

TRIALOG

Development NGOs in the enlarged EU

TRIALOG Information Service (TIS)

(30/06/2008)

The TRIALOG Information Service (TIS) is addressed to NGOs and individuals who are interested in development issues in the context of EU enlargement.

Read the TIS online at: <http://www.trialog.or.at/tis>

CONTENT

1. Activities of European NGOs

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/search/label/Activities%20of%20European%20NGDOs>

- 1.1. What French NGOs will do during the French Presidency of the EU
- 1.2. International SLOGA Conference "Intercultural Dialogue in Development Education"
- 1.3. Donor politics and gender orders in the Israeli-Palestinian-Conflict
- 1.4. CONCORD exhibition keeps touring Europe

2. EU development policy and EU enlargement

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/search/label/EU%20development%20policy%20and%20EU%20enlargement>

- 2.1. CONCORD report on the lack of progress in European commitments on aid quantity and quality
- 2.2. European Council releases Presidency Conclusions
- 2.3. The EU Budget
- 2.4. European Council focus on Western Balkans
- 2.5. European Neighbourhood Policy: Progress Reports

3. Events

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/search/label/Events>

- 3.1. Sept./Oct. 2008: TRIALOG trainings in early autumn
- 3.2. Sept. 29-30, 2008: "Connecting the EU and Neighbouring countries", Zadar/Croatia
- 3.3. Oct. 9-11, 2008: WIDE Conference 'Feminist Visions for a Just Europe', The Hague
- 3.4. November 15-17, 2008: European Development Days, Strasbourg

4. Funding opportunities

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/search/label/Funding%20Opportunities>

- 4.1. Commissioners in the neighbourhood
- 4.2. Conference on Civil Society Development in Southeast Europe launches new financing facility

5. News from NGDO platforms

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/search/label/News%20from%20NGDO%20platforms>

- 5.1. Latvian NGDO platform LAPAS presents AidWatch results
- 5.2. News from the Maltese platform SKOP
- 5.3. Romania: The day the light turned off...
- 5.4. Latvia has a Development Education Strategy!

6. Sources of Information

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/search/label/Sources%20of%20Information>

- 6.1. Dynamics of EU Development Policy after enlargement
- 6.2. CONCORD Flash

7. TRIALOG News

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/search/label/TRIALOG%20News>

- 7.1. Prague Conference discussed development paradigms and alternatives
- 7.2. TRIALOG Cyprus visit
- 7.3. Training on Strategic Planning for platforms - „How to make your visions reality"
- 7.4. In memoriam Wico Bunskoek

1. Activities of European NGDOs

1.1. What French NGOs will do during the French Presidency of the EU

Information provided by Agnes Philippart, CONCORD

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/what-french-ngos-will-do-during-french.html>

France is taking the lead of Europe on 1st of July. This French presidency of the EU is taking place in a particular context, marked by the French rejection of the European Constitutional Treaty by France in 2006 and the recent No from Ireland. Moreover, the European elections and the eventual entry into force of the amended Treaty will closely follow the French EU presidency. The future of Europe will be central in the debates.

The French national association "Coordination SUD" has foreseen several activities to raise the importance of development cooperation, both at national level and, with CONCORD, at European level. Its presidency program is focusing on Europe's relationships with countries from the South and more widely Europe's role in globalisation. Future of Europe will be the cross-cutting theme tackled from different angles.

Advocacy actions towards French and European decision takers, communication and awareness raising activities will be carried out to ensure that civil society's main concerns are taken into account in the official EU agenda. A manifesto for the French EU presidency by Coordination SUD, is presenting NGOs analysis and demands for the future of Europe and Europe's relations with countries from the South.

For each theme, a European seminar will be organised:

- Development financing (1 July): in the context of the international summits on aid effectiveness in Accra and development financing in December in Doha.
- Agriculture and development (16 September): in the context of the review of the European budget and the re-evaluation of the Common Agricultural Policy.
- Climate change and development (25 September): impact of global warming on development in the South.
- International conferences on the role of national platforms (27-28 October) and on Europe viewed by the rest of the world (29-30 October, co-organised with CONCORD) with 80 representatives from all over the world sharing their opinions on different aspects of the European external policies and the role of Europe.
- Citizens, Europe and international solidarity (18-19 November): role of citizens in the elaboration of the European project and particularly in regards to development and solidarity.
- Europe-African relations (5 December): after the joint EU-Africa strategy, adopted at the end of 2007, it is necessary to carry on with the analysis and advocacy work that was undertaken under the preceding presidencies on this subject. The aim is to have proposals for a balanced and mutually enriching relationship between the two continents

For further information <http://www.coordinationsud.org/> or contact Florence McBain:

mcbain@coordinationsud.org

Find soon all information also on: <http://www.europe-solidairesponsable.org/>

1.2. International SLOGA Conference "Intercultural Dialogue in Development Education"

Source: <http://www.sloga-platform.org/news/show/387>

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/international-sloga-conference.html>

The international SLOGA conference with the title 'Intercultural dialogue in development education' has been the biggest event among nongovernmental organizations during the Slovenian presidency. The conference, which took place on 9 and 10 June 2008 in Ljubljana, has been organized by the Slovenian NGDO platform SLOGA with cooperation from CONCORD, European Commission and Slovene Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Over 230 participants from national ministries and state agencies, parliaments, EU institutions, European civil society, international organizations, local and regional authorities and research institutes participated in the European Conference on Intercultural Dialogue in Development Education. The conference focused on the implementation of the European Development Education Consensus in the framework of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

The conference calls on growing political commitment and strengthened policy in the field of Development Education, at European and national level, namely implementing "The European Consensus on Development: The contribution of Development Education and Awareness Raising" (see links below).

