



**ACTION PLAN
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
FOR THE ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS**

JANUARY–DECEMBER 2009



ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

SUMMARY

The Action Plan of the Republic of Slovenia for the Alliance of Civilizations sets out the framework for Slovenia's activities relating to intercultural dialogue. It is based on a national strategy elaborated during the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 and represents a wide range of new and current projects and initiatives in the fields of **education, youth, media and migration**.

The Action Plan is divided into two parts, the first covering Slovenia's activities at the national level and the second those at the international level. Many different projects have been planned for the national level, with particular emphasis on fields proposed by the Alliance of Civilizations: **education** (including the intercultural dimension in revised curricula for elementary and secondary schools, providing training for professionals in education, promoting intercultural education and activities in pre-school institutions and schools, international intercultural activities in education, research projects, working groups on intercultural dialogue, EMUNI University); **youth** (European Youth Campaign of the Council of Europe "All different – All equal", "Youth in Action" programme, cooperation with the North-South Centre, European platform programme, Alps-Adriatic Working Community, Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, Central European Initiative); **media** (formulating the EU's opinion on South-Eastern Europe, programmes for guaranteeing cultural pluralism and interculturalism, EMUNI coordination project "Speak out against discrimination"); and **migration** (conference at the ministerial level, mobile partnerships, adoption of directives in the field of legal migration, special programmes for minorities). These projects are being organised by **ministries** (Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Education and Sport, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), governmental organisations (CEP, Office for Youth, UNESCO Office, Office for Nationalities) and non-governmental organisations (SLOGA platform for development cooperation and humanitarian aid). Other projects uniting several different areas have also been envisaged at the national level. These projects will be organised by the UNESCO Office (UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network, projects involving the town of Slovenj Gradec – Peace Messenger City, Task Force for Euro-Arab Dialogue); Office for Nationalities ("Dosta" campaign for overcoming prejudice against Roma); Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Task Force for International Cooperation on the Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research) and SLOGA (Global Education Week).

In compliance with Slovenia's foreign policy priorities, projects relating to intercultural dialogue are also planned at the *international level*, with particular emphasis on dialogue on the identity, future, vision and common values of the EU Member States; dialogue between nations and cultures in the Western Balkans; dialogue among cultures, religions and civilisations in the Mediterranean Region; and intercultural dialogue within different international initiatives, with special focus on the Alliance of Civilizations initiative.

Table of Contents

	Page
INTRODUCTION	4
PART I: STRATEGIC AND STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK	5
1. STRATEGY AND GOALS	5
2. TOPICS: EDUCATION, YOUTH, MEDIA AND MIGRATION	6
3. STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK	6
PART II: ACTION PLAN (JANUARY-DECEMBER 2009)	7
1. ACTIVITIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL	7
1.1. EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION	7
1.1.1. Ministry of Education and Sport	7
1.1.2. Centre for European Perspective (CEP)	9
1.1.3. Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology - EMUNI University	10
1.2. YOUTH	12
1.2.1. Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth	12
1.3. MEDIA	12
1.3.1. CEP – Task Force on Intercultural Dialogue	12
1.3.2. Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology - EMUNI University	13
1.3.3. Ministry of Culture	13
1.3.4. Information Office of the Council of Europe in the Republic of Slovenia	13
1.4. MIGRATION	14
1.4.1. Ministry of the Interior	14
1.4.2. Ministry of Culture	15
1.5. OTHER PROJECTS	16
1.5.1. UNESCO Office	16
1.5.2. Office for Nationalities	17
1.5.3. Ministry of Foreign Affairs	17
1.5.4. SLOGA – an NGDO platform for development cooperation and humanitarian aid	18
2. ACTIVITIES AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL	19
2.1. EUROPEAN UNION	19
2.2. WESTERN BALKANS	20
2.3. THE MEDITERRANEAN	20
2.4. AoC AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES ON INTERCULTURAL AND INTERFAITH DIALOGUE	21

INTRODUCTION

Since 2005, Slovenia has been participating in the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, which was established in September 2004 on the initiative of the governments of Spain and Turkey six months after the terrorist attack in Madrid. The aim of the initiative is to point out the need for dialogue between Western and Muslim societies as well as to prevent the increasing polarisation which might threaten world peace and stability. The initiative was officially endorsed by the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on 14 July 2005. At that time, a "Group of Friends" of the Alliance of Civilizations was established, which was also joined by Slovenia. The Slovenian Government has been contributing funds for the activities of the initiative since 2005.

The initiative currently comprises more than 80 countries (including all EU Member States) and international organisations (European Commission, UNESCO, Arab League, Organisation of the Islamic Conference, etc.). The Group of Friends holds meetings every year at the ministerial level on the margins of the UN General Assembly session.

On 26 April 2007, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon designated **Jorge Sampaio**, former Portuguese President, as **High Representative of the Alliance of Civilizations**. On 15 June 2007, High Representative Sampaio presented the Alliance of Civilizations Implementation Plan 2007–2009, setting out the objectives of the initiative, its structural framework, main events and specific projects. Sampaio called on AoC members to draw up **national plans for cooperation with the Alliance in the fields of education, youth, media and migration, and to appoint national coordinators**.

The **First Annual Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations** was held in Madrid on 15 and 16 January 2008. The Forum was attended by the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr Danilo Türk. There, political leaders and representatives of international and regional organisations, donor agencies and civil society discussed the increasing polarisation between nations and cultures, and developed partnerships to foster intercultural understanding at the global level.

In addition, the **following concrete projects** of the initiative were presented at the Forum: a pilot project in the field of education on critical reading of media reports (Clearinghouse), setting up a network of experts in the area of intercultural issues to provide rapid response on the Internet on questions posed by journalists during global crises (Rapid Response Media Mechanism), the Global Youth Employment Initiative, Media Fund and Youth Solidarity Fund.

