



FORUM ON CIVIL DIALOGUE & PARTICIPATION

For the opening of the European Year of Citizens 2013

European Union citizens are often moving and settling in European member states other than their native country. Member states population is increasingly heterogeneous and becomes more European. Nevertheless the participation of these EU migrants in the democratic life of their immigration countries remains very low.

In relation with the opening of the European year of Citizens, this event will try to assess the role of public authorities, civil society organizations and political parties in the participation of European citizens residing in another member State than their own, with a special focus on women participation.

The objective of the Forum is to present and debate on the creation of a **“Charter of European citizens’ participation in the EU”**. This exercise will lead to recommendation and the drafting of the Charter which will be presented to EU institutions and to public authorities in the partners’ countries. The outcome of the debate will complete the results of the project “Access to Rights and Civil Dialogue for ALL”

FORUM DU DIALOGUE CIVIL & DE LA PARTICIPATION

À l’occasion de l’ouverture de l’Année européenne des citoyens

Les citoyens européens tendent à bouger davantage à travers l’Union. La population des Etats membres en devient plus diversifiée et, d’une certaine façon, plus européenne. Cependant, la participation de ces « migrants » intra-européens à la vie locale et politique de leur pays de résidence reste dramatiquement faible.

C’est pourquoi, en relation avec l’ouverture de l’Année européenne des Citoyens, Pour la Solidarité organise, le 28 janvier prochain au Comité Economique et Social Européen, un forum sur la participation et le dialogue civil, qui réunira une centaine d’acteurs de la société civile, dont des représentants de communautés de migrants.

L’objectif de cet évènement sera non seulement d’évaluer le rôle des autorités publiques et des organismes de la société civile dans l’activation de la participation des citoyens européens, avec un accent particulier sur la participation des femmes, mais surtout de commenter et d’adopter une **Charte pour la participation des citoyens européens**, partout en Europe. Cet atelier débouchera sur des recommandations concrètes aux autorités nationales ainsi qu’aux institutions européennes. Les résultats du forum clôtureront le projet « Access to Rights and Civil Dialogue for ALL ».



- **Denis Stokkink**, Président du Think Tank européen Pour la Solidarité :
Accueil des participants et présentation des objectifs de la conférence

L'ouverture de l'Année européenne du Citoyen 2013 représente l'occasion de s'interroger sur les droits réels dont jouissent effectivement les citoyens en Europe. Ceux-ci bougent davantage, mais une fois installés dans un autre Etat membre, la liberté de circulation ne semble pas toujours suivie des autres droits fondamentaux, comme le droit de travailler (pour certaines nationalités) ou le droit de participer librement et dans les mêmes conditions à la vie politique et démocratique locale dans leur pays d'accueil. Pourtant, la mobilité citoyenne n'est pas qu'économique, elle constitue également un enjeu d'intégration et de cohésion sociale. La crise économique a également un impact sur les migrations intra-européennes et tend à en modifier les parcours.

Cette journée est aussi celle de la clôture du projet « Access to Rights and Civil Dialogue for ALL », cofinancé par DG justice, programme droits fondamentaux et citoyenneté, projet de deux ans, réunissant cinq partenaires européens et coordonné par Pour la Solidarité.

Ce projet visait à sensibiliser les « migrants intra-européens » à la question de la participation à la vie politique locale (de leur pays d'accueil) et européenne, et les informer sur leurs droits et l'importance de combattre toute forme de racisme et de xénophobie, mais aussi à favoriser la participation des associations de migrants, et notamment des associations de femmes. Les activités du projet ont consisté en l'organisation de groupes de travail, de campagnes de sensibilisation, de séminaires nationaux, ainsi que la rédaction d'une étude comparative sur la situation de cinq communautés de migrants, et d'un curriculum de formation à la citoyenneté, sorte de guide de bonnes pratiques pour les associations.

Le projet se focalisait sur une communauté étrangère par pays partenaire :

- **En Belgique**, la communauté polonaise n'exerce que trop peu ses droits liés à la citoyenneté européenne à cause d'un manque général d'information et parce que cette communauté a tendance à vivre un peu isolée de la société belge.
- **En France**, la communauté portugaise qui, contrairement à d'autres communautés de migrants, est relativement bien intégrée au niveau social et économique, mais ne participe toujours pas pleinement à la vie politique et citoyenne locale.
- **En Grèce**, la communauté bulgare tend à vivre un peu en retrait de la société grecque et ses membres ne sont généralement pas bien informés sur les droits dont ils jouissent en tant que citoyens européens.
- **En Espagne**, les membres de la communauté roumaine apparaissent être peu informés de leurs droits de citoyens européens et, par conséquent, leur participation à la vie politique et citoyenne de leur pays d'accueil demeure extrêmement limitée.
- **En Italie**, les principaux obstacles auxquels la communauté doit faire face sont la discrimination, l'exclusion sociale et un manque général d'information sur les droits fondamentaux et le droit du travail.



