

Discussion event in Slovenia

The EU2020 strategy has now entered in the phase of its implementation at national level. Member States are supposed to draw up the national reform programmes setting out in detail the actions they will undertake, with a particular emphasis on efforts to meet the national targets. It is important that stakeholders in civil

society contribute to turning these programmes into adequate national policies that put citizens first.

CEDAG has committed to to raise EU-wide awareness within CSOs that this participation is possible and supported members in contributing to their own NRP drafting process through capacity building, networking and sharing of best practices.

On 20th October CEDAG participated to a meeting organised by CNVOS, its member organisation in Slovenia, with the purpose of discussing the participation of NGOs in the drafting process of NRFs in Slovenia. Tina Michieli and Goran Forbici from CNVOS chaired the meeting insisting on the fact that NGOs have a great role to play in putting forward concrete proposals to the Government. They also highlighted the fact that this rich expertise of the civil society sector is often fragmented. NGOs should therefore find ways of pulling their resources together and coordinating their actions in order to have more strong position in a dialogue process with the political institutions.

This meeting was also the opportunity to present the Spring Alliance Manifesto to NGOs in Slovenia as an important initiative for NGOs at European and national level to join the forces to achieve common objectives.

Joseph Carew and Valentina Abita informed about the process of the Spring Alliance campaign and about the priorities and proposals of the Spring Alliance manifesto.

The Spring Alliance was created in 2009 supported by a wide range of civil society organizations in different sectors to influence the strategic direction of the EU so that it pursues social and environmental goals, as well as economic. The idea was to make a shift from the previous narrower economic model. This campaign should now be supported at national level. The success of the Spring Alliance will be measured on the basis of how many of the proposals will be effectively taken in the implementation of the national reforms programmes. Participants of the meeting highlighted the fact that education of young people and active ageing should not be neglected when talking about sustainable development. Every group and especially the most vulnerable should not be marginalised but have access to opportunities and training.

A representative from EAPN in Slovenia pointed out that Europe should put at the forefront of the attention people and not capital. The social dimension is still not so much emphasised in policy-making. Civil society has therefore to join forces and establish mechanisms to work together in order to have a strong position when entering in a process of dialogue with Government.

Another participant highlighted the fact that one thing which is often overlooked is the employment potential of NGOs . One concrete proposal to be included in the national reform programmes could be the increase of the employability of the third sector.

The discussion was closed and all the participants, representing different sectors, expressed their willingness of finding mechanisms of coordinating and come up with concrete proposals contributing to the drafting of the National reforms programmes.

As next steps they agreed to set up a NGO expert group, which will coordinate development of concrete NGO proposals.

Joseph Carew and Valentina Abita reaffirmed the intention of CEDAG of bridging the gap between the national and the European level contributing to a stronger civil society sector and able to put citizen's needs at the forefront of the designing of policies.