The **first meeting between national coordinators of the Alliance of Civilizations** was held in Paris on 2 and 3 October 2008, focusing particularly on the formulation and implementation of national strategies for the promotion of intercultural understanding in the four main fields of action of the Alliance: education, youth, migration and media.

PART I: STRATEGIC AND STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK

Slovenia sees intercultural dialogue as a process promoting the creation of an open and complex cultural environment. Traditionally set in the Alpine, Pannonian and Mediterranean worlds, Slovenia is a special melting pot of civilisations, cultures and languages that has been shaped by various civilisations and historic influences. The history of the 20th century indicates close ties with the Central European area, which included Slovenia at the time of the Habsburg Monarchy, the Balkans (life in the former common state – Yugoslavia), the Slavic world and the Mediterranean. In this light, Slovenia places intercultural dialogue among the priorities of both its cultural and foreign policies.

1. STRATEGY AND GOALS

Slovenia drew up a national strategy for the implementation of activities during the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008, which coincided with the Slovenian Presidency of the EU. The strategy envisaged numerous activities in the fields of culture, education, higher education and the integration of young people into society. It focuses on similar topics and includes activities with practically the same goals as those pursued by the Alliance of Civilizations. Therefore, the Slovenian Action Plan for the Alliance of Civilizations for the year 2009 is based on the above strategy and activities planned to be continued in 2009. In addition to these activities, three new projects in the fields of education, youth, media and migration have been included in the Action Plan, and the possibilities for cooperation with the Alliance in these projects have been defined.

The activities are based on the Slovenian Action Plan and on the following goals:

- Developing a partnership network with countries, international organisations and civil society; Developing and supporting projects for the promotion of understanding and reconciliation among cultures, particularly between Muslim and Western societies;
- Establishing relations and fostering dialogue, particularly in cases of intercultural tension;
- Establishing civil and social dialogue at as many levels of social life as possible in cooperation with non-governmental organisations and the media in all spheres involving intercultural dialogue;
- Making intercultural dialogue one of the leading principles in Slovenian foreign policy;
- Facilitating mobility in the fields of the arts, science and education, particularly by supporting the movement of ideas and persons;
- Harmonising migration policy within the EU and beyond;
- Promoting intergenerational dialogue;
- Underlining the importance of multilingualism;
- Communication in the education system, from elementary to higher education, that respects the principle of intercultural dialogue;
- Underlining intercultural dialogue in informal education.

2. TOPICS

The Slovenian Action Plan is based on the Report of the High-level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations published on 13 November 2006 defining the four main fields of action of the Alliance:

- EDUCATION – ensure that people receive the right image of other cultures through education
- YOUTH – provide opportunities for young people to meet, learn about and understand other people and cultures
- MEDIA – encourage the media to avoid producing stereotypes and inflaming conflicts or misunderstandings during global crises
- MIGRATION – develop migration policies to avoid stirring up hatred and fear

3. STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK

The following ministries and national authorities have been involved in the elaboration of the Slovenian Action Plan for the Alliance of Civilizations in the field of intercultural dialogue: Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the coordinating authority, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Sport, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of the Interior, Government Office for European Affairs, Government Communication Office, UNESCO Office, Office for Nationalities, Information Office of the Council of Europe and non-governmental organisations in Slovenia.

The first review of implementation of the Action Plan will be carried out at the end of 2009.

After the Second Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations to be held in Istanbul on 6 and 7 April 2009, Slovenia will start drawing up the Action Plan for the period 2010–2011.

No new financial obligations have been envisaged for the implementation of the Action Plan, which will be based on the existing budgets of participating ministries and on other funds.

PART II: ACTION PLAN (JANUARY–DECEMBER 2009)

1. ACTIVITIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Intercultural dialogue is an integral part of Slovenia's policies in different fields, such as culture, education, domestic and foreign policies. An aspect of promoting intercultural dialogue has been included in various acts and regulations as well as in a number of actions at the policy level of ministries and at the level of implementing internal and EU legislation in both their binding and non-binding aspects. This part summarises the activities planned for 2009 in the fields of education, higher education, youth, media, migration and other projects which, due to their multi-faceted character, would be difficult to place in only one of these fields.

1.1. EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION

One of the key priorities in the field of education is encouraging schools to open up to local, regional, national and international environments and to include elements of intercultural dialogue in curricula, programmes of further education and training for professionals in education and project work in pre-school institutions and schools.

In the field of higher education, the exchange of students and professors at the level of universities and faculties is an important element in enhancing intercultural dialogue.

1.1.1. Ministry of Education and Sport

- **Including the intercultural dimension in the revised curricula of elementary and secondary schools**

One of the most effective approaches to modernising education programmes is the competence approach, i.e. the reformulation of curricula so as to provide for the development of essential and vocation-specific skills within individual subjects and in an interdisciplinary manner (interdisciplinary learning). In today's world, intercultural communication skills are certainly among the essential ones; at the same time, they are also important elements of individual vocational competences, as they envisage the training of a young person for a successful vocational and private life in today's multicultural and multilingual world. Intercultural skills include not only the knowledge and understanding of other cultures but also the capability of active and pro-active endeavours towards effective communication between these cultures and towards their mutual enrichment facilitated by diversity and different perspectives.

In 2008, the Council of the Republic of Slovenia for General Education approved the revised curricula for elementary schools and general upper secondary schools.

For elementary schools, the syllabus for civic education and ethics has been approved and is planned to take effect in the 2010/2011 school year. Until then, the current syllabus for civic education and ethics in the 7th and 8th grades of elementary school still applies. In the 9th grade and within the scope of optional compulsory activities at secondary school level, the elective subject of civic culture is provided, which deals in greater detail with topics of compulsory syllabuses.

Within the scope of Slovenia's participation in the Task Force for International Co-operation on the Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, the inclusion of the topic of the Holocaust in syllabuses for history, civic education and ethics will be verified during a revision of elementary and secondary school curricula.

