

European Economic and Social Committee

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|  | Luxembourg, 26/11/2015 |

**EESC Civil Society Media Seminar 2015**

***Communicating European Development Policy***

**26-27 November, Luxembourg**

**Irini Ivoni Pari: Setting the scene for panel I**

**SPEAKING POINTS**

* 2015 was a pivotal year for development cooperation in the EU and beyond. It is the year where progress made in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will be evaluated and where the Agenda 2030 towards the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has been set.
* The European Year for Development (EYD) provided an excellent opportunity for a broad public debate within and in all Member States. With latest developments on migration and refugees, we have been reminded that the economic and social stability in other countries also impacts on Europe.
* Development policy is deeply rooted in the European Union's core values??? How?? Explain as not obvious to me. Therefore, its profile has to be raised and the European Year for Development was an extraordinary opportunity for this.
* Development policy is of concern to us all and Eurobarometer surveys also show Europeans overwhelmingly agree with the aims of development aid. Where the EU and public authorities are lacking human resources, civil society organisations often have to step in to fill the gap. The EESC acted also during the EYD as the bridge to the citizens, organising events with state and non-state actors, business groups, trade unions, consumers and producers, farmers and many more. Communication between those groups helps to streamline development aid and thus ensuring better use of financial aid and instruments.
* In this panel we are looking back on the European Year for development and taking stock
  + of what has been achieved;
  + of what we have learnt from this experience; and
  + of the added value which can help shape future projects.
* The experts and "founding fathers" – Andris Gobiņš and Marius Wanders will tell us how they went about promoting this idea so that it was taken on as a major campaign of the EU. Which audiences they targeted and what tools they used to convince policy makers of the EYD. Andris Gobins will elaborate on how he succeeded in convincing the EESC to take on this issue and the added value the EESC's contribution.
* Stina Soewarta from the Commission who was responsible for the execution of this yearlong campaign will explain the aims, actions and achievements of the Europe-wide communication campaign, focusing on a few highlights and new and innovative communication tools.
* Last but not least, Heike Ruettgers will give us an overview of the European Investment Bank's activities related to development policy and the respective communication strategies.