

RIGHTS, EQUALITY, CITIZENSHIP AND VALUES PROGRAMMES (REC, EFC AND CERV) – EVALUATION REPORT

QUEST's answer to the European Commission

Answered on the 20th of June, 2024

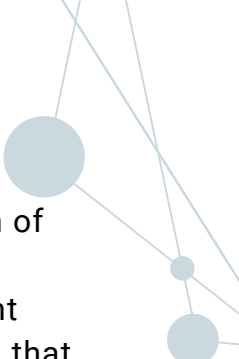
To what extent do you think that EU funding for these areas is a good thing?

The following is a comment explicitly for the call CERV-2024-CITIZENS-REM. This year 2024 was the first in which we saw a call for projects addressing the priority of multiculturalism, colonialism, and immigration (CERV-2024-CITIZENS-REM, and more precisely CERV-2024-CITIZENS-REM-HISTMIGRATION).

We welcome the Commission reflections on the profound consequences of colonial history with particular attention to structural racism and its silent mechanisms. We indeed consider that it was finally time to open up the reflection on decolonisation, the remembrance of colonial atrocities and responsibilities, as well as its current legacies.

However, we were surprised to see the way in which they were integrated into this call, and we were eager to draw attention to the following considerations :

- The fact that the budget is not evenly distributed across the four priorities of a call for projects dedicated to equality, human rights, and memory, is puzzling. We were particularly struck by the wide gap between the budgets allocated to Topic 2 – CERV-2024-CITIZENS-REM-HOLOCAUST (EUR 8.880.000, or more than 63% of the total available call budget) and Topic 3 – CERV-2024-CITIZENS-REMHISTMIGRATION (EUR 2.060.000, or less than 15% of the total available call budget). We believe that putting them on an equal footing is fundamental to reflecting the objectives and message conveyed by CERV, and to acknowledge and rectify all major historical legacies that continue to shape power imbalances in the continent today.
- Topic 2 – CERV-2024-CITIZENS-REM-HOLOCAUST takes little to no account of other minorities who were victims of the holocaust, who are often forgotten in the memories of the genocide (ie. Roma people, LGBTQI people...), and must therefore be an integral part of the reconstruction of this collective memory.

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- In general, we see as very dangerous the segmentation and hierarchisation of different forms of racism and inequalities as done in this call, giving more space (and therefore importance, visibility, and actions) to past and present forms of antisemitism and much less or no space to other forms of racism that have become prevalent in recent years, such as islamophobia. Indeed, these fragmented and biased approaches play a major role in creating division and fueling different types of violence and extremism in European countries and beyond as we speak.
 - Additionally, it called to our attention that the same segmentation mentioned before emerges also in the way in which the following question in the consultation unfolds : "To what extent do you think that the European Commission contributes to the following?". We see that all propositions are based on "citizens" support, besides the two last propositions associated with racism and violence (the only ones seemingly including non-citizens). It seems to us that this phrasing creates a divide between citizens and non-citizens while at the same time reducing the contribution of the EU programmes to (EU) citizens (with the exception of the reference made to racism and violence).
 - Finally, we believe that the construction of the following survey, leaves space for misunderstanding in the phrasing of the questions (especially question number 1, where awareness could both mean "knowledge of" or a "value judgment" around the importance of EU funding given to the selected topics) and leaves insufficient space for qualitative responses where civil society could bring more nuanced and explanatory opinions.

We hope that these remarks will enable future calls for projects in this field to be multiplied and formulated without distinctions in terms of allocated budget that may reflect political choices and harmful segmentation, using an intersectional analysis and truly allowing "remembrance of and education about common 20th century European experiences".