L'objectif de cette journée est également de présenter la **Charte pour l'accès aux droits et au dialogue civil pour TOUS les citoyens européens**, qui entend soutenir l'engagement des acteurs de la société civile, mais surtout améliorer les collaborations avec les autorités locales, nationales et européennes. Cette charte milite pour une citoyenneté active pour tous et souhaite promouvoir la capacité d'action des citoyens, ainsi que des principaux acteurs du processus décisionnel.

TABLE RONDE 1 : L'ANNÉE EUROPÉENNE DES CITOYENS : QUELS DÉFIS ?

L'Année 2013 consacrera la Citoyenneté européenne, mais que signifie être citoyen européen aujourd'hui ? L'objectif de cette table ronde est de présenter l'état de la participation citoyenne en Europe et d'investiguer les défis que s'est donnée l'Union européenne au travers de l'Année des Citoyens.

ROUNDTABLE 1: EUROPEAN YEAR OF CITIZENS: MAIN ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

2013 will celebrate the European year of Citizens, but what does it mean today to be a European citizen? The objective of this roundtable is to present the state of the art of citizens' participation in the EU and to investigate the challenges and issues the EU wishes to deal with in the occasion of this European year of Citizens.

- **Ariane Rodert** : EESC member : general presentation of the European year of Citizens and of the main participatory profiles of EU citizens

Ariane Rodert is member of the Groupe III at the EESC but she is also very present in the Social platform.

Ms. Rodert expressed the importance of this year and the primary roles that citizens have for the future of Europe. She asked "What does it mean today to be a European citizen?" and shared statistic results of the participation of citizens in Europe in terms of votes, knowledge of their rights, knowledge of their influence on the situation of Europe. She explained that:

- 42% know what it is to be an EU citizen
- only 32% are well informed of their rights
- 40% took part in the past elections
- and that only 30% know they can influence EU policy

She also underlined that these percentages are decreasing. That is why, this year is about bringing citizens together in order to build a better European community. The key poles of the project are:

- Easy accessible information for everyone
- Dialogue agreements



- Common values and principles
- Mechanisms to evaluate
- Matching the EU Policy with the European values for all Member States
- Better communication with Member States

EU citizen have to be put at the heart of the agenda in time of crisis. Freedom of movement is not enough; citizenship is much broader than this. This year is the occasion to look at Europe with a very broad vision of citizenship. European citizens may have different needs but this Year represents the same opportunity for everyone, especially for women and people with disabilities.

Citizenship is made of a bundle of rights but also of duties. Citizens have to be informed about this and this Year should work on developing capacity building related to EU citizenship if we want it to strengthen common identity in the EU. The Lisbon treaty made new proposals for EU citizenship. However, there is still a general lack of awareness on EU citizenship. This is something to work on. For example, the new EU initiatives create a chance to be involved earlier in the decision making process and to improve the dialogue with EU institutions.

What are the main issues and challenges for this European Year of Citizens?

Citizenship has to be a political will but we need to create processes to include citizens: information that is easily accessible, tools to engage citizens (resources: money, spaces, common ground), etc. We need not only to promote citizenship, but *active* citizenship. For this, we need to increase dialogue and information on EU rights and obligations applied in EU member States, through different channels than the classical ones. In this, EU media can play a big role that has to be supported.

We have to work on political will. Citizens are motivated but not activated: they need info in their language and resources. We also need to fight against citizens' skepticism and strengthen the sense of belonging to the EU and to the national level.

Mrs. Rodert concluded stating that **freedom of movement does not stand for citizenship!** European citizenship means education, economic solvency, youth employment and social communication.

- **Riva Kastoryano**, Directrice de recherche CNRS Paris: Présentation du sentiment d'appartenance dans l'Union européenne

Riva Kastoryano attire l'attention sur un phénomène inquiétant pour l'avenir du projet européen : la montée des nationalismes. L'Europe est confrontée à un pluralisme de fait. Le défi actuel de l'Union est la gestion de la diversité politique dans le cadre de la démocratie universelle.



