delegates budget implementation tasks to the NIBs. The NIBs are therefore legally bound by the rules of the Financial Regulation for the management of EU funds.

The legal framework for the delegation of tasks to NIBs specifies the criteria to be met, namely that the body proposed:

- be a national public-sector body;
- be subject to the law of the Member State concerned;
- provide adequate financial guarantees;
- have put in place, before commencing its tasks, internal control systems, accounting systems and grant award procedures as well as public procurement procedures;
- satisfy the requirements of sound financial management as set out in Article 56 of the Financial Regulation, existence and proper operation of an independent audit; internal control systems, including segregation of the duties of authorising expenses and accounting; accounting systems enabling the Commission to verify the use of funds; and transparent procurement and grant award procedures which are non-discriminatory, exclude any conflict of interest and are in accordance with the provisions of Titles V and VI of the Financial Regulation respectively, and provide adequate annual ex-post publication of beneficiaries of funds deriving from the budget, in conformity with Article 30(3) of the Financial Regulation.

NIBs need to have a specific budget and sufficient human resources to develop 2010 European Year activities. To ensure adequate political endorsement for European Year activities, the Commission encourages Member States to ensure an appropriate level of seniority among NIB staff.

To make it easier to assess NIBs, the Commission strongly recommended that NIBs be bodies which have already signed a convention with the Commission to manage EU funds for programmes such as the European Social Funds or other EU programmes managed under indirect centralised management arrangements (e.g. the national agencies for lifelong learning or intermediaries bodies related to EU Communication...)

5.2.2. *Calls for proposals and calls for tenders*

The NIBs should prepare — with the support of the Commission — the different steps for the selection of activities as part of the NP, by means of calls for proposals

⁹ (OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p. 1) as last amended by Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 478/2007 (OJ L 111, 28.4.2007, p. 13).- <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/consleg/2002/R/02002R2342-20070501-en.pdf> .

and/or calls for tenders to be published around June 2009. Eligibility, selection and award criteria for the calls will be set in accordance with Community rules.

The applications should be processed and the projects selected by the end of October 2009.

5.2.3. *How should the application be presented to the Commission?*

Annex — Chapter II — points 4, 5 and 6 — Each National Implementing Body will submit a single application for Community funding. That grant application will describe the national programme and priorities for the European Year, the actions proposed for funding. The grant application will be accompanied by a detailed budget setting out the total costs of the actions proposed and the amount and sources of co-funding. (...)

The release of global grants to participating countries will depend on the extent to which the objectives set in Article 2 (...) and developed in the Strategic Framework Document are adequately met in the National programme for implementing the European Year.

The Commission will evaluate the applications for Community funding submitted by the National Implementing Bodies, including by checking their compliance with the objectives referred to in Article 2 (...). If necessary, the Commission will request modifications to the applications

Once the NIB has been acknowledged and the NP has been approved by the Commission, each NIB will formally submit a proposal for a sum of money to be put at the disposal of the NIB by the Commission under the delegation agreement.

It should describe the national programme and priorities. It should explain the procedures for the award of individual grants or contracts and include an estimate of the number of activities to be funded. A timetable and a provisional budget should also be provided.

The budget should mention the origin and form of national co-funding (minimum 50%). This co-funding must be guaranteed in cash. This means an actual income, a financial flow that can be traced in the written accounts of each NIB, the partners or third parties. Consequently, contributions in kind, such as the provision of goods or services to the NIB free of charge by a third party, are not acceptable. However, the salaries paid to civil servants remunerated by a public administration, or to employees of companies or organisations assigned to the project would be considered as a cash contribution, since this gives rise to an expense which may be clearly identified in the accounts of the administrations or organisations concerned and which are auditable ex post, without limitation concerning personal data. The same amount must be also reported as expenditure.

If co-funding is provided by a third party, a letter confirming the amount and source must be provided by the NIB.

Projects must be selected for funding between 1 January and 31 December 2010. According to the Financial Regulation, costs incurred **before the submission** of the application by the NIB will not be eligible. Delegation agreements will not be signed by the Commission before January 2010 as they are to be financed under the 2010 EU budget.

5.2.4. *Signature of the delegation agreements*

Only once the delegation agreement is signed will the Commission be considered as having approved the costs included in the NIB proposal: the mere receipt of the NIB

proposal by the Commission should not be considered as approval. Signature of the delegation agreements should take place at the earliest time possible and most probably in the first few weeks of 2010.

