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Access to Social Rights for Young People from Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods

Expert Seminar

Youth Policy Approaches

FOR ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE FROM DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOODS

1-3 December 2010

European Youth Centre Strasbourg

Seminar report

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.   *Rationale and background of the seminar*

The youth policy of the Council of Europe aims at "…providing young people, i.e. girls and boys, young women and men, with equal opportunities and experience which enable them to develop knowledge, skills and competencies to play a full part in all aspects of society"[1].

The Council of Europe has always given particular attention to the specific situations and challenges affecting young people with fewer opportunities, growing up in disadvantaged neighbourhoods or facing greater obstacles to participation and enjoyment of their social rights.

The mechanisms to support policies for the social inclusion and integration of young people put into place by the Council of Europe include training programmes for youth workers, youth policy recommendations and guidelines for social inclusion, educational resources for participation and the support by the European Youth Foundation to pilot projects carried out by young people. The recognition and promotion of youth work and non-formal learning in Europe are also part of this effort. Non-formal education has proven to be an efficient approach when working with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, through its learner centred dimension and the fact that it also addresses young people outside of the formal school curricula. Although its recognition remains problematic, non-formal education enables youth workers to address young people's daily realities and to develop their skills, attitudes and knowledge on the basis of their own experiences. Non-formal education is close to what in some countries is referred to as "éducation populaire", aiming at ensuring access to learning and education and taking into account the individual needs of the learner.

Other measures and mechanisms include the Solidarity Fund for Youth Mobility and the work related to the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

The European Youth Centres in Budapest and in Strasbourg have often pioneered innovative intercultural education training concepts for youth workers and for youth leaders. The partnerships with the European Commission in the field of youth, with ERYICA (European Youth Information and Counselling Agency) and the Partial Agreement on the Youth Card are additional instruments that increase the potential for action and for impacting on young people through those who work with them.

Furthermore, the "All Different – All Equal" European youth campaigns – against Racism, Antisemitism, Xenophobia and Intolerance and for Diversity, Human Rights and Participation – have provided many good examples of good practice and results achieved when governmental and non-governmental youth actors co-operate towards common goals.

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[1] Committee of Ministers Resolution CM/Res(2008)23 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe

Today, however, this is not enough to reverse the feelings that social exclusion is inevitable and that the exposure of young people to it is more and more worrying.

The Enter! project on access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods

The Enter! project on the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods was set up in response to the growing concern and attention of the European Steering Group on Youth (CDEJ) and the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ), the governmental and non-governmental partners of the youth sector of the Council of Europe, to matters of social cohesion and inclusion of young people. These committees set up Social Inclusion of Young People as a work priority for the Council of Europe, including:

-        responses to the exclusion and marginalisation of young people, and measures to facilitate their access to social rights;

-        non-formal education as a means of facilitating young people's social inclusion;

-        addressing the social inclusion of young migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons;

-        the role of youth work and youth policy in promoting intergenerational dialogue and solidarity.

Within this context, the Directorate of Youth and Sport organised an expert seminar on youth policy approaches for access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods in cooperation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the Directorate of Social Cohesion.

Why this meeting?

This expert seminar follows five meetings within the Enter! project addressing issues related to access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.
Earlier in 2010, a seminar on youth information and counselling and an expert meeting on new ways of participation took place in Budapest. Later on, a seminar was dedicated to gender equality and finally, the Directorate of Social Cohesion of the Council of Europe organised a conference on social mobility of young people. The seminars brought together youth workers and practitioners, researchers and policy makers in the respective fields of expertise. Youth workers taking part in the long-term training course on access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods also took part in the meetings.

The meeting on youth policy responses was developed in close cooperation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the Directorate for Social Cohesion of the Council of Europe and set an example of cross-sectorial cooperation between three bodies active in the field of access to social rights.

The previous seminars produced concrete recommendations on the access to social rights in order to contribute to the work on drafting guidelines and policy recommendations as a result of the Enter! project. This expert seminar took the recommendations of the Enter! seminars as a starting point to explore how to integrate them into a policy document to the Committee of Ministers on the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The outcomes of this meeting were taken up by an expert group which prepared a draft recommendation by the Committee of Ministers on the access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

2. Aim of the seminar

Identifying, reviewing and prioritising main issues and proposals to be taken up for a policy recommendation by the Committee of Ministers to the member countries and other areas of youth policy on social inclusion and access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

3. Main issues addressed during the seminar

At the seminar the main topics were the intersectoral policy responses to challenges in access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The seminar took place in Strasbourg on 1–3 December 2010 and brought together youth workers working in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in 12 countries, policy makers and researchers.