The conference had also many side events like an exhibition, workshops for children, youngsters and adults, a manifestation and press conference. The first pre event was the exhibition with the title: "How do the people living in developing countries really see the impact of Europe?" Photographs show positive and less positive impact of Europe on developing countries and how we can help developing countries without destroying their own culture. The exhibition was opened by Helena Drnovšek Zorko, head of PR in Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Helena has stressed the importance of strong civil society for effective national development policy. The workshops included many activities such as games concerning global education where participants learned about unfair conditions that some countries face and how can each person with the change of thinking and living contribute towards a better and fairer world.

During lunch time, 200 participants joined the SLOGA manifestation and publicly called Slovenian government and other European governments to start paying attention to development cooperation and global education with inclusion of civil society.

On June 12, after the conference SLOGA and the Council of Europe organized a press conference where the main recommendations and conclusion were presented.

Find the Final Recommendations of the conference at:

<http://www.sloga-platform.org/attachments/387/FINAL%20RECOMMENDATIONS.doc>

Link to the summary of the speaker's speeches: <http://www.sloga-platform.org/news/show/396>

Find more about the European Consensus on Development Education at: <http://www.deeep.org/>

Further information about the CONCORD photo exhibition "How do developing countries see Europe":

<http://www.concordeurope.org/Public/emergingviews/Accueil.php?ID=4779&&language=eng>

1.3. Donor politics and gender orders in the Israeli-Palestinian-Conflict

Information provided by Magda Seewald, VIDC

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/donor-politics-and-gender-orders-in.html>

From April 17-18, 2008, the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation/VIDC (<http://www.vidc.org/>) organised the Conference "Perspectives beyond war and crisis? Donor politics and gender orders in the Israeli-Palestinian-Conflict".

„There will be no sustainable economical development without a political solution and an end of the occupation in the Palestinian Territories". All speakers of the conference agreed on this disillusion conclusion of Sara Roy (Harvard University). Although billions of foreign aid had been brought to the Westbank and Gaza during the last decades the economic and social situation today in the Occupied Palestinian Territories has become worse than ever. It was stated on the conference that the donors with their donor politics had become a part of the problem rather than a part of the solution. The foreign aid has helped to prolong the Israeli occupation of the territories.

As Maha Abu-Dhayyeh Shammass (Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counseling) pointed out: With the creation of the Palestinian Authority (PA) during the Oslo process the Israeli responsibility for the Palestinian people has been transferred to the PA. She also stated that the foreign money is used for the militarization of the territories, with weapons coming from Israel. This situation has a special influence on Palestinian women; they need protection which they do not get from the PA, as Palestine is not a functional state, where women can claim their rights.

As the UN-Resolution 1325 addresses the special needs of women in conflict situations, the conference asked how the resolution works in reality of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Siham Bargouthi (Association of Women's Action in Palestine) explained that within the last years lot of programs had been invented in the name of Resolution 1325 to support women's organizations and to empower women for leading positions. But after the Hamas victory in the elections the donors stopped their support, due to the boycott of Hamas. International help was used as a tool for punishment.

The UN-Resolution 1325 asks for women involvement in conflict resolution therefore also Israeli women's peace groups are supported. Gila Svirsky (Women for a Just Peace) referred to the tactics and problems Israeli women peace activists are facing in their struggle for a just peace.

The conference was completed by Ghada Hashem Talhami (Lake Forest College) with an enthusiastic speech about struggle of the Palestinian women's movement under occupation.

Documentation of the conference: <http://dp.vidc.org/index.php?id=161>

1.4. CONCORD exhibition keeps touring Europe

Information provided by Agnes Philippart, CONCORD

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/concord-exhibition-keeps-touring-europe.html>

After the European Parliament and the permanent Slovenian representation in Brussels, CONCORD's photo exhibition went to Paris on the occasion of the Day of Europe. Called "Emerging views", the exhibition presents photos and comments provided by citizens living in developing countries on the impact of Europe on their lives. In Paris, the exhibition was presented in one of the most touristic places of the city, the square of the town hall. It came back to Brussels to be presented at the CONCORD General Assembly and then stopped by the European Social and Economic Committee for the Open Day of the European institutions on 7th of June.

Interested in seeing the exhibition? Be prepared to travel to Slovenia where it will stay till end of August or plan a trip to Paris to see it at the FIAP from 8 September till 15 December, see: <http://www.fiap.asso.fr/>. Of course, the best way to see the exhibition is to borrow it, for free. Find out more here: <http://www.concordeurope.org/Public/emergingviews/Accueil.php?ID=4779&language=eng>

For further information: Agnes Philippart, aphilippart@concordeurope.org

2. EU development policy and EU enlargement

2.1. CONCORD report on the lack of progress in European commitments on aid quantity and quality

Information provided by Agnes Philippart, CONCORD

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/concord-report-on-lack-of-progress-in.html>

The new report of CONCORD on the reality of aid given by the European Member States and Commission to developing countries is out. Called, "No Time to Waste: European governments behind schedule on aid quantity and quality" it reveals that on current trends the European Union (EU) will have given 75 billion less in aid by 2010 than it promised, threatening progress on the UN Millennium Development Goals set for 2015.