5.2.5. *Payments*

After signature of the delegation agreement, the Commission will make a pre-financing payment of 80% of the total estimated EC funding. This payment should be made in February 2010.

The final payment will be made after all actions listed in the NPs have been implemented and reported to the NIB. The NIB should then submit its **final report on the European Year by 31 March 2011**.

6. **Monitoring and evaluation**

6.1. **Monitoring**

6.1.1. *European level*

The Commission will organise the monitoring of both Community-scale actions and national programmes. This will ensure coherence of all activities, at both preparation and implementation stages.

6.1.2. *National level*

At national level this monitoring role is the responsibility of the NIBs, with the involvement of other stakeholders a desirable feature.

6.2. **Evaluation**

Article 15 — By 31 December 2011, the Commission shall submit a report to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation, results and overall assessment of the actions provided for in this Decision

In conformity with Article 15 of the Decision, the activities of the 2010 European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion will be subject to an ongoing assessment.

The Commission will subcontract the ongoing evaluation to an independent outside organisation. Work will start in early 2010 with a view to delivering intermediate results in 2010 and final results in mid-2011.

The objectives of the exercise are to assess:

- whether the 2010 European Year has met its objectives, at both European and national levels;
- the point of organising a specific European Year, taking into consideration other existing Community initiatives and measures to combat poverty and promote social inclusion, including the European strategy for social protection and social inclusion;
- the point of launching a major information and promotional campaign at EU level, including the relevance of the chosen activities and the target audiences;

- the added value created by the European Year, including synergies created between different players and areas of intervention at EU, national, regional and local levels.

The ongoing evaluation will also consider the different aspects and activities of the 2010 European Year at European and national levels. It will cover:

- EU-level action, with particular emphasis on the information and promotional campaign;
- national action;
- any other action (e.g. projects receiving moral support from the 2010 European Year);
- the monitoring framework and systems set up at Commission level, including the Consultative Committee, the key stakeholders and the *ad hoc* inter-services group;
- NIBs and their respective national programmes.

In addition, a number of case studies will be conducted in some EU countries.

NIBs will be informed of who will carry out the 2010 European Year ongoing evaluation as soon as the selection has been made. NIBs and their staff will be expected to take the necessary steps to foster the best cooperation possible with the evaluation team and provide it with all information requested.

Annex 1 — The national programmes — proposed structure

Annex 2 — Maximum amount of EU funding allocated for each country

Annex 3 — Roadmap for implementation

Annex 1 — The National Programmes — Proposed structure

1. **NATIONAL CONTEXT: THE CHALLENGES TO BE MET (1 page)**
 - 1.1 The challenges and the national strategy against poverty
 - 1.2 The administrative structure in place
2. **THE NATIONAL PROGRAMME including THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY (5 pages)**
 - 2.1 **Activities of the 2010 European Year:**

How objectives of the 2010 European Year (Recognition of rights — Shared responsibility and participation — Cohesion — Commitment and concrete action) will be addressed at national, regional and local level. What are the expected results and impact on the national programme?
 - 2.2 **The Communication strategy including the opening event, website and national campaign**
 - 2.3 **Gender mainstreaming: how it is being treated in each chapter and activity**
 - 2.4 **Accessibility of the actions**
3. **CONSULTATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND STAKEHOLDERS (1 page)**
 - 3.1 **Stakeholders consulted**
 - 3.2 **The consultation process, its outcome and follow-up**
4. **ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION (1 page)**
 - 4.1 **Call for proposals, award criteria, selection procedure, etc**
 - 4.2 **Indicative timetable**
5. **INDICATIVE BUDGET (1 page)**
6. **MONITORING AND EVALUATION MECHANISMS (1 page)**

Annex 2 — Maximum amount of EU funding allocated for each country (*)

(provisional breakdown based on the participation of the current 27 Member States, i.e. not taking into consideration possible participation from other countries listed in Article 11 of the Decision)