The first day of the seminar focused on the work of the Council of Europe in the field of social rights, existing Council of Europe policy instruments such as the European Social Charter and the ways these instruments can support recommendations on access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The link between social rights and youth policy was explored. Participants looked at the challenges facing young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and at assets that young people and their communities have in overcoming the identified challenges. Youth workers from the city of Mulhouse (France) and Turin (Italy) shared examples of their projects in the local neighbourhoods that involved useful partnership between youth policy and social work.

Speakers from the International NGO Conference of the Council of Europe and the Council of Europe research project on "Access to social rights in Europe" analysed the social rights concept, the connections between social rights and youth policy in Europe, the role of education as the key out of poverty, the role of the European Social Charter in access to social rights and practical ways to apply the mechanisms of the Charter in youth work. The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe representatives emphasized the role of local authorities in providing access to social rights and suggested ways and means of building stronger cooperation between local authorities, social services, youth policy actors, non-governmental organisations and youth workers. The Congress

Resolution on the integration of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods was addressed as an example of concrete proposed means for local and regional authorities to reach out to the young people in question. On the basis of the inputs, exchange of ideas and experiences, the participants produced the recommendations on possible measures that youth policy actors could and should take as regards access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The work on this set of recommendations was carried out from the complementary perspectives of the youth workers / practitioners, policy-makers and researchers.

The second part of the seminar was devoted mainly to the development of the rationale for the future recommendation and resulted in the second set of the comprehensive recommendations. This was the main goal of the seminar. In the spirit of seeing young people as a resource rather than a problem – as practiced and promoted by the Council of Europe – the recommendations addressed the specific issues that should be taken up by youth policy targeted towards disadvantaged neighbourhoods in contrast to "generic" youth policy; and suggested the concrete contents for the recommendation along the grounds / rationale for proposing them. The issue of re-defining the concepts of "disadvantaged neighbourhoods" and "youth policy", often raised at the seminar, was also reflected in the final recommendations.

Particularly interesting were the examples of projects and good practices from the field by youth work practitioners and researchers. The success of the seminar was evident in the fruitful exchange of experiences, as well as in the balance of ideas and proposals, practical examples and thought-provoking questions.

This publication reflects the process and contents of the youth policy seminar of the Enter! project. It puts together the main discussions of the seminar as well as the key examples of good practices and is compiled and edited by Karina Chupina.

II. FRAMEWORK OF THE SEMINAR

1.   *Background*

Social Inclusion is one of the four priority areas of the Directorate of Youth and Sport, alongside Human Rights and Democracy, Living Together in Diverse Societies (intercultural dialogue) and Youth Policy Development.

The Enter! project on access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Within its work priority "Social Cohesion and Inclusion of Young People", the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe initiated a three-year project (2009 - 2011) to share experiences and develop innovative and effective youth work and youth policy responses to exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The project, run with the support of the Flemish Agency of Foreign Affairs, draws on the experience of the Council of Europe youth sector in developing non-formal learning and training of youth workers in order to explore responses to challenges faced by young people and youth work institutions.

The project was developed with the following objectives in mind:

- To address situations of conflict and exclusion of young people living in multicultural environments through non-formal education and youth work projects;
- To develop conceptual and practical means of translating intercultural dialogue into the realities of youth work;
- To explore and identify means for innovative youth work projects with young people at risk of exclusion and violence;
- To initiate, support and evaluate thirty-five innovative pilot projects with a high multiplier effect across Europe;
- To address situations of exclusion, conflict and violence affecting young people through partnerships between youth work, youth policy and local authorities;
- To consolidate results of the "All different – all equal" European youth campaign in relation to diversity, participation and human rights.

One core element of the Enter! project was a long-term training course for youth workers/leaders working in disadvantaged neighbourhoods with young people who face difficulties in exercising their social human rights. The course aimed at developing their skills and competences in setting up projects for inclusion and in sharing them with colleagues across Europe.

In addition to the training course and its support measures, the project included seminars and meetings in 2010 and 2011 aimed at complementing the work done with youth workers by deepening specific issues and themes and especially connecting the course and the project with the other priorities of the youth policy agenda of the Council of Europe.

The experiences provided by the long-term training course, the projects of the participants and insights provided by the seminars served as a basis for policy recommendations on the access of young people to social rights.