Les Etats constituent les forces structurantes de la construction européenne. L'Europe de la libre circulation a créé de nouveaux rapports de force entre les Etats et les communautés en mouvement. La tendance aux populismes et la résurgence des particularismes que l'on observe aujourd'hui en Europe sont l'une des résultantes d'un affrontement entre deux conceptions de l'Etat-Nation et de la citoyenneté. Il est important de rappeler que le nationalisme fut peut-être le principe majeur du 19^{ème} siècle, mais il ne fut pas celui de la construction européenne. Le populisme actuel est davantage à considérer comme un enjeu électoral lié au développement de l'UE et à la crainte de perte de souveraineté qui en découle. Ces mouvements correspondent surtout à une volonté de protection des identités et des nationalités, conceptions souvent réduites à leurs aspects ethniques.

L'identité citoyenne (la pratique de la citoyenneté se mesure par l'engagement pour le bien commun) est la seule porte de sortie raisonnable, mais elle est pleine de contradictions car on l'a elle-même ethnicisée, par exemple en recherchant en France ces débats sur l'identité nationale. Cela débouche sur un nationalisme territorial de ces identités citoyennes, comme si une certaine partie de la population seulement était accessible à des principes comme la laïcité et les droits de l'homme. Créer la possibilité d'une identification avec cette identité citoyenne sans en exclure une partie de la population est le travail qu'a encore à faire la classe politique aujourd'hui. Le défi est alors de faire émerger en Europe une nouvelle forme d'organisation politique pour englober la diversité de l'Union, et développer la participation transnationale.

Plus d'info : <http://docs.jean-jaures.net/NL410/nationalisme.pdf>

➤ **Gabriella Civico EYCA representative** (European Year of Citizens 2013 Alliance)

The European Year of Citizens Alliance (EYCA) is an open network of European and national civil society organisations willing to promote active citizenship as a core element of the European democracy in the frame of the European Year of Citizens 2013. The Alliance has adopted a Manifesto to express its political guidelines and common vision for a wide understanding of European citizenship.

A wide variety of European networks, platforms and organisations have joined the Alliance since its creation. The 56 European members of the EYCA represent more than 3000 individual organisations in 50 European countries. The Alliance covers a wide range of fields of intervention, from education to environment, health or youth, to name but a few. The EYCA is also active in the EU-28 Member States thanks to National Alliances involving national and local civil society organisations to promote active European citizenship throughout the Year by different means and activities.

Representatives of the European members and National Alliances' coordinators gather in plenary meetings every second month to make decisions regarding the EYCA orientations and to monitor the Working groups and the National Alliances. The EYCA plenary has appointed a Steering Committee composed of the European Civic Forum, the Social Platform, the European Movement International, the European Center of Volunteering (CEV), Volonteurope, the European Association



for the Defence of Human Rights (AEDH), the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA) and the European Network of National Associations (ENNA).

The main aim of the Alliance is to stimulate debate on EU citizenship and to foster citizens' participation through national alliances (national contact points and thematic working groups). The Alliance stresses on the biggest challenge of the year: to reach citizens, not only through communication operation but by working on enhancing participation and involvement of civil society organizations in EU democratic life.

The "Manifesto" on EU citizenship that can be consulted at: <http://www.eurolocal-cas.com/?p=6304>

ROUNDTABLE 2: SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AS THE PREREQUISITE TO CIVIC PARTICIPATION?

Socio-economic security often is considered as being an essential condition to political and civic participation. Is it always the case? If yes, how can we strengthen it and make sure that it leads the ways to a greater citizens' involvement in the country where they reside. The objective of this roundtable is to analyze the relation between socio-economic integration and civic engagement, and to evaluate the role local and national authorities can play in it, as well as the role of migrants' associations and networks. This panel will also investigate the influence of the financial and economic crisis on the intra-European migration flows.

TABLE RONDE 2 : L'INTÉGRATION ÉCONOMIQUE COMME CONDITIONNALITÉ À LA PARTICIPATION CITOYENNE ?

La stabilité économique est souvent considérée comme un prérequis de la participation politique et citoyenne. Est-ce toujours le cas ? Et si oui, comment la garantir et comment s'assurer qu'elle laisse ensuite place à un engagement citoyen ? L'objectif de cette table ronde est de questionner les liens entre intégration économique et participation citoyenne, d'évaluer le rôle des autorités nationales et locales dans ces deux processus, ainsi que celui des associations et réseaux de migrants, mais aussi de déterminer les influences de la crise économique et financière actuelle en matière de migration intra-européenne.