In February 2008 the Slovenian Government designated 27 January as Holocaust Remembrance Day in compliance with the UN General Assembly resolution (A/RES/60/7). Slovenian elementary and secondary schools mark Remembrance Day in an appropriate manner according to instructions provided by the National Education Institute.

- **Training for professionals in education**

The Faculty of Education of the University of Ljubljana will be providing training for professionals in the fields of social and civic competences. The Faculty of Education was selected in a public tender for co-financing professional training issued by the Ministry of Education and Sport in 2009, 2010 and 2011. The project is partly financed by the European Social Fund of the EU. As part of the topic of social and civic competence, training will also be provided on topics such as active citizenship and the promotion of intercultural dialogue.

From 15 to 25 February 2009, a group of elementary and secondary school teachers will take part in a training course on teaching about the Holocaust, which will be organised by the Yad Vashem museum in Jerusalem. The seminar is aimed at presenting the topic of teaching about the Holocaust.

- **Promoting intercultural education and activities in pre-school institutions and schools within the National Education Institute**

In 2009, as part of the promotion of intercultural education and activities in pre-school institutions and schools, the National Education Institute will carry on the tasks launched in 2008. The priorities include: raising awareness among leading and expert workers of the promotion of intercultural dialogue to all involved in the educational process; encouraging them to plan the collection, classification and preparation of cases of good practice for publication in relevant brochures; encouraging professionals in all fields to exchange experiences, with particular emphasis on interculturalism; establishing links with contracting authorities and service providers connected with the integration of children of other language groups and cultural communities that have come to Slovenia; cooperating with governmental and non-governmental organisations; and establishing links with institutions promoting intercultural dialogue in other countries.

- **Co-financing international activities in education in 2009 with particular emphasis on intercultural dialogue**

The Ministry of Education and Sport has been supporting international cooperation between schools, pre-school and other educational institutions for several years. A public tender has also been envisaged for 2009 to support projects taking into account the multicultural situation in specific schools and promoting intercultural dialogue. Cooperation of Slovenian schools with those within ASEF and Euromed is particularly encouraged.

- **Targeted research projects**

Targeted research projects are a special form of implementing and financing scientific and research activity and a method of implementing the *National Research and Development Programme for the Period 2006–2010*, a contribution of the ministry responsible for science, in cooperation with other direct and indirect budget users, to the formulation and implementation of strategic objectives set out in the documents of long-term development planning at national and ministerial levels.

In 2008, two projects were selected in the targeted research project tender "Slovenia's Competitiveness in the Period 2006–2013" within the topic "Key competences for lifelong learning" and subtopic "Developing the concept of intercultural dialogue in educational institutions"; these two projects will be carried out in the next two years.

The first research project, Intercultural Dialogue: Education, Politics, Philosophy, is designed to contribute to a theoretical debate and broader political-culturological-educational analysis of the situation and to the layout of Slovenia's plans and strategies in the broad area of intercultural dialogue. The second research project is to draft a proposal for the conceptualisation of intercultural dialogue and the purpose of introducing it into education.

1.1.2. Centre for European Perspective (CEP)

Within the Centre for European Perspective (CEP), founded by the Slovenian Government in 2005, a task force on intercultural dialogue was established.

- **Meeting of the Task Force on Intercultural Dialogue**

Purpose: The Task Force on Intercultural Dialogue was formed to promote effective and accelerated dialogue between Islamic and European countries and between Islamic communities and other political and religious entities in Europe. Its members advise CEP and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on multicultural dialogue, with a view to marking out the future of Islam in Europe, alleviating political and social tensions, and promoting effective interfaith dialogue and cooperation. Special emphasis is placed on strengthening intercultural dialogue in the Western Balkan region.

The Task Force will focus on the following areas:

- Educating Muslims and non-Muslims on European and Islamic cultural traditions through seminars, with a view to creating mutual understanding and dialogue;
- Media education leading to objective and ethical reports;
- Participating in *ad hoc* intercultural projects;
- Active strengthening of intercultural dialogue in the Western Balkans.

Task Force members:

Hanan Ashrawi (Palestine) – Chair of MIFTAH (The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy)

Benjamin Barber (USA) – the Gershon and Carol Kekst Professor of Civil Society and Distinguished University Professor at the University of Maryland

Mustafa Cerić (Bosnia and Herzegovina) – Grand Mufti (Reis-ul-Ulama) of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Francesco Francioni (Italy) – Professor of International Law

Stanislav Hočevar (Slovenia) – Archbishop of Belgrade

Marko Kerševan (Slovenia) – Full Professor of Sociology of Religion and General Sociology at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana

Giandomenico Picco (Italy) – Former Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations

Imam Abduljalil Sajid (UK) – Chairman of the Muslim Council for Religious and Racial Harmony in the UK

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf (USA) – Founder and CEO of the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA) and Imam of the Masjid Al-Farah Mosque in New York City, in the vicinity of Ground Zero

Marija Šerić (Bosnia and Herzegovina) – Croatian Cultural Society Napredak

Janez Juhant (Slovenia) – Faculty of Theology

Task Force Coordinator: Bojan Žalec (Slovenia) – Faculty of Theology

Purposes of the Task Force meeting:

Drafting a plan to more effectively spread the idea of intercultural dialogue in South-Eastern Europe. Intercultural dialogue is very important for the co-existence of various ethnic, religious and national groups in the region and for democratic development of individual countries. The plan will include scheduled lectures at schools, faculties and other institutions in the region in cooperation with organisations dealing with this issue in the Western Balkan countries.

Developing a post-graduate course on intercultural dialogue for the Euro-Mediterranean University and drafting a programme of cooperation between the University and the Task Force members.

Defining the future purpose and method of cooperation of the Task Force – action plan for 2010.