Finally, young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the project were directly involved in a large-scale event – the Enter! Youth Meeting, September 2011 – through which young people from across Europe met and provided input to and feedback on the policy recommendations. The congress was an opportunity for young people to develop their intercultural skills and to plan or initiate their own activities.

2.   *Why this seminar?*

Within this context, the Directorate of Youth and Sport organised an expert seminar on youth policy approaches for access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods in cooperation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the Directorate of Social Cohesion of the Council of Europe.

This expert seminar followed other expert meetings within the Enter! project addressing issues related to access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Earlier in 2010, a seminar on youth information and counselling and an expert meeting on new ways of participation took place in Budapest. Later on, a seminar was dedicated to gender equality and finally, the Directorate of Social Cohesion of the Council of Europe organised a conference on social mobility of young people. The seminars brought together youth workers and practitioners, researchers and policy makers in the respective fields of expertise. Youth workers taking part in the long-term training course on access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods also took part in the meetings. The seminars produced concrete recommendations on the access to social rights in order to contribute to the work on drafting guidelines and policy recommendations as a result of the Enter! project.

The expert seminar on youth policy approached took the recommendations of the previous Enter! seminars as a starting point to explore how to integrate them into a policy document by the Committee of Ministers on the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The outcomes of this meeting were taken up by an expert group which prepared policy guidelines and a draft recommendation by the Committee of Ministers on access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

3.   Aim and objectives

The main aim of the meeting was to identify, review and prioritise main issues and proposals to be taken up for a policy recommendation by the Committee of Ministers to the member countries and other areas of youth policy on social inclusion and access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The main objectives were:

- To review the results of the Enter! seminars and the long-term training course (LTTC) and extract the main outcomes to be integrated into a policy document;

- To take stock of the work of the Directorate of Social Cohesion and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in relation to access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

- To discuss amongst practitioners, researchers and policy makers the priority issues and areas of intervention of youth policy on access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

- To identify ways of linking the experience of the Council of Europe in the field of human rights and social rights to a policy document and an explanatory memorandum on the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

- To provide some input to the conceptual and practical development of the Enter! project on access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

- To propose ways through which youth policy and youth work can further contribute to access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

- To further develop cross-sectorial cooperation between the Congress, Directorate of Social Cohesion and the Directorate of Youth and Sport.

4.   Structure and Methodology

The seminar brought together 25 participants (policy makers, youth representatives, researchers and youth workers working in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods) for three days. The meeting was designed as a mutual learning situation, where participants could exchange their experiences and built upon previous results for a common identification of the main priorities to be taken to a policy level. The programme of the meeting provided space for individual as well as group reflection and debate, encouraged exchange of best practices, theoretical inputs and helped to create the theoretical and practical framework for further work on a policy document. The working languages were English and French.

During the seminar participants looked into the main problems and challenges young people face in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and analysed subsequently possible solutions; finally, they addressed the key areas for the recommendation.

5.   Participants

The seminar brought together youth workers and social workers, active members of youth organisations, youth researchers and policy makers, involved in youth work or youth policy in disadvantaged multicultural neighbourhoods. Particular attention was given to participants in previous Enter! activities as well as to local and regional authorities to ensure that the results of other activities of the project were fed into the reflection on youth policy priorities.

6.   Review of the outcomes of the previous Enter! seminars

The previous expert seminars and consultative meetings within the framework of the Enter! project aimed to deepen the work done within the project through allowing the exchange of experiences and knowledge by various stakeholders in the youth field. Following the principle of the evidence-based youth policy and supporting the dialogue within the "youth policy triangle" (youth policy – youth work practice – youth research), these multi-faceted activities encouraged participants to find ways of influencing youth policies across Europe from local to the national level and to create synergies in fostering access of young people to social rights.

"The Role of Youth Information and Counselling in Promoting Access to Social Rights for Young People" Consultative Meeting, 14 – 18 June 2010

The aim of the consultative meeting was to explore the ways in which information and counselling should be reflected in youth policy and how they should be organised to best contribute to improving the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights. The meeting sought to identify responses to how the challenges faced by young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods can be tackled in youth work in order to ensure access to information and counselling services and means. Links were made with the LTTC through some of the participants' projects; very interesting examples of successful synergies between youth work and youth information were provided[2].

It was considered important that all actors develop a new way of youth work, where access to information can be the key to tackle the problems young people face today. The seminar meant to reflect upon and share the ways the participants work at the different levels (local, regional, and national or international) and come up with solutions that can improve the current situation.

