

EUROFLASH



Special issue

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Conference Report: Europe at the Crossroads. Tuesday 15 November.

“Europe is at the crossroads because of a weakness in political leadership. So what can civil society bring it?”

This was the challenging statement that concluded the speech EU expert Miguel Mequista da Cunha gave to a recent conference organised by NICVA. Miguel had begun by outlining how the EU was now facing three massive challenges for its place on the world stage. Firstly he asserted that everything we took for granted in the economic realm has disappeared. Emerging economies with new skills more suited to the new world order are in danger of sweeping Europe aside. Secondly he said that for the first time those who influence what happens in the world are not European and do not think like Europeans. Finally he claimed that Europeans have been slow to realise how privileged they are in the world. Growing global social and political consciences may mean that that privileged position is under threat. In the face of so much change any single country is powerless. However the European Union provides a mechanism to stabilise the emerging world order. It is clear that countries must work together in solidarity to make the decisions that are right for Europe and the rest of the world. Political leaders are failing to meet that challenge because they view Europe as a cash cow or an economic arrangement. The values that were around at the creation of the EU have become lost and so EU citizens have a jaundiced view of what the EU means to them and could mean for the rest of the world. He claimed that the political elite are *‘treating the EU as if it was a boxing ring and not the ship needed to guide us to calmer waters.’* Miguel’s intervention certainly got the participants thinking and when Robin Hannan from EAPN Ireland reminded us all that the EU was in danger of losing its balance of social, economic and environmental development in favour of pure economics it was clear we were set for a lively day.

David Phinnemore from Queens University guided participants through the content of the EU Constitutional Treaty asserting that it was really a tidying up exercise bringing together existing treaties and agreements in to one, more accessible, place. Journalists Eamonn McCann and John O’Farrell debated the content of the Treaty with John supportive of it as the next step in developing a stronger more representative Europe and Eamonn rejecting the Treaty on the basis that he believes it embodies the neo-liberal economic model. The afternoon session saw five people from different aspects of civil society outline what the EU has done for them. The contributions highlighted that advances in the development of civil society, peace building, workers rights, environmental legislation and local economic development would not have happened without the intervention of the EU.

The conference was designed to start discussions on the future of Europe and to consider what type of Europe we want to live in – is it more than just an economic community? In many ways the event posed more questions than answers. Participants were a mixture of voluntary and community representatives, politicians, trade union activists, civil servants and students. They voiced a huge range of opinions from the enthusiastic voices who believed everything about the European project was in our best interests, to the cautious pragmatists who reasoned that we need the EU for economic survival, to the anti-Europeans who view the EU as either a neo-liberal economic plot or an attempt to erase national identity. However one thing was clear and agreed – there is a desire for more debate and discussions on issues like these and NICVA will be glad to accommodate it.

Tell us what you’d like to know about Europe.

Does the mention of neo-liberal economic plots leave you with a headache? Does the thought of emerging economies and new world orders have you reaching for the panic button? If all things Europe are nothing more than gobbledegook to you, you’ll be glad to know that NICVA in conjunction with the European Commission are organising a series of road-shows around Northern Ireland in 2006. These will hopefully help you tell your constitutional treaties from your communal agreements. We need to know what practical information you or your local community needs, so please pass on your queries or suggestions to James Lavery by e-mailing james.lavery@nicva.org

Active European Citizenship

The European Commission is offering funding under the EU action programme to support organisations involved in European citizenship. The programme encourages people to get involved with European issues and build links with people in other countries. Organisations can apply for the funding to co-finance their annual work programmes.

The annual work programme should cover among others at least three (3) of the following specific objectives:

- to reinforce and foster exchanges, mobility and cooperation at a transnational or transregional/cross-border European level, involving partners from at least five (5) Member States;
- to promote and extend the capacity of building networking
- to promote and reinforce the added European value of the activities of the bodies involved;
- to contribute to the quality of dissemination of information
- to encourage the quality and efficiency of initiatives in the promotion of active and participatory citizenship;
- to reinforce innovation and continuity of actions in the promotion of active and participatory citizenship;
- to reinforce a measurable multiplier effect, the dissemination of results of the actions (number of publications, information set up on new technologies).