Intensifying remote cooperation between members of the Task Force on intercultural dialogue (possibilities for an electronic publication).

1.1.3. Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology – EMUNI University

The Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI University), based in Portorož, was inaugurated in June 2008. It was co-founded by universities and other higher education and research institutions. In Barcelona on 26 November 2008, the EMUNI General Assembly adopted the statute of the University, thus marking its formal establishment, elected its bodies and its President, Prof. Joseph Mifsud. The Foundation Charter was signed by 115 higher education and research institutions from 32 countries. At the moment, the formal and legal registration of the University as a higher education institution according to Slovenian legislation is in its final stage.

The founding of the University is in line with the Barcelona Process, which aims at linking the Euro-Mediterranean area, contributing to better knowledge and promoting mutual understanding. EMUNI is also one of the six initiatives of the 2008 Paris Declaration.

The Euro-Mediterranean University will be based on mobility of knowledge and act as a facilitator of cooperation in society. Through education and research it will link different cultures and ways of thinking, thus adding to sustained social development. It will contribute to the interlinking of the Euro-Mediterranean higher education and research area, and establishment of an academic network among higher education and research institutes in the region.

Study courses and research projects will take place at the EMUNI headquarters in Slovenia as well as at partner institutions in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The courses will be internationally comparable with regard to the duration of studies, quality, content and acquired professional/academic titles. The University is to start offering its own study courses in the 2009/2010 academic year.

Center EMUNI (established in October 2007) and the EMUNI Foundation (established in August 2008) were intended to support the founding and operation of the EMUNI University. An important task of the former is to provide facilities for the University, as well as to act as its secretariat, while the prime objective of the latter is to obtain financial resources for the development and operation of the University.

Activities of EMUNI related to the Alliance of Civilizations:

- **EMUNI ReS (EMUNI Research Souk)**

EMUNI ReS, the Euro-Mediterranean Student Research Multi-conference, will be a sort of "market" (*souk* being Arabic for market) of knowledge, different views, opinions, cultural differences and similarities of the Euro-Mediterranean region. It will simultaneously (on 9 June 2009) take place at different EMUNI partner institutions (115 institutions in 32 countries), where students and professors will discuss the topic of "Unity and Diversity of Euro-Mediterranean Identities". It is estimated that approximately 10,000 students will take part in the conference, aimed at contributing to cooperation among Euro-Mediterranean research institutions and providing a forum for students to present and discuss their current research. The best student and research papers will be published.

- **Euro-Mediterranean Summer School**

For July and August 2009, a Summer School is planned to be organised in Slovenia and 9 other universities in the Euro-Mediterranean region. A public call for participating institutions was published in December 2008.

- **Training courses and seminars**

Center EMUNI offers professional support in the organisation of short seminars in Slovenia. It will also co-organise the **annual international conference** MIC 2009 entitled "Creativity, Innovation and Management" to be held in Sousse (Tunisia) from 25 to 28 November 2009.

- **International Journal of Euro-Mediterranean Studies**

A special issue of the **International Journal of Euro-Mediterranean Studies**, published by EMUNI since 2008, will be dedicated to issues concerning the Alliance of Civilizations.

- **Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education and Research**

In its conclusions, the first conference of ministers of higher education and research from the Euro-Mediterranean region, held in Cairo on 18 June 2008, included practical measures to promote the cooperation of partner countries in education and research, thus contributing to the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean higher education and research area.

Slovenia plans to host a EuroMed ministerial meeting in the fields of higher education and research; the exact date is under consideration.

1.2. YOUTH

1.2.1. Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth

In the fields of informal education, leisure activities, integration of young people into society and promoting their participation in decisions regarding the development of society as a whole, the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth at the Ministry of Education and Sport encourages young people to be actively involved in their home environment and creates conditions for their involvement in social processes. It promotes the principles of solidarity, tolerance, cooperation and intergenerational links in areas of interest to young people. Special attention is devoted to groups which for various reasons are socially deprived. The Office coordinates the preparation of study and reference materials, education on intercultural dialogue in non-governmental and youth organisations, promotion of possibilities for international cooperation of young people, in the course of which they can get acquainted with cultural and linguistic diversity and gain experience living in a multicultural environment.

Key activities in achieving the set goals for the promotion of intercultural dialogue, tolerance and understanding of diversity in 2009 include: the promotion of values such as tolerance and respect for diversity through various campaigns ("**All different, All equal**" **European Youth Campaign of the Council of Europe for Diversity, Human Rights and Participation**) and the promotion of possibilities for international cooperation through various mechanisms coordinated and monitored by the Office ("**Youth in Action**" **programme, cooperation with the North-South Centre, a European platform programme, participation in the Alps-Adriatic Working Community for promoting cooperation of neighbouring countries and regions, Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, Central European Initiative as an intergovernmental forum for political, economic and cultural cooperation**).

1.3. MEDIA

1.3.1. CEP – Task Force on Intercultural Dialogue

Forming the EU's opinion on South-Eastern Europe

The project is intended for the media in South-Eastern Europe and the promotion of European values (democracy, freedom, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, cultural diversity and the importance of intercultural dialogue) in the region. Media representatives and communication experts from the EU (Brussels) and Slovenia will share their experience and opinions with South-Eastern European colleagues on reporting on the EU, the work of its institutions, formulation of its policies, the enlargement process and especially the importance of objective reports that directly influence public opinion in these countries as well as their EU-related policies. Through such training, CEP contributes to establishing links between South-Eastern Europe and the EU, while at the same time presenting its own activities to the media and ensuring better recognition of Slovenia's development assistance to the countries in the region. Project partners include Gallup and media from Slovenia and other EU Member States.