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[2] "Enter! Access to Social Rights for Young People from Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods" information leaflet, Council of Europe, 2010

Recommendations towards the European institutions, policy makers, researchers and youth organizations were developed by the participants in the following areas:

- Youth information and counselling as a contribution to young people's education and development
- Youth information and counselling as a means to increasing participation of young people in decision/policy making processes
- Youth information and counselling as a response to discrimination, violence and exclusion
- Promoting access to youth information and counselling

As the participants explored the current challenges in accessibility of information and counselling services to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, they highlighted the need for stronger and more competent networks of youth organisations and relevant partners that are able to receive and provide training on youth information and counselling. Through this, competences necessary for youth workers' efficient work with young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods is developed.

The participants stressed the importance of co-management and mainstreaming co-management across all fields of youth work, from European to national and local levels, in order to further development support structures in the field of youth information and counselling, and as a tool to better integrate young people from disadvantaged areas in the life of their communities.

It has been generally noted that young people, especially those coming from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and from minority groups, should be empowered and recognised in order to be able to participate in the decision-making processes that affect their lives. Volunteering should thus be promoted as a good civic practice that should receive more institutional support.

Another point raised during the meeting was the need of the mobile youth work: enabling youth workers to go where youngsters are, and are taking information and counselling beyond cities to rural and disadvantaged areas.

The meeting highlighted a discrepancy between what is agreed at the European level and the realities at the local level. There was a recurrent request that the formal education sector should have a higher role in promoting participation and inclusion of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This should and could be done by introducing non-formal education activities, human rights education and civic courses into the curricula being taught at schools.

(Adapted from the activity draft report by João Salviano Carmo)

"New Ways of Participation in Multicultural Youth Work Based on Information and Communication Technologies" Expert seminar, 14-18 June 2010

This expert meeting aimed to bring policy makers, youth researchers, youth organisations and

young people together to explore how new ways of participation can contribute to improving the access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It also tackled the ways e-participation can help to overcome the challenges of inclusive multicultural youth work, as well as the issue of motivation of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods for e-participation. The question of how e-participation can support social inclusion of young people and their democratic participation, was also one of the main concerns of the seminar.

Participants discussed and identified the challenges of youth e-participation in general and specifically, its challenges in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It was agreed that new media is relevant to the needs of young people but might not be sufficient enough in youth work to change attitudes and behaviours. E-participation therefore should be combined with regular meetings and face-to-face activities, while new media should be applied (to a certain degree) as a good tool for encouraging bottom-up approaches to the participation of young people. It was agreed that expectations towards the impact of e-participation should be realistic. Experts considered e-participation as an important tool that could complement other types of participation, taking into consideration the different social backgrounds of young people. On the basis of these discussions and in line with the context of the Enter! project, the experts developed recommendations addressed to youth organisations, researchers and policy makers in the following categories in the following areas:

- Promoting access to e-participation
- E-participation as a response to discrimination, violence and exclusion
- E-participation as a tool for education
- E-participation as a mean to impact youth policies

Besides focusing on the participation of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, the recommendations concentrated on the ways to support unrecognized forms of participation while striving towards inclusive multicultural youth work and equality in the access to existing structures of youth participation.

(Adapted from the draft activity report by Danijela Juric)

"Gender Equality in Youth Projects" Seminar, 23-27 June 2010

The seminar addressed the issue of gender equality, especially in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, through a fruitful sharing of ideas and experiences on how gender equality can be promoted and mainstreamed in youth projects. The 26 participants of the seminar agreed upon a set of recommendations on how to ensure gender equality in youth work with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, in four main categories:

- Promoting gender equality as a response to discrimination, violence and exclusion in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

- Promoting gender equality in multicultural youth work in disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- Promoting gender equality through the development and the implementation of youth policies
- Education and training as a tool to promote gender equality in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

The main results of the seminar were the definition and the exploration of the concept of gender equality as such, as well as the recommendations developed by the group of participants. It explored in depth the challenges gender mainstreaming represents in nowadays societies, the ambiguity it still bears at political and social level, as well as the difficulty to address the issue of gender at large in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Moreover and besides general proposals for follow-up, the participants also developed concrete recommendations on how to address the issue of gender equality in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and on how to create synergies between different actors and in a transversal manner.