- **Marie Arena**, Sénatrice et ancienne Ministre Fédérale de l'Intégration Sociale, de l'Égalité des Chances et du Dialogue Interculturel: commentaire et perspective politique, point de vue national

A l'heure où la crise économique remet en question le filet social des citoyens européens, et provoque l'insécurité de l'emploi et l'allongement de l'âge de la retraite, beaucoup de citoyens ne voient plus dans l'Union européenne une institution qui les défend. Or, avec cette Année européenne du Citoyen, est l'occasion de renforcer l'affiliation au projet européen et de se battre pour une Europe plus solide, AVEC ses citoyens. A partir d'aujourd'hui, tous les aspects devraient être traités au niveau européen, car la citoyenneté européenne est présente à tous les niveaux, aussi bien local, régional ou national.



Cela commence dans les mentalités, il faut se convaincre qu'il y a quelque chose à changer et que cela ne va pas se faire tout seul. Il faut soutenir l'Europe sociale qui est aujourd'hui en péril, en donnant priorité à l'emploi et à la sécurité économique. Chacun doit également réaliser que l'Europe n'est pas – et ne peut pas – constituer la seule réponse à la crise. La sortie de ces difficultés économiques, sociales et environnementales ne passera que par une coopération entre le niveau européen et le niveau national, voire local.

Quant à l'affiliation au projet européen, elle passe forcément par une meilleure représentation de la société civile. Les citoyens européens croient dans les principes de la démocratie représentative. Mais la démocratie de l'UE semble parfois fait l'économie du débat, par souci d'efficacité. En effet, la transposition automatique des directives a fortement limité les possibilités de débat politique des gouvernements... ce qui sonne comme un décalage avec les volontés affichées pour cette Année européenne du Citoyen. À nous maintenant de montrer aux citoyens que leurs voix comptent.

- **Bruno Amoroso**, Docent Emeritus at the University of Roskilde, Jean Monnet Chair, Socio-Economic integration and participation

Docent Emeritus at the University of Roskilde, gave us his insight on the socio-economic integration and participation. Bruno Amoroso started with two questions: How can we motivate migrants to participate in the EU project and its principles? And how can EU institutions be educated to citizens' participation? These two very simple questions raise the issue of the two-fold process of EU participation.

On the one hand, he argues that we need a redefinition of the Maastricht treaty. What seemed to fit at that time doesn't correspond anymore to the effective participation of 500 million citizens. We should also review and give strength to the EU institutions. The European Parliament should be a real parliament and the European Commission should consist of commissioners elected by the people.

On the other hand, there is a huge lack of knowledge and of interest on EU institutions, explaining the low level of participation at EU elections. He stressed that in order to give content to the general principle of citizenship, the EU needs to motivate and educate people and migrants on the functioning of the European democracy. He says that the main obstacle is the lack of information and interest among citizens. We cannot speak about "interculture" without establishing clear terms for such a big project.

But this is only one part of the problem. Let's take the example of the Romanian community in Italy. According to the 2010 yearly statistical report on immigration, the overall Romanian population residing in Italy in 2009 reached 887,763 people; this represented 21% of the total foreign population. Yet, their participation in local or European democratic life remains dramatically low. There seems to be a tricky part in the integration process of Romanian community that is very inward organized (family relations are very strong and the community tends to close up).



However Romanians in Italy are active and keen to organise themselves in various kinds of associations. At the national level the Romanian community is composed of people who arrived in Italy alone or followed the family network and/or friends in search of employment and better living conditions.

One of the main problems faced by the Romanian community is social exclusion and stigmatisation. In Italy immigrants are stigmatised by the media. In the case of Romanians, this perception is worsened by the presence of Roma, who are often assumed to come from Romania, even if their composition is highly variegated. Romanian immigrants' participation in European and local elections in Italy is low. This is mainly due to the scarce information about the right to vote provided to the community, as well as its lack of interest in politics.

The problem is that the EU wishes to resolve this problem through individualistic solutions but they are not appropriate. Romanians more than other groups, act in a cooperative way and build their communities on family structure. A way to improve Romanians' participation would be to link economic integration with political participation. That's what the project "Access to rights and civil dialogue for ALL" tried to do, with the help of the experience of social economy. The solutions to citizens' activation should be collective ones and concern target groups such as the youth, women, etc. We are not just individuals. We leave in groups and work together. The European Union should find new solutions about how to educate this community on our values in terms of solidarity (not on how to read the European constitution!). They deserve to emerge from the sector of informal economy to join the official one because they have qualifications and the EU has just to find a way to recognize their know-how.