1.3.2. Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology – EMUNI University

The Euro-Mediterranean University will assume the role of coordinator and mediator as regards media and intercultural dialogue, and cooperate with the newly founded national advisory body, including representatives of the Government Communication Office; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture, and Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology; the Faculty of Social Sciences; and the Information Office of the Council of Europe. Other non-governmental organisations will be invited to participate in an advisory function.

EMUNI will analytically follow problematic issues, pointing to possible tensions, and try to find ways of contributing to Alliance of Civilizations projects and cooperating with the EuroMed Info Centre in the field of media awareness.

1.3.3. Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Culture will endeavour to ensure the exercise of the rights of citizens of the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenians around the world, members of the Slovenian minorities in Austria, Hungary and Italy, the Hungarian and Italian national communities in Slovenia, and the Roma community living in Slovenia to public information and to be informed in general, the preservation and development of Slovenian national and cultural identity, the promotion of cultural production in the field of the media, the culture of public dialogue, the consolidation of the rule of law and welfare state, and the development of education and science.

Through calls for applications, the Ministry allocates funds from its budget to projects that fulfil the criteria for achieving the above objectives. It will co-finance documentaries and films which present and preserve cultural heritage. It will co-finance the distribution and showing of non-commercial art films in the Art Cinema Network, with special emphasis on assuring the plurality and democracy of general information publications, as well as the plurality and democracy of radio and television programme services and electronic publications. Important criteria for financing include exercising the right to public information, informing local and minority communities, disseminating media in minority languages, respecting the principles of cultural diversity and gender equality, and putting tolerance into practice.

1.3.4. Information Office of the Council of Europe in the Republic of Slovenia

“Speak out against discrimination” campaign

The “Speak out against discrimination” campaign arose as a practical suggestion in the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue to ensure that the Council of Europe, alongside media professionals and journalism training institutes, would bring into focus the role of the media in multicultural Europe, whilst striving to promote dialogue in the context of growing cultural diversity. Its focus is to raise awareness and condemn discrimination, in particular discrimination based on a person’s ethnic or racial origin. The campaign believes that through the media a crucial contribution can be made to raising awareness about discrimination and to encouraging more public debate, thus leading to better mutual understanding between different communities. While fully respecting the autonomy of media professionals and media organisations, the campaign pursues three objectives:

The first campaign objective is to ensure that information on national and European anti-discrimination mechanisms are made widely available to people. Despite the fact that discrimination is a crime in Europe, it is both commonplace and the means available to victims to combat it are still relatively unknown. Special partnerships with mainstream and ethnic and diversity media will ensure that information is produced and widely disseminated to counteract this. To ensure the campaign achieves this goal, networks bringing together media professionals, staff from anti-discrimination bodies and minority representatives will be set up.

To ensure that media professionals are well prepared for working against a backdrop of socially diverse European societies, a journalism training pack is being developed in close cooperation with journalism training institutes and media professionals. The aim of this pack will be to ensure that young and mid-career journalists in particular have access to useful training and resource material, which will in turn encourage good practice in reporting against discrimination. A virtual pack will be made available online in 2009, including general tips for good practice and case studies, which will form the basis of class discussions and exercises, and a summer school on media diversity will be held in 2009.

The final campaign strand is to support the access of minorities to all levels of work in the media. There are two main ways in which the campaign will be working in this area, namely via staff policies to ensure that access is possible for minorities to all sectors and levels of the media industry; and via editorial practice, i.e. by encouraging good practice when reporting on intercultural issues and policies. A handbook of good practices will facilitate this objective and will be made available in 2009.

1.4. MIGRATION

1.4.1. Ministry of the Interior

The Ministry of the Interior regularly prepares an annual **regional ministerial conference on migration, organised crime, corruption and terrorism at Brdo pri Kranju – the so-called *Brdo Process***, a cooperation platform uniting the Western Balkan countries, Turkey, Slovenia, Austria and Italy. The year 2008 saw the 7th edition of the conference, which is also planned to be organised in the future. As part of the Brdo Process, the Ministry of the Interior, in cooperation with the IOM, set up migration profiles for the Western Balkan countries and Turkey. They contain detailed data on countries of origin, which are of relevance in effective migration flow management.

At the time of Slovenia's EU Presidency, two **mobile partnerships** were formed (**with Moldova and Cap Verde**). Mobile partnerships represent a new tool in the global approach to migration, focusing on practical aspects of cooperation with third countries. Slovenia joined the Moldova Partnership. Mobile partnerships encompass various projects related to migration; the Slovenian Ministry of the Interior will participate in the project of exchange of know-how and good practices in asylum policies.

Furthermore, during its EU Presidency Slovenia devoted great attention to swift **adoption of two directives in the field of legal migrations** which will increase the attractiveness of the European Union for third-country migrants, simplify and unify European reception

procedures, guarantee a broad spectrum of rights to migrant workers and thus prevent their exploitation.

For several years, the Ministry of the Interior has been assuring the implementation of measures aimed at including refugees (i.e. persons to whom the right to asylum in Slovenia has been recognised) in Slovenian society; the Ministry provides budgetary and European funds to NGOs in this area.

In 2008, the Decree on the Integration of Aliens was adopted, which specifies certain measures aimed at promoting the integration of third-country nationals who reside in the Republic of Slovenia on the basis of provisional or permanent residence permits. Concurrently, the Ministry of the Interior provides funds for the implementation of NGO projects in the field of intercultural dialogue.

In 2009, in accordance with the International Protection Act and the Decree on the methods and conditions for ensuring rights of persons with international protection, and the Aliens Act and the Decree on the Integration of Aliens – the Ministry of the Interior will be organising and funding **Slovenian language courses and education programmes in Slovenian history, culture and constitutional order for various categories of foreign nationals.**

In addition, in 2009 the Ministry of the Interior will allocate budgetary funds and funds from the European Refugee Fund and the European Fund for the Integration of Third-country Nationals to different **NGO programmes aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue and integrating foreign nationals into the Slovenian cultural, economic and social environment, for example:**

- workshops intended for identification and overcoming of intercultural differences, and elimination of discrimination and xenophobia;
- education workshops aimed at improving employment possibilities;
- assistance programmes for Slovenian language learning;
- learning assistance programmes for schoolchildren;
- providing psychosocial assistance to persons under international protection.