The participants and the team welcomed the investment of the Directorate of Youth and Sport on the issue of gender, even though the focus had been in the recent times mainly on gender-based violence – with what it implies – rather than on gender equality as such. The participants unanimously highlighted the need to further sharpen the approaches on the question of gender and gender equality as to be as inclusive as possible when it comes to the different groups and gender identities. This is a necessary step as well as a sine qua non condition to ensure further efficient work on such issue in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

One of the main challenges of the seminar was to deal with a wide range of expertise either in gender and gender equality issues or on working with disadvantaged groups / in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The requirement to deal with both areas of work simultaneously and in an integrated manner prevented the group to reach very clear conclusions. This demonstrated that further work is needed and all the participants shown a very clear dedication to further work in that direction, with the help of the institutions.
(From the activity report by Gisèle Evrard)

"Social Mobility of Young People" Conference, 30 June – 1 July 2010

The conference was organised within the framework of a 2009-2010 year project on social mobility as a contribution to social cohesion (run by the Directorate General of Social Cohesion), and, as part of its objectives, aimed to create links with the Directorate of Youth and Sport's Enter! project. The main purpose of this event, which was to examine some key factors influencing social mobility and the particular challenges faced by young people in taking advantage of opportunities to increase their social mobility, on the basis of different initiatives undertaken in various countries and to discuss three key factors which have the greatest influence on the social mobility of this age group:

- the importance of *family* structures and parental cultural capital for increasing or decreasing lifetime chances;
- the effectiveness of formal *education* systems in mediating between social origins and destinations and the role of non-formal education in developing life skills and preparing young people for active citizenship;
- difficulties in accessing the *labour market*, particularly in the light of the current crisis, and the future expectations of young people.

Discussions on social mobility therefore linked with four key issues – family, education, employment and equal opportunities – from different but reinforcing perspectives, namely the policy, research and implementation/practitioners points of view. It was underlined that existing measures at European and national levels, such as youth work projects, complement formal education but will not be successful without taking into account cross-cutting policy perspectives, involving other policy sectors such as labour and education. Holistic approaches should be promoted in order to have an insight into the community and environment young people live in.

Related to the topic of family, research showed correlation between the family network and the role it plays in educational choices, performance, life perspectives of youth, as well as parents' educational background. Connection between family expectations and state support needs to be discussed, especially in view of the recent economic crisis, but also the situation of migrant communities and young people living in disadvantaged areas.

As for education, non-formal education seems to have an impact beyond employment in its value ("*know how*" against "*know what*") and therefore, should not be considered as an alternative but rather as complementing formal education.

From the employment perspective, in order to understand the needs of young people, policies need to recognise new cultural lifestyles, diverse identities and values of contemporary youth (including multicultural groups) as these may affect their choices on the labour market, are linked to risks and opportunities and, therefore, social mobility.

Finally, from the practitioners' perspective, recognition of small-scale initiatives, fostering participatory learning, gaining non-cognitive competences (such as leadership, improvement of self-esteem) and capacity–building of the local community are key in ensuring equal opportunities and, consequently, contributing to social mobility.

(From the conference report of Ms Izabela Litewska, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Poland)

7.   Enter! long-term training course

The long-term training course (LTTC) was a central element of the Enter! project that prepared youth workers and youth leaders working with young people in disadvantaged

neighbourhoods, to help young people to exercise their social human rights. Each participant in the course was expected to develop a concrete project with young people, based on active participation, intercultural learning and human rights education.

The course took place over two years, during which a group of youth workers actively involved in disadvantaged neighbourhoods was trained on social rights and develops competences on how to address these issues with young people in the neighbourhoods. The course included residential seminars, e-learning and mentoring elements between the seminars as well as project development dimensions.

The objectives of the course were set as follows:
• To develop participants' competences in developing and running a youth project for social inclusion based on intercultural learning, human rights education and participation;
• To familiarise participants with European youth programmes and policies (Council of Europe and European Commission) and the values, mission, structure and ways of working of the Council of Europe and in particular the Directorate of Youth and Sport;
• To concretely address situations of conflict and exclusion of young people living in multicultural disadvantaged neighbourhoods through non-formal education and youth work projects by the course participants;
• To explore and develop conceptual and practical means of translating intercultural dialogue into the realities of youth work;
• To identify and try out criteria for innovative youth work projects with young people at risk of exclusion and violence;
• To initiate, support and evaluate up to thirty five innovative pilot projects with a high multiplier effect across Europe;
• To share knowledge and experiences on challenges to human and social rights faced by young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Europe;
• To support the implementation of cross-sectorial and interdisciplinary youth work and youth policy by associating local authorities, youth research and youth policy development to youth work;
• To contribute to the recognition of youth work and non-formal education at local and national levels;
• To support the implementation of the objectives of the Agenda 2020 of the Council of Europe in relation to the social inclusion of young people.