At the press launch on 22 May, Justin Kilcullen, President of CONCORD, explained: "A hundred thousand estimated dead in Burma, food prices rocketing and a woman dying every minute in pregnancy or childbirth. Now, more than ever, European governments must deliver the aid they promised to the world's poor".

The official statistics, released by the OECD in April (see OECD website: http://www.oecd.org/document/8/0,3343,en_2649_33721_40381960_1_1_1_1,00.html), showed that European aid fell sharply in 2007, with Belgium, France and the UK recording falls of 10-30%. According to the OECD: "most donors are not on track to meet their stated commitments to scale up aid and will need to make unprecedented increases to meet the targets they have set." If this record of slow progress continues, Europe will find it harder to meet its target with every year that passes.

In addition, CONCORD's report proves that European governments continue to "inflate" their aid statistics with debt relief and refugee costs. 15 old member States provided only 0.33% of their gross national income as genuine aid in 2007, continuing to miss the target set for 2006 of 0.39% of GNI.

The EU has committed to make aid work better by making it more predictable, better coordinated, accountable and aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. But NGOs are concerned that these targets are not being met and that more ambitious commitments are needed. Moussa Faye, Chief Executive of ActionAid Senegal, was also present at the press launch and the round table attended by officials. He recalled that "if you live in Senegal where one in eight children dies before

reaching his or her fifth birthday, aid means services and services mean the difference between life and death”.

2008 is a crucial year for aid, testing the credibility of European governments. At the High Level Ministerial Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra, Ghana, this coming September, the EU will review its progress against commitments made in 2005 in Paris. “Europe has a responsibility to take the lead at this crucial event by delivering more and better aid” explained Marivic Raquiza of GCAP South-East, North and Central Asia (GCAP-SENCA)."

Over 200 media reported on CONCORD's report and the demonstration, organised by CONCORD (<http://www.concordeurope.org>) and GCAP (<http://www.whiteband.org>) that took place in front of the European Commission and Council in Brussels at the opening of an EU meeting on 26 May. CONCORD also met with the permanent Slovenian representation, which held the Presidency of the European Union, to voice its view.

Download the full CONCORD Aid Watch Report 2008 from:

<http://www.concordeurope.org/Files/media/extranetdocumentsENG/NavigationSecondaire/WorkingGroups/Aidwatch/Aidwatch2008/Light-Full-report.pdf>

For further information: Jasmine Burnley, jasmine.burnley@concordeurope.org

For video comments from citizens from developing countries on the fall in EU aid:

<http://www.concordeurope.org/Public/Page.php?ID=3083>

2.2. European Council releases Presidency Conclusions

Information provided by Rebecca Steel, TRIALOG

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/european-council-releases-presidency.html>

The European Council, which took place on 19 and 20 June, has released its Presidency Conclusions, which cover a wide range of topics. These include the Western Balkans, the MDGs, and the two initiatives for increased cooperation with the EU's neighbours; namely the Union for the Mediterranean and the Eastern Partnership.

Nothing new was announced in terms of the Western Balkans. The Council reaffirmed its support for the European perspective of the countries in the region, stressing the need for political and economic reform and underlining the need for recent progress to be consolidated, through the Stabilisation and Association Process.

The Council turned its attention to the Millennium Development Goals because of the importance of 2008 as a 'turning point in enhancing the collective efforts to eradicate poverty in the context of sustainable development.' The Council seems much more optimistic about the possibilities of achieving the MDGs than most other actors, although despite being convinced they can all be achieved, it does admit concern at current trends. ODA commitments were restated, and the member states are being encouraged to establish indicative timetables. Other related areas also covered by the conclusions are aid effectiveness, policy coherence for development (PCD) and Aid for Trade.

The compromise between the heavily criticised Barcelona Process, which has been in place since 1995, and the newly re-proposed Mediterranean Union, has been given the title Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean and is seen by the Council as an opportunity to 'inject further momentum into the Union's relations with the Mediterranean.' The EU will consult its Mediterranean partners in order to prepare a joint declaration to be adopted at the Paris summit for the Mediterranean on 13 July.

The Eastern Partnership, recently proposed by Poland in response to the increased cooperation foreseen for the Mediterranean region, was welcomed by the Council as a way of developing the eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and enhancing regional cooperation.

The full Presidency Conclusions can be downloaded from:

http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/Council_Conclusions/June/0619_EC-CON.pdf

2.3. The EU Budget

Information provided by Rebecca Steel, TRIALOG

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/eu-budget.html>

The EU Budget is not a topic many would choose for a fascinating discussion among friends, but it is behind every action the EU takes and small changes in the budget can make all the difference to large numbers of people. There is no denying the budget is of vital importance.

At the beginning of May, Budget Commissioner Dalia Grybauskaitė presented a proposal for the 2009 budget. In it, spending on structural actions for New Member States (NMS), the so-called EU-12, will be double the share it was in 2006 and up from 47% this year, to 50% of the €48.4 billion allocated to support cohesion across Europe.

More important than the yearly budget though is the multi-annual planning for the budget, the next of which will start in 2014. It might seem a long way off, but the European Commission is in the middle of a budget review, which is intended to feed into the next financial perspectives.