- **Elzbieta Kuzma**, chercheur à l'Université Libre de Bruxelles : Le rôle des associations de migrants dans l'intégration socio-économique et la participation

La stabilité économique est primordiale pour la citoyenneté politique, et ce pour tous les citoyens. Il s'agit là d'un besoin fondamental, surtout pour les primo-arrivants. Afin d'explicitier les liens entre intégration économique et participation politique, Elzbieta Kuzma prend l'exemple d'une communauté qu'elle connaît bien, la communauté polonaise de Bruxelles.

Les Polonais à Bruxelles représentent le groupe le plus nombreux et le mieux organisé des migrants de l'Est. La motivation première de la migration polonaise vers l'Europe de l'Ouest est économique. Ses facteurs sont notamment le fort taux de chômage en Pologne et les perspectives de revenus plus élevés hors de Pologne. Les Polonais se rendent en Belgique pour y travailler et pour y trouver une meilleure qualité de vie, pour eux et pour leurs familles. Le deuxième motif caractéristique de la migration polonaise est qu'elle a longtemps été perçue comme une migration temporaire. Les événements géopolitiques et l'élargissement progressif de l'Union européenne ont façonné le schéma migratoire qui consiste aujourd'hui en une migration principalement économique.



Durant de nombreuses années, des Polonais séjournent illégalement en Belgique et commencent donc à développer des réseaux leur permettant de vivre une vie « normale ». Ils développent un réseau de services à même de couvrir la plupart de leurs besoins, mis à part les services d'éducation et de santé. Le journal *Gazetka* (publié chaque mois en polonais à 20.000 exemplaires) constitue un bon exemple du dynamisme de cette communauté.

L'adhésion de la Pologne à l'UE en 2004 et l'ouverture du marché belge du travail en 2009 constituent des moments clé de changement de statut pour les migrants polonais. Toutefois, ces changements formels ne se sont pas encore traduits dans les comportements, nous vivons donc actuellement une période importante pour la communauté polonaise qui peut désormais sortir de l'ombre de la clandestinité et jouer un rôle plus important dans la vie quotidienne belge.

Cependant, leur histoire d'« illégalité » et la force des réseaux informels communautaires ont contribué à un manque d'intégration conséquent à la société Belge. Le faible niveau de participation aux élections, particulièrement au niveau européen, traduit aussi un manque de confiance des Polonais dans le politique et d'une certaine fatigue de ceux-ci à cause du raidissement des conditions socio-économiques. Même s'il existe de bonnes pratiques (à renforcer), la communauté reste mal informée de ses droits et manque d'appuis de la société formelle belge pour pouvoir réellement activer la participation de ses membres. Pourtant, des changements considérables ont pu être observés dernièrement. En effet, lors des dernières élections locales en octobre 2012, pour la première fois, des candidats polonais (et principalement des candidates) se trouvaient sur les listes des élections communales.

- **Blagorodna Filevska**, President of the Greek-Bulgarian cultural association "Paisii Chilendarski" : The role of women in the participatory process

Mrs Filevska participated in the focus groups of the project. She also was the first Bulgarian person who was candidate at EU elections in 2009 in a Greek political party.

"Paisii Chilendarski" is a Greek-Bulgarian association that focuses on education, on promotion of culture and organizes intercultural activities. The association also advocates the rights of Bulgarian people in Greece. The initial objective of the association is to be an education structure for Bulgarian children to allow them to learn their native language.

Until 2008, Bulgarian migrants were mainly women of a certain age without kids. They specialized themselves in elderly care, child care, cleaning, seasonal work in hotel and restaurant, or even prostitution. Their work usually was undeclared. After the adhesion to EU, more families and younger women came to Greece. One of the biggest problems is that we do not have official data on the real number of migrants. There probably are more than 200 000 but nobody knows. As Bulgaria is a neighboring country, circular migration is easy. Migrants usually come to get seasonal work in tourism industry for 4-5 months and to get Greek unemployment benefits while returning to Bulgaria. Until 2011, they were persistent to stay in Greece because the situation was worse in Bulgaria. But now with the economic crisis, some think to go back.



Bulgarian people don't understand what politics and participation can mean to them. The aim of the association therefore is to inform them about their rights. This behavior comes from a lack of political culture and has to be put in context. Historically, because of the old communist regime, Bulgarian people did not develop a strong culture of participation or transparency. The main obstacles to participation are that they don't feel related to or concerned by elections and that they have very little knowledge on EU politics and on how it can affect their life.

