The European Year of Citizens 2013 —
Getting people to get involved

John Macdonald,
Directorate-General Communication
European Commission
The European Year of Citizens 2013 is underway...

...so what's it all about?
Times are tough
The best solutions to the EU's problems are at the EU level, but if we want to do more at the EU level...
Stronger EU powers need stronger EU democratic legitimacy
So, the EU's spotlight is on **Citizens** especially in 2013...
The main **political themes** of the European Year of Citizens are...

**Building a better Europe for citizens**

**Inviting them to join the debate**

**Informing them of their EU-level rights**
Let's focus on... getting involved
IT’S ABOUT EUROPE
IT’S ABOUT YOU

Join the debate

European Year of Citizens 2013
www.europa.eu/citizens-2013
The EU is built on the principle of representative democracy, and citizens have the right to participate.

"Every citizen shall have the right to participate in the democratic life of the Union. Decisions shall be taken as openly and as closely as possible to the citizen."

(Article 11 TEU)
How do I make my voice heard?

How do I "join the Debate"?
As an EU citizen, use your vote!
www.europa.eu/citizens-2013
The European Year of Citizens 2013 is dedicated to the rights that come with EU citizenship. Over this year, we will encourage dialogue between all levels of government, civil society and business at events and conferences around Europe to discuss those EU rights and build a vision of how the EU should be in 2020.
Join the debate

Debate on the future of Europe

This debate is about you, about your rights and about your future. The European Commission is now coming to a town near you. High level European personalities will listen to your views. This is your chance to tell them what kind of Europe you want to live in and what you expect from the European Union of tomorrow.

Your voice in Europe

Your Voice in Europe is the European Commission’s “single access point” to a wide variety of consultations, discussions and other tools which enable you to play an active role in the European policy-making process.

European citizens’ initiative

The European citizens’ initiative allows one million EU citizens to participate directly in the development of EU policies, by calling on the European Commission to make a legislative proposal.

Looking for solutions

How does the European Union work?

VIVIANE REDING
Vice-President
Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship

CONTACT

For questions related to the Year, contact
The team of the Year 2013
For general information enquires, contact
Europe Direct:

Call 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11
Citizens' Dialogues
Your opportunity to take part in the debate on the future of Europe.

Participate in the dialogue

As the debate about the future of Europe gathers pace, the European Commission is reaching out to citizens by visiting towns across Europe and asking them directly for their views.

Upcoming dialogue – 7 June, Milano, Italy

Speech: European Central Bank on banking union

23/05/2013 - Mario Draghi, President of the European Central Bank, said that national policies alone are not enough to end the financial crisis.
Citizens' Dialogues – all over the EU

Reaching out to citizens: feeding discussion throughout the European Year of Citizens, including the Citizens' Dialogues, paving the way towards the European elections 2014

Dialogues planned

- Milan 07.06.2013
- Esch 30.6.2012
- Warsaw 11.7.2013
- Crete 12.07.2013
- Heidelberg 16.7.2013
- Sofia 07.2013
- Namur 13.9.2013
- Tallinn 14.9.2013
- Györ 01.10.2013
- Trieste 16.9.2013
- Hungary 09.2013
- Helsinki 24.9.2013

Virtual event

- Autumn 2013

Dialogues held

- Bratislava 01.10.2013
- Stockholm 15.10.2013
- Bratislava 10.11.2013
- Marseille 14.11.2013
- Valletta 11.2013
- London 02.2014
- Copenhagen 2014
- Vilnius 13.12.2013
- Barcelona 28.02.2014

- Cadiz 27.9.2012
- Graz 5.11.2012
- Berlin 10.11.2012
- Paris 23.11.2012
- Napoli 30.11.2012
- Dublin 10.1.2013
- Göteborg 18.2.2013
- Torino 21.2.2013
- Coimbra 22.2.2013
- Roma 18.3.2013
- Thessaloniki 22.3.2013
- Pisa 5.4.2013
- Ghent 12.4.2013
- Brussels 4.5.2013
- Limassol 8.5.2013
- Düsseldorf 8.5.2013
- Antwerp 8.5.2013
- Ljubljana 9.5.2013
- Nicosia 10.5.2013
- Prague 13.5.2013
Environmental issues have featured strongly