The total amount available is €3.36 million and grants may fund up to 80% of an organisation's costs during its budgetary year. At least 20% of the budgets of the bodies must be co-financed from non-Community sources.

To be eligible to apply for the funding, organisations must be non-profit making in either the public or private sectors and based in one of the 25 EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Romania or Bulgaria.

For organisations whose budgetary year runs from January to December, the deadline for applications is 30 December. For other organisations, applications must be submitted at least one month before the start of their budgetary year in 2006.

For further information, visit:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education_culture/activecitizenship/5905/index_en.htm

Additional information can be obtained from:

European Commission

Directorate-General for Education, Training, Culture and Multilingualism -EAC

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Leonardo da Vinci Mobility programme European placements and exchanges

Leonardo da Vinci is a European Community programme which aims to support national training strategies through funding a range of transnational partnership projects aimed at improving quality, fostering innovation and promoting the European dimension in vocational training.

Please note that applications must be submitted by organisations - individuals may not apply directly. Leonardo da Vinci provides funding for six types of project:

- **Mobility Work** - placements and trainer exchanges. Delivered by the British Council.
- **Pilot Projects** - Production of training materials to develop innovation and quality in training (including Thematic Actions). Delivered by ECOTEC.
- **Language Competences** - Production of vocationally-specific language learning materials. Delivered by ECOTEC.
- **Transnational Networks** - Facilitating the transfer and exchange of experience and good practice. Delivered by ECOTEC.
- **Reference Materials** - Research and statistics. Delivered by JIU/European Commission.
- **Joint Actions** - Collaborative projects with Socrates and Youth "Measure". Delivered by JIU/European Commission.

In addition to the priorities, there are two issues that should be taken into account in all proposals:

- health/safety and risk management issues related to the proposed activity (whether organising mobility programmes or developing new training materials)
- mainstreaming equal opportunities (by integrating the equal opportunities dimension into the design, implementation and evaluation of activities).

In order to maximise their chances of success all project proposals should be supported by a sustainable and relevant partnership of organisations at UK and transnational level. Proposals led by or including the following organisations are particularly encouraged:

- employers, especially SMEs
- Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs)
- Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) and other sector-based bodies
- trade unions and other professional bodies
- Chambers of Commerce
- careers services
- Connexions partnerships (and equivalent organisations in Northern Ireland)
- local lifelong learning partnerships and
- voluntary and community organisations.

All application documentation can be downloaded from the UK Leonardo website, found at www.leonardo.org.uk . Applicants should use and consult the website.

- current Leonardo Application Form;
- Community Call for Proposals;
- General Guide for Promoters;
- specific guide for the measure you are applying to;
- Guide for UK Applicants
- Financial and Administrative Handbook
- Good practice guides available.

Closing Dates for full applications is 10 February 2006.

Dubai International Award

Sponsored by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat) and the Municipality of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, the 2006 Dubai International Award for improving the living environment is given every two years for housing, planning and environmental schemes that improve the quality of life for local people.

Prizes totaling US\$360,000 will be awarded to up to twelve schemes, two of which will be selected for special consideration because their experience can be transferred to other towns, cities or communities.

To be eligible, projects should cover at least three of the following areas:

- poverty reduction;
- economic development;
- social services;
- environmental management;
- infrastructure, communications and transport;
- housing;
- land use management;
- urban governance;
- civic engagement and cultural vitality;
- gender equality and social inclusion;
- disaster and emergency management;
- production and consumption patterns;
- urban and regional planning;
- technology, tools and methodology;
- children and youth;
- architecture and urban design;
- older people;
- information for decision making;
- water and sanitation;
- housing and human rights;
- HIV/AIDS;
- technical and international cooperation; and
- resilient communities.

Activities can take place at community, local, regional, national, or international level and the award is open to entrants worldwide. Schemes should demonstrate how they have changed people's lives and attitudes, a commitment to

sustainable development, lessons learned and their transferability.