ADOPTION DE LA CHARTE SUR LA CITOYENNETÉ ACTIVE DE TOUS LES CITOYENS EUROPÉENS - ADOPTION OF THE CHARTER ON ACCESS TO RIGHTS AND CIVIL DIALOGUE FOR ALL IN EUROPE

- **Zeta Georgiadou**, Deputy Head of Unit Union Citizenship and free movement : presentation of the Commission's actions in the field of Fundamental rights and citizenship
- **Cécile Le Clercq**, Directorate-General for Communication, European Commission

The approach of the Commission for this European year is to work on specificities of topics and of stakeholders. There is a need to translate EU citizenship in concrete benefits for citizens. The ultimate goal of the European Commission's policy as regards EU Citizenship is that EU citizens feel at home wherever they are in the EU, and also feel European at home. It is important that the Committee of Regions and the local and regional authorities are associated at an early stage of this reflection. The Commission wishes to increase legitimacy by increasing transparency through a deeper collaboration with civil society organizations. In short, the main expectation of the EU Commission for this European Year of Citizens is to empower civil society organizations so that they become real bridges between EU and citizens.

On this matter, the **"Charter access to rights & civil dialogue for ALL in Europe"** is a good snapshot of the problems and what to do to solve them.

The main actual obstacles to an active European citizenship are, according to Mrs. Georgiadou and Mrs. Le Clercq, that citizens cannot access adequate information, that migrants face major difficulties to form or join political parties, and that additional conditions to participation are maintained in some EU member states

At a more individual level, one can observe that EU citizens are willing to participate, but need concrete impact on their daily life. EU citizenship looks too abstract. In addition, information on EU citizenship may improve the attitude of local society towards non-nationals EU citizens. Therefore, the better the people of Europe understand their rights as EU citizens, the more informed their decisions will be. Informed citizens understand that they have a stake in the European project. They therefore want to engage in the democratic life at all levels. This is the vision for the European Year of Citizens 2013.

What the Commission expects to change for this year is an improved connection between national and EU level. Therefore, the main actions that are to be taken for this Year are the following:



- Law enforcement: improve contacts with member states
- Dissemination of best practices examples
- Promotion of automatic registration system
- Increase the role of local and immigration associations

- **Antigoni Papadopoulou**, European Parliament rapporteur on the European year of Citizens: Comments and perspectives and EP point of view and expectations for the European Year of Citizens

Citizens want the EU to give answers to their problems, in particular to those linked to economic crisis. European citizens are not fully aware of the rights attached to union citizenship. Therefore, they do not enjoy these rights which are namely: the right to move and reside freely within member states, to vote and to stand as candidates in municipal and European parliament elections, to enjoy diplomatic and consular protection, to petition the parliament, to apply to the European ombudsman and to benefit from the European citizens' initiative.

The European year of citizens (EYC) provides a unique opportunity to highlight citizens' rights and to encourage active participation in the democratic life and public affairs of the EU. In times of economic, political and social crisis, and only a year before the next European elections, putting European citizenship at the centre of the political agenda is an essential step towards deeper European integration with strong democratic legitimacy. The voices, worries and cries of anguish of European citizens must be heard so that effective policies are developed and citizens' trust in EU policies is regained. Language problems and other barriers, as well as the lack of information in mainly trans-boundary situations, must be addressed effectively.

Citizens need to be informed and motivated to participate actively in the shaping of European policies. Their active involvement and democratic participation strengthens tolerance, social cohesion and solidarity. It enriches cultural diversity, promotes gender equality and mutual respect. It also strengthens the sense of a common European identity based on common fundamental values and the respect of human rights.

The European Parliament's expectations on this EYC are about working together: to increase solidarity and the sense of belonging, especially in time of crisis, and to promote close coordination and synergies between civil society organizations and citizens from one country to another, but also between institutions, the European parliament in particular, as well as European political parties, local, regional and national authorities, the media, and universities.

The "Charter on access to rights & civil dialogue for ALL in Europe" is interesting in that matter because it speaks about the need to work together.



ROUNDTABLE 3: BEING AND GETTING INFORMED ON YOUR RIGHTS: HOW TO IMPROVE THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS ON FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS?

One of the main obstacles of participation of EU migrants seems to be a general lack of information. Therefore, under which form and conditions do EU citizens best perceive information on their fundamental rights? The objective of this panel is to investigate the different ways to raise awareness and to communicate on fundamental rights and participatory processes from local and national authorities toward EU citizens, but also to present best practices promoting a greater engagement of migrants to motivate them to fetch information by themselves.

TABLE RONDE 3 : S'INFORMER ET ÊTRE INFORMÉ DE SES DROITS : COMMENT AMÉLIORER LA TRANSMISSION ?

