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Priorité est aussi donnée au respect des règles en matière de sécurité sanitaire des denrées alimentaires, d'environnement et de bien-être des animaux.

### Un partenariat entre l'Europe et ses agriculteurs

Les derniers élargissements de l'Union en 2004 et 2007 et l'adoption de la PAC par les nouveaux Etats membres ont fait naître de nouveaux défis. Au total, plus de 7 millions d'agriculteurs sont venus s'ajouter aux 6 millions déjà présents. Les zones rurales couvrent 90% du territoire de l'UE dont plus de la moitié est consacrée à l'agriculture. La PAC a toujours eu et continue donc d'avoir de bonnes raisons d'être. Elle n'a cessé d'évoluer pour tenir compte aussi bien des exigences du monde agricole que des nouveaux besoins de la société.

Aujourd'hui, même si la sécurité alimentaire reste une priorité, «d'autres problèmes tels que le changement climatique et l'utilisation durable des ressources naturelles» sont davantage au cœur des préoccupations, selon Dacian Cioloș.

La Commission a ainsi présenté en octobre 2011 des réformes destinées à relever les défis actuels et ceux de l'après-2013: sécurité alimentaire, changement climatique, utilisation durable des ressources naturelles, développement régional équilibré (voir *Cend* 609, page 1). L'aide au secteur agricole doit ainsi permettre de faire face aux effets de la crise économique et à la volatilité accrue des prix des produits agricoles pour contribuer à une croissance intelligente, durable et inclusive telle que définie dans la stratégie Europe 2020.

BENJAMIN DUSAUSSOY, CEND

▷ [http://bit.ly/50ans\\_de\\_PAC](http://bit.ly/50ans_de_PAC)  
▷ [http://bit.ly/bilan\\_sante\\_PAC](http://bit.ly/bilan_sante_PAC)

Netherlands Representation

## The Dutch love Europe... for holidays

For the first time, the Commission's Representation in the Netherlands was present at the Holiday Fair in Utrecht – an annual event that attracts 125,000 visitors looking for information on their next holiday destination.

The Commission had a 50m<sup>2</sup> stand with two information desks, a nice lounge to relax and enjoy, and a sunny back wall on which to project information. The rows of aeroplane seats were a real crowd-puller, allowing visitors to sit down and play a tailor-made interactive quiz with questions on the European health insurance card, cross-border payments and passenger rights. For every right answer, players received a blue EU luggage label. The more labels they collected, the more chances they got to win a European travel bag or suitcase belt. Almost 1,000 visitors took part in the game.

During the fair, staff on the stand received a wide range of people – from families and pensioners cheerfully singing along with two actors as if they were already on their way to the South, to tourism students who were very enthusiastic about the information provided.

The first day of the fair was reserved for professionals, giving the Representation an excellent opportunity to meet travel agencies and tour operators, who are very



Staff of the Representation and Europe Direct at the Holiday Fair. In the middle: Head of Representation Jimmy Jamar.

important multipliers in spreading information on European rights to consumers.

"Fairs offer excellent opportunities for face-to-face contacts with certain target groups," said Bart Roelandt of the Representation in The Hague.

The stand was manned by Commission staff and members of the Dutch Europe Direct network, who handed out 45,000 brochures on travelling in Europe. They were assisted by a legal adviser from the European Consumer Centre (ECC) and another from Your Europe Advice. Visitors to the fair very much appreciated the information the Commission provided, with the ECC's and Your Europe Advice's support. To have rights is one thing, to know them is another, and to be able to claim them makes them real.

"This is a perfect chance to make the Commission's work visible in the daily lives of European citizens. We will be back next year, with an even more attractive stand," said Jimmy Jamar, Head of Representation.

The Europe Hall at the Holiday Fair turned out to be a top location for the Commission's stand. 45% of the visitors were mainly interested in information on Europe, Italy being the most popular travel destination, followed by France, Spain and Germany. Portugal, Greece and Scandinavia are also popular destinations. Europe is still the favourite holiday destination of the Dutch. Eurosceptic? No way!

CAROLIEN PEETERS, THE HAGUE REPRESENTATION

▷ [http://bit.ly/EU\\_travel](http://bit.ly/EU_travel)

European Economic and Social Committee

## Rewarding excellence in civil society

The Civil Society Prize celebrates the achievements of civil society organisations and rewards outstanding projects with public recognition at European level. Organised since 2006 by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), this year's Prize – worth €30,000 – was awarded on 7 December to three civil society organisations during the EESC's plenary session.

The first prize went to the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) for its 'SocialErasmus' project. ESN is a student association which has supported young Erasmus students and promoted student mobility since 1989. The project gives students the opportunity to get to know a new culture and new education systems, while engaging as volunteers and helping the local community, thereby gaining valuable individual experience while giving to their host country. "We are extremely happy with this award," said Tania Berman, the ESN's president, in her acceptance speech. "This project shows local people the benefits of Erasmus and creates real integration. Winning the prize is recognition that international students can make a contribution to local communities."

European Alternatives, an organisation promoting active citizenship, took the second prize for their 'Transeuropa

Festival' – a two-week cultural festival and political event that took place simultaneously in twelve European cities in May 2011, promoting democracy, equality and culture beyond the nation state.

The 'Light on the Rights' Bus Tour, an extraordinary bus trip around 15 European countries to foster proactive participation by school students in working for their rights, earned the Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU) the third prize. OBESSU is a platform for cooperation between student unions active in secondary education, campaigning to boost school students' rights and make their voices heard at EU level.

"It is more usual for civil society organisations to be awarded grants from donors to implement a project. At the EESC we are looking at the excellence of initiatives already carried out: we want to reward them and celebrate them. The impact goes beyond the amount of money we offer, as our winners acquire European public recognition and have the opportunity to meet our 344 members gathered together for a plenary session," stated EESC President Staffan Nilsson presenting the Prize.

MATTEO MANZONETTO, CEND

▷ [http://bit.ly/EESC\\_civil\\_society\\_prize](http://bit.ly/EESC_civil_society_prize)



EESC President Staffan Nilsson with representatives of the three organisations awarded with the 2011 Civil Society Prize.