

Commission Decision adopting the 2010 annual work programme on grants and contracts for the preparatory action - European Year of Volunteering 2011
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Budget line: 15.06.11

Basic act: Preparatory action in the field of application of the TFUE Treaty (Article 49 (6) (b) of the Financial Regulation

1. OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

1.1. Main features / general objectives of the action

The purpose of the preparatory actions in 2010 is to lay the groundwork for a successful European Year of Voluntary activities promoting active citizenship in 2011. The comments to budget line 15.06.11 stressed the importance of good public awareness, communication with volunteers at national, regional and local level and engagement with citizens. Therefore the preparatory actions will focus mainly on the development and launching of the information and communication campaign and the co-ordinated mobilisation of civil society in line with the objectives of the 2011 European Year which are to:

- Work towards an enabling environment for volunteering in the EU - To anchor volunteering as part of promoting civic participation and people-to-people activities in an EU context and address existing obstacles to voluntary activities, where appropriate and necessary.
- Empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary activities - To facilitate voluntary activities and help organisers to implement new types of voluntary activities and to encourage networking, mobility, cooperation and synergies within civil society and between civil society and other sectors in an EU context.
- Recognise voluntary activities - To encourage appropriate incentives for individuals, companies and volunteer-development organisations and gain recognition for volunteering at EU level and in the Member States by policy makers, civil society organisations, public institutions, the formal and non-formal education sector and employers for skills and competences developed through volunteering.
- Raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering - To raise general awareness of the importance of volunteering as an expression of civic participation which contributes to issues which are of common concern of all Member States, such as a harmonious societal development and social cohesion.

1.2. Recent policy developments

The work programme for the preparatory actions is defined by the anticipated political context in 2010. In that perspective, the elements below should be taken into consideration.

- The support of the European Parliament and the Council is very strong. Already in July 2008, the European Parliament adopted a written Declaration calling for a European Year of Volunteering in 2011 and the European Parliament and Council accelerated procedures to adopt the European Year in November 2009.
- When adopting the EU budget for 2010, the budgetary authority has increased the budget for the preparatory actions from € 2 to 3 million.
- The legal base for the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship 2011 was adopted by Council Decision of 27 November 2009 (2010/37/EC) covering an amount of € 8 Mio for 2011.

1.3. Priorities and specific objectives for 2010

In line with the comments to budget line 15.06.11 there are two main priorities and specific objectives for the preparatory actions in 2010:

A. Information and communication campaign

A well-targeted and professional information and communication campaign is crucial to the success of the European Year. It is therefore proposed that the services of a PR company be used to develop and implement a communication campaign at European and national level aimed at raising the awareness of the Year amongst all relevant stakeholders. The selected provider will be charged with: the conception, implementation and monitoring of an overall communication campaign and strategy for the European Year; the development and dissemination of a wide range of information and promotional material for use at European and national level and a communication toolbox including a European website; the planning and organisation of awareness-raising events and other visibility measures including Ambassadors for the Year and media relations as well as support for the communication activities organised by the European Year National Co-ordinating Bodies and the activities aimed at engaging volunteers and civil society organisations to be carried out by the co-ordination structure mentioned in 1.3.B.

B. Civil Society co-ordination structure

Volunteers and the civil society organisations that represent and work with volunteers are key stakeholders of the European Year. Achieving the objectives of the Year will only be possible if civil society is fully mobilised and actively engaged. It is necessary to put in place an efficient means of reaching the many thousands of volunteers and civil society volunteer organisations spread across Europe. It is therefore proposed to support one co-ordination structure bringing together the major stakeholders at European level that would mobilise volunteers and promote ownership of the Year amongst civil society. The structure would: complement the information and communication activities to be undertaken by the PR company by planning and carrying out activities specifically aimed at engaging volunteers and civil society organisations and aiming, encouraging recognition of volunteering, stimulating projects and promoting sharing of experience and partnership building between civil society, business, research and public authorities, supporting debate and sharing of experience to improve the policy framework of volunteering and creating better conditions for voluntary activities in the EU.