L'un des principaux obstacles de la participation semble être le manque d'information. Dès lors, sous quelles formes et dans quelles conditions les citoyens étrangers perçoivent-ils le mieux l'information sur leurs droits ? L'objectif de cette table ronde est d'investiguer les différentes manières de faire passer l'information des autorités vers les citoyens, mais également de présenter les bonnes pratiques encourageants ces derniers à s'informer davantage sur leurs droits.

- **Jorge de Portugal Branco**, service social de l'Ambassade du Portugal en France : Diffusion de l'information: le rôle des autorités nationales et locales

En France, la communauté portugaise, qui est en poids numérique l'une des communautés les plus importantes, demeure la moins mobilisée aux élections municipales et européennes, que ce soit en proportion de la communauté comme en termes relatifs par rapport aux autres communautés étrangères.

Certes, la participation politique, que ce soit le vote ou le fait de se présenter aux élections, n'est qu'une composante de l'exercice de la citoyenneté et « l'invisibilité » de la communauté portugaise est compensée par d'autres formes de participation souvent de nature associative.

Si les Portugais peuvent faire preuve de passivité politique, il serait pourtant faux d'affirmer qu'ils sont apolitiques, car la passivité peut constituer une forme de résistance. Des organismes tels que Civica jouent par exemple un rôle déterminant dans le développement de la participation civique des citoyens portugais et européens résidant en France (et qui ne sont pas des ressortissants français) en sensibilisant les associations, les familles et les organisations gouvernementales de France et du Portugal.

Le vote découle des droits électoraux, mais beaucoup de Portugais se sentent mal informés. Dès lors, comment transmettre cette information ? Cette responsabilité revient au pays d'accueil, à l'UE, aux associations et médias locaux. Une mutation dont on ne tient pas assez compte est la mutation technologique. Un autre aspect souvent oublié est également l'importance des canaux informels des migrants. Il faut dès lors activer et utiliser tous les canaux possibles (magasins, églises, médias communautaires, etc.).



- **Claude Denagtergal**, ETUC: la libre circulation des travailleurs en Europe: obstacles et opportunités en termes de droits fondamentaux

La libre circulation des personnes reste le parent pauvre par rapport aux autres libertés de l'UE (libre circulation des services et des capitaux). En particulier, l'information relative aux droits des travailleurs migrants doit impérativement être améliorée.

Vu la crise économique et la situation actuelle du marché du travail européen, la migration des travailleurs est d'autant plus importante. Si la Commission entend promouvoir et faciliter les politiques de mobilité professionnelle, les Etats membres ont en réalité tendance à freiner la dynamique afin de protéger le marché du travail national. Une étude d'Eurobaromètre montre qu'à peine 10% des Européens ont vécu et travaillé dans un autre pays à un moment de leur vie. Les obstacles à la mobilité des travailleurs sont donc bien réels.

Le rôle des syndicats en la matière est surtout d'aller vers les travailleurs migrants, d'entrer en partenariat avec d'autres organisations et institutions pour assurer ces droits, et de pousser vers une meilleure coordination entre ces acteurs pour améliorer les conditions des travailleurs.

La Confédération européenne des syndicats a d'ailleurs édité un « guide du travailleur mobile » (<http://www.etuc.org/a/50>) et créé des bureaux d'information locaux afin de contribuer à la suppression des obstacles à la mobilité des travailleurs et de garantir des conditions de travail décentes pour tous.

Pour convaincre les Etats membres d'appliquer les règles européennes, il faut renforcer la stabilité de l'emploi et la participation des travailleurs. Cela rejoint les conclusions de ce matin : il faut d'abord une stabilité socio-économique, la participation citoyenne viendra ensuite.

- **David Dueñas**, researcher at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili of Tarragona: The potential role of migrants network and associations: a useful asset or a risk of increasing communitarianism?

Migration processes help to create non-permanent networks that help to satisfy practical needs and demands of their members (initial adaptation, family care, housing, labour orientation). In practical terms, the main issue that global society requires for being integrated can be solved, but those that are required by nation-state societies need a deeper involvement with local networks that could share the local culture of needs, and that do not appear in migrants' priorities.

Several studies show how networks strongly define the direction of migration and their first adaptation, configuring strong networks of nationals, families and other contacts done before the migration. But migrants associations can play a double role. They can bond by creating internal links in the migrant community, to reinforce cultural or ethnic linkages, what fits with the interests of core networks of migrants. But they can also bridge by playing a role in creating links with local or other migrant communities, building bridges with local institutions or citizens.