1.4.2. Ministry of Culture

Within the Sector for Minority Cultural Rights and the Development of Cultural Diversity, the Ministry of Culture systematically provides protection of cultural rights to actors of various identities. The mission of the Ministry of Culture is to create conditions for cultural diversity and enable members of minority ethnic groups to preserve and develop their identities; the Ministry's policy in this respect is based on the concept of cultural rights as a category of human rights. Its objectives are aimed at considering cultural diversity as broadly as possible, and enabling participation of all those who can offer anything original and authentic to the culture in this area. This principle is contained in the National Programme for Culture (NPC) as well as in the document on the principles and objectives of minority cultural policy. In its annual programmes, projects addressed to disabled, children, refugees and other vulnerable groups are given priority. The co-financed projects are regularly publicised on the Ministry's web pages.

The Ministry of Culture pursues a policy of highly developed cultural pluralism and interculturalism, as opposed to assimilation. To date, three types of programmes have been

developed for implementation that include specific normative, organisational and financial tools which all together constitute the coherent minority-oriented policy of the Ministry.

The first is a special **programme of support for uniting and preserving individual identities**; it is intended for most variegated projects – books, compact discs, literary evenings, lectures and publications – either in the languages of the minority groups or bilingual.

The second is an **integration programme**, allowing integration in artistic and other programmes of the Ministry of Culture following equal criteria, as well as applying the principle of equal opportunities and effective integration in public cultural infrastructure.

The third programme, set up in 2008, is focused on the **development of internal minority human resources, training and employment**. This programme is being financed from the European Structural Fund (ESF), responding to needs concerning internal human resources, as announced by the minority community. The programme is bound to solve the issue of human resources and, concurrently, promote the development of minority groups.

Among its priorities, the new NPC states the activities of the Ministry of Culture targeting improved conditions for intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. The priority criteria in public tenders and calls for applications include the cooperation of various minority groups and cultural activities for children and refugees. One of the adopted measures was the establishment of a coordinating committee, which includes representatives of various nationalities, and a mediation instrument, used by the Ministry in cases of tensions, perception conflicts, disagreements, misinterpretations and similar situations that might result in more serious conflicts.

1.5. OTHER PROJECTS

1.5.1. UNESCO Office

Programmes and activities of the **UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network – ASPnet Slovenia**. Eighty Slovenian schools and pre-school institutions participate in the network. The objectives and principles of lifelong learning, based on the "Four Pillars of Education", are the foundation of values and educational activities of all ASPnet participating schools and contribute to the effective development of knowledge, work, personality and well-being of each individual, as well as small and large groups of people. All this is meant to strengthen peace and international understanding. We are going to include the promotion of the Alliance of Civilizations in the UNESCO ASPnet working programme.

Projects implemented by the town of Slovenj Gradec – Peace Messenger City, including the annual Peace Festival on the occasion of UN Day, where NGOs present their activities related to the culture of peace and non-violence. The programme offers a series of workshops and events organised by the participating NGOs and schools, and a children's competition in painting, literature and photography, each year bringing together a number of participants from various age groups.

The National Commission for UNESCO set up a **Task Force for Euro-Arab Dialogue**, whose objective is to create – in cooperation with regional organisations such as the Council of Europe, ISESCO and ALECSO – a framework and appropriate conditions for the development of multilateral projects in multicultural dialogue education.

The main targeted activities are the training of teachers and the exchange of experience in various areas, including the analysis of textbooks and learning of the Arabic language in European schools.

1.5.2. Office for Nationalities

The "*Dosta!*" campaign

"Dosta! Go beyond prejudice, discover the Roma" is an awareness-raising campaign within the framework of a wider Council of Europe/European Commission Joint Programme. It is aimed at overcoming prejudice and stereotypes about Roma. The campaign is focused on enhancing understanding and knowledge of Romany culture and identity, improving the effectiveness of communication channels to raise awareness and inform the public about the situation of Roma, as well as promoting tolerance, intercultural relations and coexistence. In Slovenia the campaign officially started on 17 November 2008. The Slovenian Government Office for Nationalities is responsible for its implementation, closely cooperating with the Information Office of the Council of Europe in the Republic of Slovenia. The interested public has been invited to participate in the campaign, including numerous NGOs, societies, the professional public, relevant institutions and the Roma community.

The Roma information centre ROMIC presented a song entitled *"Dosta! – Hejrin!"*. In the best possible way, through music, it summarises the message of the entire campaign: enough prejudice, let's open up our hearts and accept each other, and everyone should contribute through his/her actions to better coexistence and a decent life for all. The song is to be broadcast on all Slovenian radio stations, thus becoming a symbol of the campaign.

The Council of Europe has prepared certain materials: posters, information leaflets, a guide on how individuals, institutions, societies and organisations concerned can join the campaign and include its messages in their activities, as well as television and radio spots, which have all been translated into Slovene and made available to a broader public. In 2009, a series of events (workshops, seminars, roundtables) will be organised by different government bodies and NGOs, aimed at overcoming prejudice and promoting tolerance, understanding and acceptance. In 2009, two significant events will be organised to acquaint the public with messages on tolerance and coexistence of minorities in Slovenia, and the *"Dosta!"* campaign: the 50th anniversary of the Government Office for Nationalities (June 2009) and an event accompanying the official launch of the Council of Europe project entitled "The paths of the Roma cultural heritage" (October 2009).

Special attention will be paid to children, and therefore the campaign will try to find its way into schools, pre-school and other educational institutions. The campaign is bound to go on for at least two years, in 2009 and 2010.

