

NGO
forum
09 |



Cutting the Democratic Deficit through Civil Participation

27-28 October

Conventum conference Center, Örebro, Sweden

A Union for Peace and Justice – The European Union

Believing that the community you are a part of is based on good values and good practice is essential. If you believe this, you are willing to contribute. If you don't, you will opt out. The European Union is facing a serious problem in this respect. The factor of democracy is crucial. The time has come for the European Union to show itself worthy of its citizen's trust and belief.

To ensure the European Union is based on peace and justice, in the minds of the citizens, change is needed, especially in the way decisions are made. The politicians, working with a popular mandate, need a strong partner to make this happen - Civil Society. Otherwise democracy will not work in the long run. Why? The basic concept is trust. Trust between people in the community. Trust, numerous scientific reports show us, is built through people interacting and meeting.

Closed negotiations between Governments can no longer be the prime decision making method in a European Union that wants to be truly democratic. One of the main challenges for the European Union is to find a balanced way to make transparent decisions based on relevant experiences from various stakeholders.

If we want to make this a reality, we need more than words – we must act. We must give more room for the organisations where millions of Europeans put their energy, their hope and their work – Civil Society.

Critics may say that this is naïve. They would of course be right. Belief in the good is always naïve. But the alternative is nevertheless not viable.

The NGOforum09 aims to give clear strategic recommendations on how, at least partially, we can engage in this challenge. Take part in the exciting process of turning the European Union into our Union!



Conference Themes

The conference is built around three main themes which are formulated as questions to be resolved jointly at the Conference. These questions or themes will be the base for the Conference deliberations and the joint policy formulations. The Conference themes, which are fully explained on the Conference website, are the following:

Q1: Democratic Deficit

Is it possible to reduce the Democratic Deficit within the European Union through Civil Participation?

Q2: Public health and Wellbeing

Do the health and wellbeing indicators and models deserve to be part of official national accounts?

Q3: Civil Society Identity

Civil society has arguably three main roles; market actors, creators of social capital, and political voice. Do we have to choose one or two main identities or can we be all three?

Aim of the Conference

This will be a working Conference, that will try to agree on three main policy proposals for both the political and the NGO-sector on the themes of the Conference. These three proposals will be based on the deliberations during the Conference.

This Conference aims to make a distinct participatory foot-print in the overall democratic process of developing a Europe for and by the Citizens!

Welcome to Sweden and Örebro!



Programme

October 26

Reception and social event for guests that arrive.

October 27

09.00-10.00 **Registration**

10.00-10.30 **Official Opening**

Introduction to the Conference theme and official opening

Dr. Anna Carlstedt, President for the National Forum for Voluntary Social Work

Mr. Ján Figel', Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth (TBC)

Mrs. Nyamko Sabuni, Minister for Integration and Gender Equality (TBC)

Mr. Märten Blomqvist, County Commissioner, The County Council of Örebro

10.30-12.00 **Opening Plenary**

Introduction: Staffan Nilsson, President Group III European Economic and Social Committee.

“Civic cultures and Democratic Participation: Citizen Participation in Policy making”. Speaker: Professor Marilyn Taylor, Univ. of the West of England.

“Building together Local Indicators for Societal Progress”. Speaker: Saamah Abdallah, New Economics Foundation.

“What kind of Non-Profits, for what kind of Future?”. Speaker: Professor Helmuth K. Anheier, University of Heidelberg, Director of the Center for Civil Society at UCLA's School of Public Affairs.

12.00-13.00 **Key Note Speaker Panel**

Reflections from the Key note speakers based in their contributions, on the theme of the Conference. Lead by professor Erik Amnå, Örebro University (TBC).

13.00-14.30 **Lunch**

14.30-15.00 **Introduction of Draft Conference Document and Workshop Sessions**

15.00-18.30 **Workshop Sessions including Coffey**

19.00 **Social Event**

October 28

- 09.00-09.30 Opening of day 2
- 09.30-11.00 **Workshop Conclusions and Recommendations**
Presentations of policy recommendations and conclusions from workshops – Workshop General Rapporteurs.
- 11.00-12.00 **Debate**
Debate on draft policy recommendations and proposals from workshop
- 12.00-14.00 **Lunch**
- 14.00-14.30 **Final Conference Document Presentation**
Presentation of key policy proposals and proposals from workshops in a final draft of the Conference document.
- 14.30-15.00 **Voting**
Voting on the final draft of the Conference document.
- 15.00-15.30 **Concluding Panel**
High level participation from the Political Sphere and from the Civil Society: Reflections on policy recommendations, how to take the work onwards. Panel lead by Mr. Bengt Westerberg President of the Swedish Red Cross (former minister for Social Affairs).
- 15.30 **Closing Speech**
Anna Carlstedt, President of the National Forum for Voluntary Social Work

Workshop proposal

Democratic Deficit

1. Citizenship

Active citizenship and the role of the civil society for mobilization and participation.

2. Civil society organizations as Bridges

The role of civil society organizations as a bridge between citizens and authorities for increased engagement.

3. Multilevel Governance

Participatory democracy and civil society role in the shift from government to governance.

4. Civil Dialogue Initiatives

Innovative instruments for civil dialogue, the connection between national agreements, EU civil society charter and code of good practice for civil participation.

Public Health

5. Indicators for Societal Progress

Benefits and consequences of indicators of Health or Wellbeing in national reporting systems and procurement procedures.

6. Taking Active part in Society

Empowerment through volunteering and the cooperative principles.

7. Evidence and Added Value

Securing quality and competence in civil society engagement in public health issues - value of the public-civil society cooperation.

8. Healthy Regions

The role of volunteering and civil society in creating healthy regions

NGO Identity

9. Social Measurement Methods

Proving and improving public-NGO cooperation added value through social measurements. Effects of the methods we use.

10. New Roles and Responsibilities of NGOs

Issues and opportunities of combining service provision and protection of user rights and Civil society organizations as citizens voice.

11. Widening Entrepreneurship

Making entrepreneurship accessible to more actors through “social enterprises”.

12. Financial Diversity,

Ways to enhance the capacity and independence of civil society organisations.



Contact

Website

www.ngoforum09.se

Updated information, online debate, registration

EU Officer

Ariane Rodert

Ariane.rodert@socialforum.se

+32495239546

Secretary General

Göran Pettersson

Goran.pettersson@socialforum.se

+46709965425

Conference Coordinator

Ludvig Sandberg

ludvig.sandberg@socialforum.se

+46734209840

Conference Coordinator

Gordon Hahn

gordon@serus.se

+46768787677

NGO forum 09

ngoforum09.se



ORGANIZER:



PARTNER:



WITH SUPPORT FROM:



ÖREBRO LÄNS
LANDSTING