During the course, participants also developed specific projects with young people, based on active participation, intercultural learning and human rights education, and also address specific challenges in their access to social rights. These projects provided the practical basis for learning about how to promote the social rights of young people and how best to use youth research for youth policy action. The LTTC was structured around three residential training seminars at the European Youth Centre. In between the seminars, the participants worked on the development and implementation of their project while being mentored by trainers. The

European Youth Foundation has prioritised eligible projects of the LTTC for financial support as pilot projects. An e-learning platform provided deeper insights into specific issues and allows participants to co-operate and share experiences.

The experience gained from participants' projects of the LTTC served as a basis for the development of policy recommendations on the access of young people to social rights.

The participants attending this course were either active grassroots youth workers/leaders or local authority representatives dealing with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. 32 participants from 24 countries were selected based on their experience and the projects they were running or planning on access to social rights for young people.

The main features of the course were:
• The long-term nature acknowledged that learning takes place over a longer time span. Three residential seminars were combined with a practice period to develop projects.
• A reference and support group was set and met regularly to lend their expertise to the course team and steers the course. A variety of stakeholders were represented in this group.
• An internet site and e-learning platform were used for communication between participants and team and for the online learning and training between the residential seminars.
• Participants implemented concrete projects to improve the access to social rights in their disadvantaged area, with the mentoring of the team.
• The practice projects or the participants made links with youth research and youth policy makers. Results and good practices were documented online.
• Documentalists captured all the methods, inputs and outcomes of the different seminars, projects and online platform in a reader-friendly way.
• An evaluator assessed the quality of the different course elements and the learning of the participants, extracting conclusions for future activities and policy.
• Results of this LTTC fed into other dimensions of the Directorate of Youth and Sport's programme.

Interim Reflections by the Enter! LTTC evaluator (from the interim evaluation report)

The interim evaluation report prepared by Yael Ohana, external evaluator of the Enter! LTTC, provided an overview of the progress of the course within its first year in 2010. Some of the observations and reflections are presented below.

Participants found the course useful in general as it has broadened their horizons and provided relevant support to the development and implementation of their projects. With the support of the European Youth Foundation and other funding bodies, projects have been advancing faster.

Participants have specifically gained in terms of confidence, knowledge (about human rights and social rights) and skills (in relation to the practice of non-formal education and projects).

They also gained legitimacy in the eyes of important actors in their context because of the connection with the Council of Europe, access to funding, resources, contacts or educational materials, mutual support from the group and the mentors, as well as broader horizons (the world beyond the local disadvantaged neighbourhood where they work and / or live). The mentoring system was considered essential and was much appreciated.

Overall, the evaluation indicated that the course functioned well, with the following remarks:

- The course has succeeded in establishing projects based on principles of intercultural learning, human rights education and participation. At a time, expectations that complementary educational measures as were developed and financed by the European level could solve structural problems of social rights, were unrealistic and might deflect attention from the fact that national and local authorities have primary responsibility for the development of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Nevertheless, as complementary measures, the projects of the participants were credible and relevant.
- Most of the participants could be considered "novices" in matters of the European youth sector at the beginning of the course. The course provided them with information and knowledge about European youth programmes and policies. It gave them the opportunity to gain insight into "how Europe works". Participants reported that they feel closer to Europe – the idea that Europe can be helpful to them and young people in the disadvantaged neighbourhoods does not ring false.
- Intercultural dialogue might be a side effect of some of the projects. A small number of projects explicitly aimed to increase communication between young people from different cultural groups that could be in conflict. The intercultural dialogue impact of the projects might thus become clearer throughout the rest of the course and upon its completion.
- Establishing very effective policy relationships between the participants and the authorities responsible for the recognition of youth work at the national level, did not seem likely to be a strong result of the LTTC. However, innovations and interesting new approaches to youth work for access to social rights that were identified through the course, should be used in post-course European level advocacy activities aimed at the recognition of youth work and non-formal education.