2. GRANTS

2.1. Grants to bodies with a de jure or de facto monopoly (Art. 168.1(c) IR)

Grant to support a co-ordination structure

See index 2 of the programming table of budget line 15.06.11

A grant agreement for an action will be signed with one coordination structure for the activities mentioned under 1.3.B. Since 2008, the key stakeholders of civil society have been co-operating together in the form of an alliance of NGOs active in the field of volunteering and have been instrumental in campaigning for the declaration of 2011 as a European Year of voluntary activities to promote active citizenship.

The Alliance is a unique pan-European grouping of 22 international and European networks of NGOs bringing together an unparalleled wealth of knowledge and experience. It represents around 1,500 civil society organisations active at national and regional levels thus providing broad representation across Europe and access to many thousands of volunteers through the national and regional members of their networks. The Alliance covers all sectors and types of volunteering as well as all ages of volunteers and therefore is de facto in a monopoly position to carry out the tasks of the civil society co-ordination structure as provided for in Article 168.1(c) of the detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation (hereinafter "IR"¹). No other body could rival the wide scope, breadth of geographical coverage and scale of representation of the Alliance.

The Alliance secretariat will be invited to present a grant request where the allocation of funds received from the EU has to be detailed and specify how they would: plan and carry out activities specifically aimed at engaging volunteers and civil society organisations, encouraging recognition of volunteering, stimulating projects and promoting sharing of experience and partnership-building between civil society, business, research and public authorities, supporting debate and sharing of experience to improve the policy framework of volunteering and creating better conditions for voluntary activities in the EU. These activities would complement the information and communication services to be undertaken by the PR company.

The request will also need to include elements allowing the Commission to assess the financial, legal and technical capacity of the organisation designated by the Alliance members to act as its secretariat with regard to the tasks of the civil society co-ordination structure. In addition the Alliance secretariat will have to demonstrate the European dimension of the co-ordination structure and its value added in relation to the objectives of the European Year.

The European Union's financial support will be awarded through an action grant.

¹ Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p. 1.)

3. PROCUREMENT

3.1. Communication campaign

See index 1 of the programming table of budget line 15.06.11

The communication campaign of the 2011 European Year of voluntary activities to promote active citizenship will need to be developed during the first semester of 2010 and launched during the second semester to ensure a good level of awareness for the Year in 2011.

An overall communication strategy for the European Year should provide a joint framework for the communication activities of all stakeholders. The strategy should give direction not only for the Commission's communication activities at the EU level, but also provide a clear framework for the Member States to develop 27 national communication campaigns and provide a basis for the civil society organisations to develop their activities specifically aimed at engaging volunteers and civil society organisations..

The communication strategy needs to create coherence between the various activities carried out by the different stakeholders and at the same time be flexible to take account of the very diverse operating situations of the stakeholders.

It is proposed that a specific contract be drawn up under the Multiple Framework Contract No EAC/20/2008 with renewed competitive tendering for the provision of integrated communication services. The selected provider will be charged with: the conception, implementation and monitoring of an overall communication campaign and strategy for the European Year; the development and dissemination of a wide range of information and promotional material for use at European and national level and a communication toolbox including a European website; the planning and organisation of awareness-raising events and other visibility measures including Ambassadors for the Year and media relations as well as support for the activities organised by the European Year National Co-ordinating Bodies and the activities aimed at engaging volunteers and civil society organisations to be carried out by the co-ordination structure mentioned in 1.3.B.

PROGRAMMING TABLE FOR 2010**Budget line 15.06.11****Title** Preparatory action - European Year of Volunteering 2011**EUR 27****3.000.000****TOTAL (*)****3.000.000****ANNEX I**

Index	Actions and sub-actions	Budget	Mode of implementation	Number of grants / contracts	Average value of grants / contracts	Maximum rate of cofinancing	Publication of the calls/tenders	Grant Agreement (**)
1.1	Communication campaign	2.600.000	PP	1	2.600.000	NA	NA	NA
1.2	Coordination of civil society activities to support the EYV	400.000	MON	1	400.000	90%	NA	AGR
Total		3.000.000						

(*) Pursuant to Article 83 of the Financial Regulation, the appropriations may also finance the payment of default interest.

(**):

AGR Grants covered by a written agreement

PP: Public Procurement

MON: Grants to bodies with a de jure or de facto monopoly - Art 168.1 (c) IR