A lunch debate was held on 21 May by the Brussels-based Civil Society Contact Group, to discuss the financing of the EU – where does, could and should the money come from. Presentations gave an overview of the current sources that contribute to the EU budget, the problems surrounding VAT as a source and the current situation regarding environmental tax in EU member states. The discussion that followed looked at alternatives to the current sources of funding, bringing up the importance of finding a solution that is equitable and efficient.

Discussions around this topic will continue at Brussels level. NGOs, institutions and individuals were encouraged to contribute to the EC's budget review.

Links:

Find more information about the EU budget:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/issues/issues_en.htm

View contributions submitted to the EC in the consultation on the budget:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/reform/issues/read_en.htm

2.4. European Council focus on Western Balkans

Information provided by Rebecca Steel, TRIALOG

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/european-council-focus-on-western.html>

The General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) meeting held in Luxembourg on 29th April 2008 included debates on the situation in the Western Balkans and resulted in conclusions on the region.

Regarding Serbia, the Council welcomed the signature of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) and of the Interim agreement as important steps towards joining the EU. It reiterated the necessity for Serbia to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and vowed to monitor this cooperation jointly with the EC.

The Council welcomed the conclusion of the first phase of police reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is one of the necessary conditions for further progress towards the conclusion of the SAA.

More generally, the Council welcomed the Commission communication "Western Balkans: Enhancing the European Perspective" from March, and stated that the progress achieved in recent years through the

Stabilisation and Association process should be sustained and made irreversible. According to the conclusions, "the European perspective needs to be tangible and more visible to the people across the Western Balkans".

The Council also welcomed the Commission's intentions to increase the number of scholarships for students from the Western Balkans to study in the EU, and the initiatives to step up support to civil society and enhance donor coordination, to support socio-economic development in the region.

Link - European Council press release:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/gena/100227.pdf

2.5. European Neighbourhood Policy: Progress Reports

Information provided by Rebecca Steel, TRIALOG

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/european-neighbourhood-policy-progress.html>

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) country progress reports were published by the European Commission (EC) on 3rd April 2008, accompanied by a Commission communication on the implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2007.

The EC's main conclusions from the progress reports are that since the end of 2006, economic integration has been progressing; mobility with certain countries has been facilitated; cooperation on justice and the fight against organised crime has increased; energy cooperation contributes to more energy security; transport links have been strengthened and countries in the European neighbourhood are becoming increasingly involved in EU programmes in research, innovation and education.

The reports are available for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Moldova, Palestine, Tunisia and Ukraine.

The reports were met with disappointment from certain groups, including the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network (EMHRN), which called for the establishment of a mechanism for the systematic and public monitoring of the ENP Action Plans, allowing for clear benchmarks on which to base future Country Progress Reports.

Links:

All EC ENP reference documents: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm

European Commission progress reports: http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/documents_en.htm#3

EMHRN response: <http://www.euromedrights.net/pages/511/news/focus/52201>

3. Events

3.1. Sept./Oct. 2008: TRIALOG trainings in early autumn

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/septoct-2008-trialog-trainings-in-early.html>

The following trainings are planned for September and October:

- TRIALOG Training in Cyprus (September 16 – 19, 2008)
TRIALOG will hold a general training on funding opportunities within the EC-context, Budget-line "Non State Actors - Local Authorities" - especially with the focus on the possible engagement for the Turkish Cypriot organizations and on "Development Education". Additionally, we are organizing a platform-building activity together with Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot NGOs.
- TRIALOG Training in Macedonia (October 21 – 23, 2008)
For the first time, TRIALOG will hold a general training on funding opportunities within the EC-context, on "Development Education" and on the Budget-line "Non State Actors - Local

Authorities" in Macedonia - especially with the focus on the possible engagement of Macedonian organizations, in view of Macedonia being a candidate country.

- Study Visit "Development Policy" (October 5-10, 2008)
TRIALOG will organise a study visit to different EC institutions and civil society organisations in Brussels (Belgium) and Strasbourg (France). This study visit is open for the new member states representatives in the CONCORD EPAN and FDR working groups. The invitation letter with further details will be sent out soon.

(Development) NGOs from Cyprus and Macedonia interested in the trainings should contact Petra Kreinecker, TRIALOG Capacity Building Officer, at p.kreinecker@trialog.or.at.

3.2. Sept. 29-30, 2008: "Connecting the EU and Neighbouring countries", Zadar/Croatia

Information provided by Elena Tegovska, ECAS, and Olivier Consolo, CONCORD.

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/sept-29-30-2008-connecting-eu-and.html>

Following-up to the EU Neighbourhood Conference in April in Ljubljana (see April TIS <http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/04/eu-neighbourhood-conference-in-slovenia.html>) which resulted in the adoption of the Ljubljana declaration (<http://www.ecas-citizens.eu/content/view/76/173/1/4/>), The European Citizen Action Service (ECAS) and the National Foundation for Civil Society Development (NFCSD) from Croatia are organising a conference on "Civil Society connecting the EU and neighbouring countries: 3 collaboration spaces for civil society development beyond EU borders". It will take place in Zadar, Croatia, between 29 and 30 September 2008.

The collaboration spaces will be organised around the following themes:

1. The Ljubljana declaration and beyond
2. Agenda for common problems and solutions for Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) from the EU Neighbourhood
3. Enhanced donor coordination for sustainable civil society development

Further information will become available in July 2008.