1.5.3. Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Task Force for International Cooperation on the Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research

In 2007, Slovenia joined the Task Force for International Cooperation on the Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research as an observer; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the membership holder. The Task Force, composed of government and NGO representatives,

provides a diplomatic platform for NGOs and enables them to participate in international projects relating to Holocaust education and remembrance. Special attention is devoted to cases of anti-Semitism. There are 6 working groups active within the Task Force, comprising representatives of national delegations – experts in their respective fields. The working group on education has special significance. At the moment, 26 countries participate in the Task Force, including most of the EU Member States. Slovenia has already participated in the plenary sessions and individual working groups; the possibility also exists to draw funds aimed at Holocaust-related projects.

A base-line study on activities related to Holocaust remembrance in Slovenia is currently being prepared as part of the activities that need to be carried out for the country to upgrade its Task Force status to a "Liaison Country" (followed later by full membership). In this context, a seminar on the Holocaust was organised in November 2008 in the Yad Vashem museum in Jerusalem, attended by a group of 20 Slovenian experts (from governmental agencies, museums, universities and other institutions).

Within the framework of Slovenia's Council of Europe chairmanship, an international seminar for teachers will be organised in October 2009 in Slovenia, focused on education in the field of crimes against humanity in connection with the birth of the European idea, including the Holocaust. The seminar will be organised by the National Education Institute and the Council of Europe.

1.5.4. SLOGA – an NGDO platform for development cooperation and humanitarian aid

Global Education Week

Between 15 and 22 November 2009, the 11th consecutive Global Education Week will take place, a traditional European event launched in 1999 at the initiative of the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe and organised each year in various European countries. Global Education Week encourages pupils, teachers and youth groups, local communities, governmental and educational institutions, and NGOs to explore educational activities for global citizenship. Its objective is to point out differences and inequalities at both local and global levels, and promote understanding with regard to the fundamental ideas of global citizenship. In 2008, the event was coordinated in Slovenia by SLOGA – a Slovenian NGDO platform for development cooperation and humanitarian aid. The common theme of Global Education Week at the European level is intercultural dialogue, whereas its main slogan in Slovenia, chosen by SLOGA, is "You too are part of this world!".

Nineteen organisations active in various ways in the field of global education participated in the organisation of the Week in 2008. The success of the Week was not only in the number of participating organisations, but also in the fact that many events took place in smaller towns outside the capital Ljubljana. Diverse activities were organised, from workshops, seminars, lectures and roundtables to exhibitions, documentaries and street actions. There were more than 600 direct participants, while many more were informed about Global Education Week in one way or another, and were thus involved indirectly.

2. ACTIVITIES AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

The promotion of interfaith and intercultural dialogue is one of **Slovenia's foreign policy priorities**. The foreign policy dimension of discussions on interfaith dialogue comprises the following:

- Political and civil society dialogue on the identity, future, vision, common values and guidelines of the 27 EU Member States.
- Dialogue between the peoples and cultures in the Western Balkans linked with the EU enlargement priority.
- Dialogue between cultures, religions and civilisations in the Mediterranean Region.
- Intercultural and interfaith dialogue within international initiatives, such as the Alliance of Civilizations, Tripartite Forum on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace, Council of Europe White Paper and Asia-Europe Interfaith Dialogue meetings – ASEM.

2.1. EUROPEAN UNION

The European Commission and the European Parliament declared 2008 the **European Year of Intercultural Dialogue** in view of enhancing the cultural and civilisational aspects of European integration. Intercultural dialogue was also one of the priorities of Slovenia's EU Council Presidency in the first half of 2008, when numerous projects addressing this topic were carried out in Slovenia:

- The conference entitled "Intercultural Dialogue as a Fundamental Value of the EU", organised in cooperation with the European Commission (7 and 8 January 2008), was concluded by the opening ceremony of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.
- The international conference "Europe, the World and Humanity in the 21st Century" (10–13 April 2008) sought to answer questions relating to common European values and the role of Europe and its humanism in the 21st century.
- The international conference "New Paradigms, New Models – Culture in the EU External Relations" (13 and 14 May 2008) established that the culture of dialogue, tolerance and understanding is an important component of dialogue between Europe and its immediate neighbourhood, particularly the Mediterranean Region.

On 23 September 2008, the European Commission and the European Council sent a letter to the High Representative of the Alliance of Civilizations highlighting the importance of cooperation between the EU and the Alliance of Civilizations in intercultural dialogue. An Action Plan on Cooperation between the EU and the Alliance of Civilizations for the period 2008–2010 was enclosed with the letter. The following areas of cooperation are defined in the Action Plan: **promotion of human rights and political reform, media and access to information, intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity, migration and integration, the role of civil society in preventing polarisation and radicalisation.**

On 20 November 2008, the Education, Youth and Culture Council adopted **conclusions on the promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in the external relations of the Union and its Member States**. The document is aimed at creating opportunities for the development, enhancement and integration of culture and intercultural dialogue in the external relations of the EU and its Member States. These conclusions, together with the Council conclusions on intercultural competencies, adopted on Slovenia's initiative during its presidency (to lay the foundations for the development of citizens' competencies), provide a

solid basis for sustained inclusion of intercultural dialogue in all relevant EU policies in the future.

2.2. WESTERN BALKANS

The Centre for European Perspective (CEP) organised the first meeting on intercultural dialogue at Jable Castle, from 6–8 February 2007, with the participation of political and religious representatives from the Western Balkans. There is a Working Group on Intercultural Dialogue within the CEP. During the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, the CEP organised a conference on Muslims as citizens of the West, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at Jable on 22 February 2008. The conference addressed the situation of Muslims as one of the "new minorities" in Europe.