(Adapted from the interim evaluation report of the Enter! LTTC by Yael Ohana)

Enter! project reference and support group

This group supported the development, monitoring and evaluation of the project and its links with other projects and programmes. The group met at least once a year and its members provided input to specific activities:

- The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
- The Directorate of Social Cohesion of the Council of Europe
- The statutory organs of the youth sector of the Council of Europe – the European Steering Committee on Youth and the Advisory Council on Youth

- The European Youth Foundation
- The European Youth Forum
- The SALTO Youth Resource Centres on Inclusion and on Participation
- The European Network of Youth Researchers

(from the Enter! project website www.coe.int/enter)

III. CONCLUSIONS BY THE GENERAL RAPPORTEUR

1. Policies and realities – in quest for workable solutions

How to reach the "unreachable"? The young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods who face personal and systemic exclusion are still often overlooked by the mainstream youth and policy programmes. And how can young people themselves access the necessary means and services in the disadvantaged areas that they are entitled to? The denial of access to many services, acute challenges encountered by youth from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the need to include these young people into policy framework and community life were the central reflections of the seminar.

The seminar participants discussed and identified the challenges of access to social rights by young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and respectively, reflected on possible youth policy responses to these challenges. No summary would do justice to the rich range of views expressed at the seminar, yet it is a good sign that the progress is continuing in a consistent way.

The main results of the seminar are recommendations on youth policy responses to the identified challenges as well as the outlined priority areas for the future recommendation by the Council of Europe, from the different perspectives of practitioners, researchers and policy-makers.

Within the two intense days of discussions, the key idea of the seminar – finding and founding the *raison d'être* to the forthcoming recommendation by the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers – seems to have been fully achieved. Furthermore, participants suggested concrete contents for the future recommendation as well as concrete cross-cutting policy actions to tackle problems of access to social rights in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

How should youth policy respond to the challenges of access to social rights? Every now and then, in working groups and in plenary sessions, it has been reiterated that "one size fits all" policy approach has never been effective in advancing access to social rights for vulnerable young people. As one working group aptly put it, *"There is nothing more unequal than the application of an egalitarian policy to persons who are unequal!"* Continuing this line of thought, the participants insisted that youth policy should be more closely linked to the lived experiences. Paraphrasing Howard Williamson, policies should hit the target, but should not miss the point. For policy to be effective and fully responsive to the specific needs of young people, the voices of young people themselves should be heard at all levels of decision-making. Youth policy should recognize the existence of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and concentrate on preventive and proactive measures. The participants

stressed that the disadvantaged neighbourhoods mirror society's problems in their extreme form. Still, all too often, as participants admitted, in an effort to accomplish measurable results, programmes pick most easy targets to work with while leaving out the most socially excluded.

One of the most important outcomes of the seminar discussions can be said to be the realization that there is the need to *re-think* the debate about disadvantaged neighbourhoods, definitions of youth policy, approaches and areas of policy intervention.

It was underlined that *holistic approaches* should be pursued in order to have complete understanding of the situation of youth from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. As Marie-José Schmitt from the International NGO Conference of the Council of Europe emphasised, when talking of access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, we should not forget the inseparability of social, economic and cultural rights from human rights.

Kevin O'Kelly's comprehensive presentation informed participants about the barriers as identified within the European study on access to social rights and about the effective ways of dealing with them. Reflections by participants also suggested that more than removal of barriers or risks is needed – investments and actions to create the conditions for access to social rights and inclusion should be made by NGOs, youth and social workers, state institutions, services and the public. These are the actions that can contribute to the policy long-term impact and sustainability. A structural approach that tackles reproduction of discrimination, exclusion and oppression is necessary, since integration measures alone prove to be insufficient. In the course of discussion, the discrepancy between policy intentions and lack of resources or political will in the local realities in various countries was mentioned time and again.

As presented by Mrs. Alison Cook, the challenge in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (that applies to all relevant stakeholders as well) is to be more inventive in the definition of youth policies in order to reach out to various groups of young people. The significance of grassroots work, the role of local authorities, proximity of services were highlighted, as well as the importance of supporting youth-initiated and youth-run projects, peer-to-peer support systems and dedicated space in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Nonetheless, it was argued by participants that giving a space to young people would be not enough, since for successful participation youth need the combination of the rights, means, opportunities, support and space. This "RMSOS" framework builds a capacity and a context where participation can thrive. This implies a careful consideration of the whole social context, of the role of youth and of neighbourhoods' physical and social qualities.