3.3. Oct. 9-11, 2008: WIDE Conference 'Feminist Visions for a Just Europe', The Hague

Source: WIDE News, Number 5, May 2008; <http://www.wide-network.org/>

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/oct-9-11-2008-wide-conference-feminist.html>

On 9 to 11 October, the WIDE (Women In Development Europe) Annual Conference 2008 entitled 'Feminist Visions for a Just Europe' will take place in The Hague in the Netherlands.

This year's conference will be hosted by WO=MEN, the Dutch Gender Platform, and is expected to convene at least 200 delegates representing the unique triangle of women living and working in the 'West, East and South'. Its general aim is to examine Europe's role (and responsibilities) in the world, viewed through the lens of women's rights and gender justice.

Each of the three conference days is structured to meet concrete goals:

Day 1: Feminisms in Europe Today Reflections

Day 2: Europe's Role in the World through the Lens of Women's Rights and Gender Justice Challenges and Opportunities

Day 3: Building a Feminist Future through a Just Europe Strategies and Alliances

For more information and the preliminary programme, please visit: <http://www.wide-network.org/index.jsp?id=380>

Read the latest WIDE newsletter at: http://62.149.193.10/wide/download/2008_News_5.pdf?id=637

Download the latest newsletter from KARAT, a Warsaw based regional coalition of organizations and individuals that works to ensure gender equality in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS):

<http://www.karat.org/karat/img/fckimages/KARAT%20News%20June%202008.doc>

3.4. November 15-17, 2008: European Development Days, Strasbourg

Source: http://www.eudevdays.eu/Public/index_en.html

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/november-15-17-2008-european.html>

The third edition of the European Development Days (EDD), a meeting of different development cooperation stakeholders and decision makers organised by the European Commission, will take place in Strasbourg (France) on November 15-17, 2008.

This year, the central theme will be "local authorities and development"; eg. twinning initiatives between local authorities in the "North" and "South" will be encouraged. A lot of organisations, including NGOs, will present themselves in the so-called "Development Village".

For more information and the draft agenda please visit the official EDD website:

http://www.eudevdays.eu/Public/index_en.html

4. Funding Opportunities

4.1. Commissioners in the neighbourhood

Information provided by Rebecca Steel, TRIALOG

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/commissioners-in-neighbourhood.html>

Jan Figel, the European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth has launched the Ljubljana Process – Funding Heritage Rehabilitation in South-East Europe, a joint initiative from the European Commission and the Council of Europe.

The process will ensure funding for significant numbers of rehabilitation projects in the Western Balkans, and foster the adoption of sustainable funding strategies for them. It was announced at a conference organised under the Slovenian Presidency of the EU: New Paradigms, new models- Culture in the EU External Relations in May.

Commissioner Figel said the initiative was part of the endeavours to 'valorise emblematic heritage sites in the areas' in order to build bridges between communities, 'thereby fostering reconciliation, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in this part of Europe.'

Meanwhile, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the European Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), has launched the EU's Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF). This facility will mobilise funding for infrastructure projects, mainly in the energy, transport and environment sectors, but also for SME (Small and medium enterprises) development and social sector projects, throughout the area covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner said that 'concrete projects financed under this facility will bring tangible benefits to citizens of the neighbouring countries and the Union alike and will bring our partners closer to the EU.'

Links to original press releases:

Figel' launches landmark process for cultural heritage in the Western Balkans

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/08/737&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

More funds for vital investment in EU's neighbourhood

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/08/709&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

4.2. Conference on Civil Society Development in Southeast Europe launches new financing facility

Information provided by Rebecca Steel, TRIALOG

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/conference-on-civil-society-development.html>

The European Commission's DG Enlargement held a conference on 17th and 18th April on civil society development in southeastern Europe.

The conference attracted almost 500 participants from the region, who were invited to use the opportunity to network, exchange best practices and build partnerships. High profile speakers such as George Soros and enlargement Commission Olli Rehn started proceedings, giving way to panel discussions and workshops on particular themes, as well as a full programme of side events and stands.

Another of the conference's main purposes was also to disseminate information about a new facility under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) for civil society development.

The facility will cover three areas:

- Support for local civil society initiatives, capacity building and reinforcing the role of civil society in the candidate and potential candidate countries
- So-called people-to-people activities: programmes that familiarise journalists, young politicians, trade union leaders and teachers for example with EU policies and institutions
- Support for developing partnerships and networks between civil society organisations in the EU and enlargement countries to promote knowledge and experience transfer.

Participants were provided with a cultural programme in the evenings, with a concert by the Sarajevo-based Youth Symphony Orchestra of Southeast Europe and the "Balkan Film Days" showing the best recent films from the region.

Those who attended the conference were generally positive about the opportunities it had provided to network and find out more about EU policies, including the IPA. Common criticisms of the conference were that it had been a too big event and that some of the panel discussions had been ill-prepared and badly chaired.

Find documents relating to the conference at:

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/civil-society-development/conf_17_18_docs_en.htm

5. News from NGDO platforms

5.1. Latvian NGDO platform LAPAS presents AidWatch results

Information provided by Mara Simane, LAPAS Director

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/latvian-ngdo-platform-lapas-presents.html>

„In last place again – together with Bulgaria!” With this headline, the Latvian NGDO Platform (LAPAS) launched information on the release of the CONCORD AIDWATCH Report on May 22nd (see also article on the report in this TIS). The LAPAS press release was used by three major internet sites, TVNet, Delfi and Dienas Bizness and mentioned on the national radio station.