Local authorities, community organisations, non-governmental organisations and others are invited to submit nominations.

The closing date for 2006 entrants is 31 March 2006, although those applying before 31 January 2006 will be given feedback on their bids. The awards will be announced in November. Further information and guidelines are available online at:
<http://www.blpnet.org/awards/awards.htm>

Anti Violence Funding- Daphne Programme

The 2006 call for anti-violence projects has been published by the European Commission. The Daphne II programme to combat violence against children, young people and women next year's projects should concentrate on European legislation and preventing bullying and violence. Organisations should be based in an EU or European Free Trade Association country.

The general objectives of the Daphne II Programme are to:

- contribute to ensuring a high level of protection of physical and mental health by the protection of children, young people and women against violence, by the prevention of violence, by the provision of support for victims of violence and by the protection of groups at risk;
- increase the knowledge base on the mechanisms of violence and on the treatment of perpetrators and to improve the collection of data on violence in Europe;
- assist and encourage NGOs and other organisations active in this field and promote transnational actions.

Daphne aims to provide an opportunity for non-governmental organisations, local authorities and others to share knowledge and experience by working with their counterparts in other European countries.

Priority areas for 2006 are:

- peer violence and peer protection;
- European legislation relating to violence;
- involving children, young people and women in preventing violence and in victim support;
- developing indicators and collecting data on violence against migrants, against people living and working on the streets and in the family;
- the development of local, national and/or European policy on the institutionalisation of children, on violence in the home and on violence against women sex workers; and
- the exchange, adaptation and use of good practice.

A budget of €9.085 million has been agreed for projects in 2006. The EC will award grants of between €50,000 and €175,000 per project, covering a maximum of 80% of costs.

Eligible activities include work experience, the exchange of good practice, studies, research, surveys, field work, creating networks, training packages, educational packages, treatment programmes and awareness-raising activities. All projects should be innovative and transnational, involving at least two organisations or more from at least two different countries.

Applications should be sent to the Commission by 10 February 2006.

Further information is available at:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/funding/daphne/funding_daphne_en.htm

If you do not find the answer to your question in the FAQ section on the Daphne website, please contact the Daphne Helpdesk by e-mail to:
daphne-helpdesk@transtec.be

Funding in Judicial Matters

The EC has now issued its 2006 call for proposals for funding from the AGIS framework programme for police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters.

Proposed schemes should be transnational, involving at least three organisations based in three different EU Member States or in two Member States and one candidate country.

Six priorities have been set for 2006 projects. These are:

- judicial cooperation in criminal matters;
- cooperation between law enforcement agencies;
- preventing and combating terrorism;
- preventing and combating organised crime;
- crime prevention; and
- protecting victims' rights.

Training schemes, staff exchanges, cooperation projects, studies, research and the exchange of information and best practice will be eligible for funding from next year's €16.26 million AGIS budget. **Projects should start between 1 May and 31 December 2006.**

A small number of grants are available for non-governmental, non-profit making organisations, whose work programme is geared towards the professional development of magistrates and judicial practitioners, cooperation between public authorities and associations in the area of victim assistance or the rehabilitation of offenders, the development of restorative justice and mediation, or the production and dissemination of

information on accessing legal interpretation, translation and advice. Successful organisations will also receive grants of up to 70% of their costs for the year.

All applications should be submitted by 27 January 2006.

Further information is available online at:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/justice_home/funding/agis/funding_agis_en.htm

Online Information



For all the events affecting the voluntary and community sector within Northern Ireland visit: www.nicva.org



Grant Tracker has been designed by NICVA as a one-stop funding resource for voluntary and community groups in Northern Ireland. It functions as a searchable website and is supported by the staff from NICVA's Funding Advice Service. Visit: www.grant-tracker.org



European Information Network

This site provides a definitive list of EU information providers in Northern Ireland, as well as providing links to a whole host of related European, regional and national websites. Visit: <http://www.europe.org.uk>

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