Country	Maximum amount of EU co-funding	Weighting of votes in the Council	Corrected percentage in order to guarantee a minimum contribution of €120 000
	€	%	%
Austria	255.155	2,90	2,84%
Belgium	307.329	3,48	3,41%
Bulgaria	255.155	2,90	2,84%
Cyprus	120.000	1,16	1,33%
Czech Republic	307.329	3,48	3,41%
Denmark	176.894	2,03	1,97%
Estonia	120.000	1,16	1,33%
Finland	176.894	2,03	1,97%
France	750.807	8,41	8,34%
Germany	750.807	8,41	8,34%
Greece	307.329	3,48	3,41%
Hungary	307.329	3,48	3,41%
Ireland	176.894	2,03	1,97%
Italy	750.807	8,41	8,34%
Latvia	120.000	1,16	1,33%
Lithuania	176.894	2,03	1,97%
Luxembourg	120.000	1,16	1,33%
Malta	120.000	0,87	1,33%
Poland	698.634	7,83	7,76%
Portugal	307.329	3,48	3,41%
Romania	359.503	4,06	3,99%
Slovakia	176.894	2,03	1,97%
Slovenia	120.000	1,16	1,33%
Spain	698.634	7,83	7,76%
Sweden	255.155	2,90	2,84%
The Netherlands	333.416	3,77	3,70%
United Kingdom	750.807	8,41	8,34%
Total	9.000.000	100,00	100,00

(*)Member States will provide at least the same amount as the EU contribution

Annex 3 — Roadmap for implementation

October 2008:

Consultation on Strategic Framework Document with Member States and relevant EU level stakeholders

November/December 2008:

Member States:

- Process to appoint National Implementing Bodies (NIBs) (with a validated capacity to manage EU funding)
- Prepare nomination of Member State's representative to the Consultative Committee (preferably the national coordinator of the European Year)
- Identification of national stakeholders

Commission:

- Preparation of terms of reference for the EU information & media campaign and evaluation

January/February 2009:

Member States:

- Appointment of NIBs (with a validated capacity to manage EU funding) (by 15 January)
- Appointment of the members of the Consultative Committee (with a capacity to coordinate and run the campaign at country level (by 15 January)
- NIBs to identify priorities and consult stakeholders on draft national programmes

Commission:

- Acknowledgement of the NIBs (end of February)

March/April 2009:

Member States:

- Preparation of the national programmes in partnership with stakeholders

Commission:

- 1st meeting of EU stakeholders followed by the 1st meeting of the Consultative Committee
- Award of contract for EU-level media campaign and evaluation
- Preparation of the conference on "Social exclusion and the media"

- Preparation of the Financing Decision 2010

May/June 2009:

Member States:

- Send national programmes to Commission (15 May)
- Preparation of calls for proposals for activities

Commission:

- Approval or request for amendments to the national programmes (end June)
- Support to the NIBs

The selected contractor will prepare national campaigns & relations with the media

July/September 2009:

Member States:

- Preparation of the national media campaign

Commission:

- Adoption of the Financing Decision 2010
- Preparation Opening Conference (Spanish Presidency, January 2010)

October/November 2009

Member States:

- Selection of projects for the European Year 2010
- Preparation of the NIB proposal for EU co-funding

Commission:

- Conference on “Social exclusion and the media”
- 2nd meeting of EU stakeholders and 2nd meeting of the Consultative Committee

December 2009:

Member States:

- Presentation of national applications to the Commission (by 10 December 2009)

Commission:

- Starting assessment of NIBs’ proposal for EU co-funding

- Final preparation Opening Conference (Spanish Presidency, January 2010)

January/February 2010:

Member States:

- Participation in the EU opening Conference in Spain
- Opening events in each country

Commission:

- Opening Conference (Spanish Presidency)
- Finalise assessment of NIBs' proposal for EU co-funding
- Financial commitments
- Signature of the delegation agreements with the NIBs
- Payment of the first instalment to the NIBs

March/April 2010

Member States:

- Start of the activities of the EY 2010

Commission:

- 3rd meeting of EU stakeholders and of the Consultative Committee

November/December 2010:

- Closing Conference (Belgian Presidency)
- 4th meeting of EU stakeholders and of the Consultative Committee

2011:

- Evaluation of the 2010 European Year and final report by each Member State
- Final payments for the 2010 European Year (March 2011)
- Member States and Commission: continue to build on the momentum created by the 2010 European Year to transform social inclusion into concrete actions
- 5th meeting of EU stakeholders and of the Consultative Committee
- Final overall report on the European Year