LAPAS presented over 30 copies of the report to the Head of the Parliament Foreign Relations Committee, the Head of the European Affairs Committee, the Prime Minister, the Finance Minister, Head of the State Chancellery and other key policy makers.

In addition, LAPAS sent a letter to all of the 100 members of parliament to thank them for their participation in adopting the Law on Development Cooperation and International Aid (still underway). The letter urged them to remember that a law alone will not help them keep up their commitments; financial support is needed.

May 22nd concluded with a meeting at the National Youth Council with members of youth NGOs. The heated discussion went overtime about Latvia's need to be more active. At the end of the day, visits to the LAPAS website were double the average.

AidWatch activities culminated with an op-ed editorial in Diena, Latvia's most widely read daily newspaper written by Mara Simane, LAPAS Director.

Visit the LAPAS website: <http://www.lapas.lv/>

5.2. News from the Maltese platform SKOP

Information provided by Mario Gerada, SKOP - Secretariat

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/news-from-maltese-platform-skop.html>

Over the past year the National Platform of Maltese NGOs has undergone a number of changes. The platform has been engaged more actively with the media, issuing regular press releases about development issues, writing articles for newspapers and also participating in interviews. Therefore the need for a logo and a catchier name was felt.

A process of discussion was opened up with the member organizations which resulted in the new logo and the name SKOP, standing for solidarity and cooperation. Another change related to SKOP's visibility and image is the current restructuring of the platform's website (which will become available at: <http://skopmalta.org/>)

Both public visibility and regular organization of activities for development organizations (for members and non-members), have brought the platform into closer relationship and dialogue with different stakeholders in the sector of Development. In the past years SKOP's membership has also increased to 13 organizations whilst others are discussing the possibility of joining.

The above mentioned achievements were possible also thanks to a Presidency Fund project which SKOP embarked on last year. The support of the Presidency Fund has been crucial for the platform's and its membership capacity building; giving them the possibility to engage NGO organizations (members and non-members), the media and Ministries into advocacy on development issues, also raising awareness and knowledge about development policy issues.

Also the Platform's engagement with CONCORD and support from TRIALOG assisted SKOP to slowly but surely strengthen itself, develop its expertise and engage in advocacy work in a more effective and professional manner.

5.3. Romania: The day the light turned off...

Information provided by Valentin Burada, Romanian NGO platform FOND

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/romania-day-light-turned-off.html>

On 24 April 2008, the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) together with the office of UNDP in Romania officially launched the programme "Strengthening the National Institutional and Educational

Capacity to Carry out Official Development Assistance (ODA) Programmes and Projects". The programme has been presented as „a joint effort to support the transformation of Romania from a recipient of ODA and humanitarian aid to a donor country”.

Albeit the only genuine partners in development cooperation for the Romanian MFA over the last 3 years and the only active actors with some experience in the field, Romanian civil society organizations (CSOs) seem to have been once again overlooked. The long awaited opportunity for them to be offered effective support to become more active abroad and at home as promoters of development cooperation still remains a distant perspective.

Although the objectives, activities and timeframe of the programme were not yet defined at the moment of its launching, according to the first information that have been released it is UNDP Romania that will be the main actor in charge with promoting awareness among Romanian citizens on development cooperation with national ODA funding. It will also strengthen the capacity of the Romanian Government to disburse its ODA. Other „non-state actors” are also invited to participate to the trainings that are to be organized.

The decision to entrust this mission to the UNDP Office in Bucharest came at the end of 2007. It was the result of the lack of MFA capacity to directly disburse ODA funds within the Romanian budgetary and administrative constraints. This can be a great opportunity for the UN agency to contribute to the empowerment of local actors in development, as long as it will offer them the possibility, with national ODA funding, to implement awareness raising and development education activities. However, while, formally, both the Romanian MFA and the UNDP have already recognized that local CSOs have the experience and capacity to carry out this type of activities, both institutions have yet to prove their attachment to the principles of ownership and partnership.

In the words of the UNDP representatives, among other things, „the further expansion of ODA will bring several economic advantages to Romania, including procurement that will benefit Romanian companies”. Consultancies have already been mentioned as likely implementers for development education and awareness raising activities.

The launch event has ended unexpectedly and abruptly when the electricity went off and everybody had to leave the hall. As people were left in the dark, many answers have also remained unanswered.

5.4. Latvia has a Development Education Strategy!

Information provided by Mara Simane, LAPAS

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/latvia-has-development-education.html>

Latvia's development stakeholders adopted Latvia's Development Education Strategy for 2008-2015 on April 3rd 2008.

The strategy was the result of a process spearheaded by the Latvian NDGO Platform LAPAS that began with a seminar in August 2007 at which representatives of the Ministry of Education Center for Curriculum Development and Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vidzeme University College, the University of Latvia, Liepaja Academy of Pedagogy, UNESCO Latvian National Committee and many leading Latvian NGOs discussed the vision for Latvia vis a vis development education for 2015 – the year that Latvia chairs the EU presidency.