- Milan, 7 June, with Commissioner Hedegaard, on climate change
"Your Voice in Europe" website
Your Voice in Europe is the European Commission’s “single access point” to a wide variety of consultations, discussions and other tools which enable you to play an active role in the European policy-making process. This website has three sections:

- **Consultations**: give us your opinion on EU policies and influence their direction.
- **Discussions**: discuss the main issues of the day and chat on-line to EU’s leaders.
- **Other tools**: discover other ways in which you can make your voice heard in Europe.

Read more:

- [Why has this site been set up?](#)
- [Why is some information not in my language?](#)
- [Legal notice](#)

Last update: 04.10.2012 | Top
European Citizens' Initiatives
The European citizens’ initiative allows one million EU citizens to participate directly in the development of EU policies, by calling on the European Commission to make a legislative proposal.

This website provides information on all citizens' initiatives, it explains the rules, and enables you to launch your initiative.
ECIs on environmental issues are among the most advanced so far...

End Ecocide in Europe: A Citizens’ Initiative to give the Earth Rights

Suspension of the EU Climate & Energy Package

Pour une gestion responsable des déchets, contre les incinérateurs

Right2water: Water and sanitation are a human right! Water is a public good, not a commodity!
Other ways to get involved
Inclusion on the agenda (Commission)

Preparation of the proposal (Commission)

Negociation and adoption (EP and Council)

European Citizens’ initiatives
- EESC - CoR
- Social dialogue
- Civil dialogue
- Advocacy / lobbying

Consultations
- EESC - CoR
- Social dialogue
- Civil dialogue
- Advocacy/lobbying

Hearing at the EP
- EP contacts
- EESC - CoR
- Advocacy / lobbying...
And then ....

⇒ Participate (action programmes)
⇒ Contribute to monitoring and evaluation
⇒ Challenge, make a complaint
The horizontal dimension:
Exchange of experiences and networking

- ...between citizens (e.g.: town-twinning)
- ...between organisations (e.g.: transnational projects)
- ...creation of networks, umbrella organisations, etc.
The vertical dimension:

Civil dialogue

Don't forget:
European Economic & Social Committee
– the "Stone in the Commission's Shoe"

“Structured” dialogues:
e.g. DGs TRADE, AIDCO, SANCO, EAC, COMM

Other meetings:
e.g.: ECHO, DGs ENV, EMPL, ENTR

Regional dialogues
e.g.: DGs REGIO, RELEX, ELARG
The **vertical** dimension (cont'd)

**Complain!**

To the **European Ombudsman:**

=> In cases of maladministration

**Complaint against a Member State:**

=> against a measure or practice considered to be contrary to EU law
The **vertical** dimension (cont'd)

**Petition** the European Parliament

=> Highlight a breach of a citizen’s rights by a MS, local authorities or another institution
The *vertical* dimension (cont'd)

**Lobbying and Advocacy**

- Importance of *transparency*, hence the Joint Transparency Register of the European Parliament and of the Commission (there were 5,643 on 8/4/2013)
Don't forget the **new ways to engage!**

- eGovernment Action Plan 2011-15,
- eParticipation,
- eGovernance,
- Social media,
- "Citizens' panels", etc.
The 2013 EU Citizenship Report — A major 'deliverable' for the European Year

- Timely political context
- Citizens at the centre
- Strong EU rights
12 new actions to improve EU citizens' lives...

...in 6 key areas

1. Removing obstacles for workers, students and trainees in the EU
2. Cutting red tape in the Member States
3. Protecting the more vulnerable in the EU
4. Eliminating barriers to shopping in the EU
5. Targeted and accessible information in the EU
6. Participating in the democratic life of the EU
A Policy Report by end of 2014 Q1!

European Year of Citizens 2013
www.europa.eu/citizens-2013
If you have something you want published on our website as 'news', why not send us an e-mail?

comm-eyc2013@ec.europa.eu
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