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The international conference "Europe 2020 - Civic Visions", part of the "Interacting with the European Parliament" initiative, will be held in Sofia on January 29 and 30 (Friday and Saturday), 2010.

The conference venue is the "Grand Hotel Sofia" on Gurko Street 1 in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria.

The "Europe 2020 - Civic Visions" international conference is part of the "Interacting with the European Parliament" initiative. This project's implementing organizations are the European Institute, the Center for Policy Modernization and Europe Gateway and it is a fact due to the the financial support of the European Parliament's DG "Communication".

The conference will be a common place for participants from various countries to brainstorm about the contemporary challenges, which the European Union is facing, as well as about the ways in which the civic sector can contribute to the debate on the definition of the Union's development goals until 2020.

Agenda:

FRIDAY

9.30 - Registration

10.00 - Opening (Hall "Sofia", fl. 2)

11.30 - 17.00 - Work sessions into panels (Panel 1 - Hall "Serdica"; Panel 2 - Hall "Triaditsa"; Panel 3 - Hall "Sofia")

SATURDAY

9.00 - Registration

9.30 - Closing session (Hall "Sofia")

11.00 - Closing remarks

11.30 - Press conference (Hall "Sofia")

This two-day conference aims at bringing together representatives of CSOs, both grass-root and

think-tank organizations, academic representatives and MEPs, giving them the floor to develop visions about Europe's future, on the basis of their concrete experience and practice. The objective of the conference is to come up with a framework on what Europe should look like in 2020, as well as with ideas about the ways to achieve the presented goals and the action that should be taken to implement these.

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The conference team invites all the citizens, interested in these topics, to join the debate - really or virtually, depending on where you are. We are looking forward to hearing your opinions and proposals on issues such as the European democracy, the role of the national state and its institutions, the European cultural space and identity, the education, the youth issues, the EU solidarity as shared responsibility for development, the challenges to the Cohesion policy, the EU enlargement and the social issues.

We encourage you to contribute in one of the panels (see below) through sending us an email or through posting a comment in the forum before the conference's start.

The "Europe 2020 - Civic Visions" conference has three panels:

- * Panel 1 – The European democracy – mission possible?
- * Panel 2 - European cultural space and identity;
- * Panel 3 - The solidarity in the EU – shared responsibility for development.

The conference working languages are English, Bulgarian and French. Simultaneous translation is provided.

All the discussions will be aired live online on the initiative's website in English. Viewers and readers from all parts of the world are very welcome to share their views...

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The general question is, what – in your opinion, based on your experience and activities – the EU should look like in 2020 in the domains related to the workshop topic, so that it best meets the expectations of the citizens and the civic organizations in the context of the common EU development challenges.

Each panel will host participants, representing think-tanks, grass-root CSOs, the academia and MEPs and will be moderated by independent facilitators. The panel work will start with the presentations and continue with discussion and brainstorming. Each panel will result in a draft common concept on what Europe should look like in 2020 in the domains, related to the panel topic, including ideas about the ways and activities, through which the proposed goals could be achieved.

Those three concepts will be presented at the conference's closing plenary session and, taking them together, we will try to summarize the civic viewpoints about the key development drivers of EU 2020.

A summary of all the contributions made by the participants before and during the conference will be included in an analytical publication, which will be disseminated among the key stakeholders on European level. The aim is to offer the institution representatives, the Members of the European Parliament in particular, an overview of the civic visions and expectations about Europe's future, which they could take into consideration in the EU policy-shaping.

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"Interacting with the European Parliament" (<http://parliament.europe.bg>) is a project, implemented with the financial support of the European Parliament and approved under the EP's 2009 Annual Grant Program through DG "Communication". This initiative aims at facilitating the communication between the civil society and the EU institutions, the Members of the EP in particular.

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