This was followed by a series of discussions with stakeholder groups: teachers, media representatives, policy makers, those active in adult education, and the academics in which the groups identified the knowledge, skills are necessary for different stakeholders so that by 2015 they are able to play their role in the global development process. The groups also suggested priority actions to achieve this.

Latvia's Development Education Strategy for 2008-2015 sets out the goals, performance indicators and basic directions for action. The strategy will be published on the LAPAS website and will be used as an advocacy tool until the government decides on adopting an official version of the document.

Ingrida Mikisko, Head of the Development Education Working Group of the Latvian NGDO Platform - LAPAS (Director of the Latvian Adult Education Association) represents Latvia in the Development Education Forum and will present the Latvian strategy to this CONCORD working group.

Visit the LAPAS website at: <http://www.lapas.lv/>

6. Sources of Information

6.1. Dynamics of EU Development Policy after enlargement

Information provided by Simon Lightfoot, University of Leeds

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/dynamics-of-eu-development-policy-after.html>

The enlargement of the EU from 15 to 27 member states has the potential to affect the whole direction and shape of EU policy with regard to development - both because of different priorities of the new Central and Eastern European (CEE) states and the issue of aid diversion to new and poorer states. A research paper by Simon Lightfoot, University of Leeds, examines whether the CEE states have a fundamentally different approach to development and developing countries and whether this will lead to pressure to shift the policy in new directions over the longer term.

Download the research paper "Dynamics of EU Development Policy after enlargement" from: http://www.dialog.or.at/images/doku/lightfoot_eu-dev-policy-after-enlargement.pdf (This is a slightly revised version of European Development Policy Study Group Discussion Paper 35, visit <http://www.edpsg.org/index.pl> or use the direct link <http://www.edpsg.org/Documents/DP35.doc>)

See also the article of Simon Lightfoot in BOND's April 2008 edition of "The Networker": Growing pains: development policy in the new Europe, Link: <http://www.bond.org.uk/News/growingpains.htm>.

6.2. CONCORD Flash

Information provided by Mathieu Pique, CONCORD Assistant

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/concord-flash.html>

The May issue of the CONCORD Flash is out. Read about the common challenges of poverty in the EU and in the world, and other news from the European NGO confederation for relief and development.

Download the Flash from:

http://www.concordeurope.org/Files/media/internetdocumentsENG/4_Publications/1_CONCORD_Flash/FIash2008/Mai-Flash-final.doc

7. TRIALOG News

7.1. Prague Conference discussed development paradigms and alternatives

Information provided by Anita Bister, TRIALOG

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/prague-conference-discussed-development.html>

Do we follow the logic of economic growth or the logic of development? Do we want to have more or do we want to live happier? Is democracy a pre-condition for development? Are the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) a shame? What role do China, India, Brazil play globally? Do we fight the causes or symptoms of poverty?

These and many other questions were raised at the conference „Are we on the right track? Paradigm review by civil society organisations (CSOs) as development actors“ which took place in Prague from May 14-16, 2008 and was organised by TRIALOG and CONCORD in cooperation with the Ecumenical Academy Prague and the Czech NGDO platform FoRS.

The conference offered the possibility for an open dialogue between CSOs from „West“, „East“ and „South“ and for reflecting together upon the principles which underlie the development work of civil society. Many of the 140 participants, coming from more than 50 different countries, stated that it was for the first time that CSO representatives from Africa, Asia, Latin America had the chance to talk in depth with their colleagues from the new EU member states and to get to know more about these relatively new donor countries. It was generally felt that there is a lot of experience which the „East“ and „South“ can share and that this dialogue should be intensified.

In his introduction, Justin Kilcullen, president of CONCORD board, successfully kicked off the conference by raising several provocative questions about the „tyranny of MDGs“, the division of civil society in different blocs, the failure to mainstream gender in development work etc. The key speakers from Brazil (Chico Whitaker, World Social Forum), Kenya (Rebecca Tanui, BEACON), Malaysia (T. Rajamoorthy, Third World Network) and Russia (Olga Ponizova, Eco-Accord) challenged development paradigms from the perspective of „South“ and „East“ and laid the ground for a lot of further discussions during the conference. In response, CSO representatives from new and old EU member states reflected on the challenges which were identified by the colleagues from developing countries. In 6 thematic workshops a number of development approaches was tackled and alternatives to the prevailing models were presented and discussed.

Several outcomes were collected on the last conference day and personal commitments taken by the participants how to work further in their organisations on certain topics. There was a lot of agreement on the need to be political: work for change, deal with power and tackle structural causes of poverty! The MDGs are a shame since they took politics out and replaced it by numbers and targets which leave half of the world's poor in poverty. The need for common advocacy work between CSOs in the „South“ and „North“ was stressed several times as well as the need for global education promoting well-being and active citizenship. Burning issues such as climate change and the limits of growth need to be dealt with more actively; and many other issues...

The results of the conference feed into the strategic plan of CONCORD and into the strategy for TRIALOG's future work. This year's conference was the basis for a second conference in 2009 which will focus on practical steps and the resources civil society needs in order to reach development aims. The 2009 conference will actively engage donors, government officials, multinational agencies and others, responsible for shaping EU and global development policies. In the meanwhile, CSO cooperation and the debate on development principles has to go on...

Find the conference documentation (incl. presentations, video messages of the main speakers etc.) at:

<http://www.trialog.or.at/start.asp?ID=155>.