However, this double role may carry opposed interests. Associations are managed according to the interests of the members of their communities having a great tendency to work for internal issues (bonding), while public institutions demand to the associations to bridging their work back to the creation of linkage with hosting communities, under the nation-state framework. This situation leads to the difficulty of sharing interests between migrant communities and local citizens (and between their organisative expressions).

In the framework of the EU Project "Access to Rights and Civil Dialogue for All", as part of a broader study about the general situation of Romanian migrants living in Spain, we conducted a focus-group research with the Romanian Roma community living in Santa Coloma de Gramanet (Barcelona).

The Romanian Roma community can be described as a closed group with almost nonexistent ties to other collectives living in the region, let it be migrants or country nationals. Their precarious living conditions and their socio-demographic characteristics (strong kinship ties, high school dropout rates, strong social control exercised by the community), as well as their social isolation (both in Romania and in Spain), determine their social behaviour: strengthening ties within the community stand as prerequisite of their non-interaction with extra-communitarians, or reduce the existence of such relations/interactions to an absolute necessary level of survival. The existence of closed networks and strong ties within this network, guarantee sustainability on the level of basic needs for families, but causes difficulties on the level of individual development, especially in the case of women.

Closed community network ties for women often work as negative factors from the viewpoint of their empowerment and integration as a collective, this latter accumulating greater importance in their host society. Their social network logically depicts a closed and homogeneous group and their strong ties to the community can be understood as working in both ways in the situation of irregular migrants: from one hand guarantees their subsistence and everyday survival, on the other hand creates a trap for women which, deriving from the same network logic, is impossible to break through.

Presentation: http://prezi.com/nh4i8kzb7591/the-potential-role-of-migrant-networks/?auth_key=102ef3cd5cc403abeb3913628159d4c222ce3977

- **Amandine Bach**, European Women's Lobby: Best practices on citizens empowerment: focus on women

Amandine Back spoke about empowerment of migrant women and good practices encouraging migrant women's participation, and mainly promoting a greater engagement of migrants.

We all have a responsibility in our different positions, whether as decision-makers, functionaries from EU institutions, NGO staff members, or as citizen. Too often, the responsibility has been put on migrants in the media and in political discourse. Responsibility to comply with the law of course,



but also responsibility to have a job that fits your qualifications, to know the local language, the culture, etc.

Access to information is essential to have access to fundamental rights, but this access of information is a matter of political will. It is about practical things like making this information accessible in different languages, targeting specific groups when relevant, having places where this information can be found whether public or NGOs. But it is also about rethinking our way of working by cooperating with migrant NGOs, establishing partnerships, consulting them when designing programmes and not use them to reach your target group, it is about trust, about making change happen. And then it is also about implementation of laws! And change of laws to ensure access to fundamental rights is a reality!

Advocating for migrant women's rights, including women asylum seekers, has been a key priority for European Women's Lobby (EWL) since immigration and asylum have become an EU competence (1999). The EWL has been running in 2001 a campaign for women asylum seekers' rights, including the recognition of gender-based persecutions and it has been a key issue for the association since then. EWL lobbied actively and successfully the advisory committee on equal opportunities between women and men to include as a new challenge the immigration, integration and asylum policies in their opinion on future gender equality policies in the EU.

Amandine Bach also stressed on the dependent legal status of many migrant women, either because they came through family reunion or labour migration (e.g. domestic workers), clear violation of human rights. This issue will be key to raise this issue in the upcoming process of revision of the family reunion directive (as well as the need to be entitled to work and been provided with language courses and life-long trainings upon arrival).

How to improve access to fundamental rights for migrant women? Provide migrant women with the opportunities to participate in the society:

- To grant the right to vote and stand in local and regional elections
- To lift restrictions on political parties
- To ensure women and men migrants enjoy the right to consultation
- To ensure that undocumented migrants are not excluded from any forms of democratic participation and enjoy their basic rights
- To support civil society initiatives for and by migrants

Amandine Bach insisted on funding as a challenge both at national and European level: some of the members of the networks (and even the strongest) nearly closed down this year because of national, regional or local funding cuts. EU funding is becoming nearly the only source in most EU countries but organisations do not have the capacity, both financially (need co-funding) or in human resources to apply.

Presentation: http://www.beingcitizen.eu/pdf/Bach_EESC_Brussels_28012013.pdf



CONCLUSION OF THE DAY: PRESENTATION OF THE VIDEO OF THE PROJECT:



Available on : http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=-bTx4lfEqb4