In 2009, members of the Working Group on Intercultural Dialogue will participate in a project to be launched in Bosnia and Herzegovina entitled "School Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina". A "Battle of talents: a contest for the best draft project on the topic of intercultural dialogue" will be organised as part of this project. Lectures on intercultural dialogue will be arranged separately for students, as well as for school teachers and principals. The Working Group on Intercultural Dialogue will be included in the project; it will present methods for overcoming ideological and historical divisions and prejudices in order to achieve tolerance, mutual respect and understanding between individuals of different religious, ethnic or national affiliations. Priority will be given to projects of regional and multiethnic character and to those establishing links with the youth of Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Slovenia. The author of the best project in the area of intercultural dialogue will receive a prize – payment of tuition for study in the EU, and the winning project will be carried out by the CEP in 2010.

2.3. THE MEDITERRANEAN

The year 2008 was also declared the Euro-Mediterranean Year of Dialogue between Cultures. During the Slovenian EU Council Presidency, a **Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Culture** was held in Athens in May 2008. Its final document includes a reference to the **Alliance of Civilizations** and its contribution to strengthening dialogue and mutual respect between cultures and peoples of the Euro-Mediterranean Region.

The ministers expressed their support for the **Euro-Mediterranean Culture Strategy** encompassing cooperation in the field of dialogue between cultures and cultural policies. The Strategy should highlight the cultural dimension of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership based on the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. It was agreed to set up a follow-up mechanism to expedite formulation of the Strategy.

The final document includes a number of activities representing **Slovenia's active and lasting contribution to dialogue between cultures**. It also expresses acknowledgement of the initiative for the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean University based in Piran. Both conferences held in Slovenia – "Europe, World and Humanity in the 21st Century" and "New Paradigms, New Models: Culture in the EU External Relations" – are mentioned in the document as an important contribution to dialogue between cultures and in the light of

drafting the EuroMed Strategy. Mention has been made of the meeting "EuroMed and the Media Task Force", which was also held in Ljubljana. On the margins of the conference, four journalists out of 76 candidates from 37 countries received awards, among them a young journalist from the *Dnevnik* daily, Uroš Škerl, for his contribution to enhancing respect for diversity.

The main objective of the **Anna Lindh Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures (ALF)** as an institution within the **Euro-Mediterranean Partnership** is the promotion of dialogue between cultures. In addition to participation on the Board of Governors and with the heads of ALF national networks, Slovenia also has a representative on the Advisory Council. The ALF included in its programme of activities for the period 2009–2011 cooperation with the **Alliance of Civilizations**. **At a meeting between the leadership of the ALF and the Alliance of Civilizations in Paris on 3 February 2009 a decision was taken to launch a joint initiative entitled "Restore Trust, Rebuild Bridges"**. Participants were invited to submit proposals for activities in the fields of culture, education, cooperation of the youth and the media.

In 2009, Slovenia will play an active role in the implementation of the activities of the **Euro-Mediterranean Conference of the Ministers of Culture and the programme of activities of the ALF in the period 2009–2011**. Members of the Slovenian ALF network will participate in the joint projects proposed. **Slovenia's most important and lasting contribution is the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean University based in Portorož (EMUND)**, which will contribute to enhancing intercultural dialogue. The University will also take part in projects relating to intercultural dialogue and education **during Slovenia's Council of Europe chairmanship**.

2.4. ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES ON INTERCULTURAL AND INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

Slovenia has been taking an active part in different international initiatives on the topic of interfaith and intercultural dialogue, i.e. within the **UN in the Alliance of Civilizations and in the Tripartite Forum on Interfaith Cooperation for Peace, the Council of Europe White Paper project and the Asia-Europe meetings on interfaith dialogue (ASEM)**.

This section will focus on Slovenia's activities within the **Alliance of Civilizations** initiative.

- **Annual Forum of the Alliance**

The President of the Republic of Slovenia took part in the first annual forum in Madrid. Slovenia also intends to participate in the second Forum, to be held in Istanbul on 6–7 April 2009.

- **Ministerial meetings of the Group of Friends of the Alliance**

Slovenia has been participating in the Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends ministerial meetings held in New York in September on the margins of the UN General Assembly session at the level of foreign ministers since 2005.

- **Meetings of national coordinators of the Alliance**

Slovenia appointed Ambassador Matjaž Kovačič, Head of Division for International Organisations and Human Security of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as national coordinator

of the Alliance of Civilizations. Ambassador Kovačič took part in the first meeting of national coordinators of the Alliance held in Paris on 2–3 October 2008. The next meeting will be held on the margins of the Second Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations in Istanbul.

- **Trust Fund of the Alliance**

Slovenia has been allocating funding for the operation of the Alliance of Civilizations since 2005. USD 15,000 was earmarked for the Fund in 2005, USD 20,000 in 2006, USD 15,000 in 2007 and USD 20,000 in 2008. Slovenia will provide financial support for the initiative in 2009 as well.

- **Projects of the Alliance**

Slovenia will examine possibilities for participating in the Alliance's specific initiatives, i.e. the project relating to the Media Literacy Education Clearinghouse, which would include information on national practices in this area.

Possibilities will also be examined for the appointment of an expert who would take part in an expert network in the area of intercultural issues, i.e. the Rapid Response Media Mechanism, providing a rapid response via the Internet to journalists at the time of major global crises.

- **Signing of the cooperation agreement with the Euro-Mediterranean University**

The Euro-Mediterranean University launched an initiative for the signing of a **cooperation agreement with the Alliance of Civilizations**, which was then signed on 21 December 2008. The University thus became a partner organisation of the Alliance in the field of education and research programmes aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue. Within the "research network" of universities and other institutions, cooperation will be set up under the agreement in exchanging experts and engaging in joint research in the area of intercultural dialogue. The Euro-Mediterranean University will also participate in the Alliance's projects, such as the Clearinghouse and Rapid Response Media Mechanism.

Representatives of the University will be attending the Second Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations in Istanbul.