7.2. TRIALOG Cyprus visit

Information provided by Rebecca Steel, TRIALOG

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/trialog-cyprus-visit.html>

TRIALOG Policy Officer Rebecca Steel visited Cyprus at the beginning of June to attend an international civil society forum and to get an update about the complicated situation that Greek and Turkish Cypriot NGOs face in their daily work. The visit was a preparation for the TRIALOG training planned for the autumn and another step to support Cypriot NGOs in their activities to interlink more with the European development agenda.

The civil society forum provided an excellent meeting point for organisations from all over Cyprus to come together and talk about civil society development on the island in terms of a couple of major themes: policy influencing, and peace building. Representatives from Cypriot NGOs, the UNDP, the European Parliament and Commission offices and international organisations such as the Council of Europe, all came to the buffer zone between the two sides of the island to analyse the current situation and determine how they can help to improve it in the future. Concrete ideas were brought out during the last session, and a follow up meeting was planned in order to ensure the ideas were not lost, but turned into actions. The awards ceremony that followed highlighted the successes that some NGOs have managed to achieve through their work.

Face-to-face meetings with some NGOs working in Cyprus on development education and related topics highlighted the problems organisations on the two sides have to overcome to work together. The unique political situation on the island means they have to cross physical barriers as well as others in order to cooperate, and forming a platform that includes both sides has proved to be a step that was just too ambitious. It is also unclear how much EU funding for Cypriot organisations is open to Turkish Cypriots.

TRIALOG will provide training on a range of topics for Cypriot NGOs in the autumn, and will continue to encourage the efforts of all organisations to work across the border, despite the difficulties posed by the political situation on the island, and to engage in European issues as much as possible.

7.3. Training on Strategic Planning for platforms - „How to make your visions reality“

Information provided by Petra Kreinecker, TRIALOG

<http://trialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/training-on-strategic-planning-for.html>

On Monday, May 19, an intensive TRIALOG training on strategic planning took place with the very energetic facilitator Rocio Lanao from ATINCHIK, Peru. As Rocio participated in the TRIALOG-CONCORD conference "Are we on the right track" organized the week before in Prague (see the related article in this TIS), TRIALOG was able to win her as a trainer for our Capacity Building programme in the field of "management capacities for New Member States (NMS) platforms".

Working since 15 years in the consultancy ATINCHIK in strengthening local organizations in Latin America, Rocio shared her planning experiences and methods, but especially the participatory approach and spirit of ATINCHIK with the group.

The 12-hour workshop started with incorporating the individual perspectives into a common vision. After discussions in smaller groups, the activities and goals related to the vision for the platform(s) were broken down into expected results and it was shown how to make such a vision more concrete.

Another characteristic of the Latinamerican approach, beside this participatory group involvement, is the visualization of the results - therefore at the end of the day, the wall of the seminar room was filled with posters and above all with a big round globe which contained and visualised all the different levels of the developed strategy.

Within only one day of intensive work, the 12 participants from 7 NMS platforms got a concrete and practical instrument into their hands to elaborate a 3-5 years strategy for their platforms together with their members.

Most of the NMS participants, for the first time in their working life, experienced a capacity building activity carried out by a trainer from a developing country - and as the feedback showed, they were very enthusiastic and impressed by the skills and personal engagement of Rocio Lanao.

7.4. In memoriam Wico Bunskoek

<http://dialog-information-service.blogspot.com/2008/06/in-memoriam-wico-bunskoek.html>

TRIALOG was deeply saddened to learn of the sudden death on 16 May 2008 of Wico Bunskoek, Director of Kontakt der Kontinenten, Netherlands. He had been working with his organisation since 1971 and was director for 22 years, dedicating himself completely to the organisation.

Wico was also a long-standing and active member of the CONCORD Working Group on Enlargement, Pre-Accession and Neighbourhood (EPAN), which is convened by TRIALOG. The Chair and convenor sent a message of condolence on behalf of the group, as his presence at meetings will be greatly missed .

Th.E.M. Wijte wrote on the Kontakt der Kontinenten's website that Wico 'represented values like respect, dialogue between different cultures and religions, internationalisation and above else, he stood for hospitality.' Wico was 61 years old.

The thoughts of the TRIALOG team are with Wico's family, friends and colleagues at this difficult time. Messages of condolence may be send to condoleance@kontaktderkontinenten.nl

END

One of TRIALOG's aims is to intensify the exchange of information and experience between development NGOs (NGDOs) in accession countries, EU Member States and the global South. Through the TIS we forward you information on global development issues, conferences and seminars, NGO funding opportunities, enlargement issues and NGO activities in "East, West and South", provided to us by our partners. Please note that the views presented in articles or publications/weblinks not authored by ourselves are not necessarily those of TRIALOG.

You are welcome to actively participate in the networking of TRIALOG by sending us important information, documents, position papers, etc. which we can then spread to our partners.

Please feel free to forward the TIS to interested friends and colleagues.

If you have had this passed to you by a friend and want to receive the TIS yourself, you can sign in at <http://www.trialog.or.at/db/editadr.asp?nuremail=yes> or contact office@trialog.or.at

You can download this issue and earlier ones also from our website

<http://www.trialog.or.at/start.asp?ID=97>

Read the TIS online at: <http://www.trialog.or.at/tis>

If you would rather not receive the TIS, please send an email to office@trialog.or.at.

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