Mobile youth work approach that is social-area-related and focuses on bringing youth work units right into the area, was seen as one of the especially workable solutions on how to reach out to youth in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The insights gained from seminar inputs and discussions, served as a basis for comprehensive, in-depth recommendations. The groups of participants identified the main challenges faced by young people in disadvantaged areas and developed a list of recommendations, divided into four categories:

- ✓ Defining and proposing emphasis in a youth policy as regards young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

- ✓ Youth policy and youth work responses to the challenges of access to social rights by youth from disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

- ✓ Specific issues that should be taken into account for a youth policy in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in comparison to youth policies in general;

- ✓ The necessary contents to be included in the policy recommendations by the Committee of Ministers (including the rationale for proposing them).

Although the recommendation topics were approached from different starting points and perspectives, the important common threads and conclusions were developed. These conclusions, new understandings (or attempts to re-think the notions) of disadvantage, disadvantaged neighbourhoods and youth policy should be brought to the fore of developing policies that are truly inclusive and will enable young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to live as respected, valued and contributing members of society.

2. Conceptual issues

It would be impossible to engage in a meaningful and effective policy development or practical work without discussing the most vital concepts and possibly coming to the common understanding of them. It seemed that in the course of seminar discussions, participants discovered more aspects to "disadvantaged neighbourhoods" and other concepts than they expected to see. Various points of view on the key terms were expressed that one can see below. Though no discussions were planned specifically for discussing the terms as such, the subject of the need to elaborate the key definitions came up every now and then during plenary sessions as well as during group work – be it work on challenges faced by young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, work on proposing youth policy responses or reflecting on the rationale for the policy recommendation. Youth policy actors were encouraged to acknowledge and look into various notions of youth policy, disadvantage, disadvantaged neighbourhood and citizenship when developing the final recommendation proposal for the Committee of Ministers:

Defining the concept of youth policy. In group work, participants discussed that there are numerous notions and dimensions of youth policy. Youth policy should not be confined to

leisure activities and should be formulated and implemented in the way so as to ensure coverage of all groups of young people. Youth policy in general is expected to enable young people to "acquire the attributes of adults" with a view to social integration, i.e. youth policy is essentially a supportive policy.

Defining "disadvantage". There are many dimensions of "disadvantage" – "disadvantage", to the opinion of some participants, should incorporate an economic, social, political and physical/geographical dimension. These dimensions can be overlapping and experienced at the same time. For example, participants had a discussion regarding the well-being of young people and stressed that a sense of well-being is not always related to financial matters – this should be remembered when thinking about "disadvantage".

Defining the concept of "disadvantaged young people". This is related to the "disadvantage" definition first of all. There are many kinds and groups of young people with varying socio-economic and cultural characteristics, and all of them can be the driving force in their neighbourhoods in one way or another.

Concept of the "disadvantaged neighbourhoods". The questions raised by some participants in this regard, were: Is this concept seen from policy-makers' perspective in a uniform way? As argued by a working group of participants, neighbourhood can be physical as well as social (example is the space based on identity – people with disabilities living in a specific area), so it goes beyond geographical dimension. So, if we are to convince policy makers of the need for certain measures, how do we position disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the variety of youth target groups affected? As one of the solutions, participants strongly recommended developing the policy definition of a "disadvantaged neighbourhood" with direct involvement of young people.

How do we define "citizenship"? The exchange of experiences among participants showed that the concept of citizenship is contested – disadvantaged groups seem to develop their own understanding of space, social cohesion and citizenship (e.g. democratic citizenship as opposed to formal citizenship), while seeking alternatives. These alternatives, again, amount to more than mere removal of the barriers to participation – they are about inclusion as valued participants in the society. The discussion on citizenship interpretation therefore brought up the concern or, rather, realization that new ways of reflecting on problems of injustice, inequality and exclusion are needed: as one could put it, the realities of disadvantaged groups call for "inclusion *plus"* and "citizenship *plus"*.

3. Identifying the challenges in local realities

Before starting to work on youth policy responses, the working groups analysed the

challenges facing youth in disadvantaged neighbourhoods from different perspectives. Here are the key identified challenges – the cultural, structural, spatial, attitudinal, emotional and social barriers that consecutively lead to exclusion of young people themselves or hamper the work of those involved into work with young people – including, but not limited to:

- Low self-esteem resulting in lack of motivation towards education, and lack of role models and opportunities.

- Vague concept of citizenship; lack of promotion of citizenship and creation of levers to increase young people's participation.

- Identity problems / issues, in part related to the vagueness of the citizenship concept; lack of the sense of belonging to the neighbourhood, integration into family, value of the family, family support and the sense of belonging to the family, family inheritance; intergenerational divide; lack of objective reflection on the history of migration and background of migrants and indigenous minorities; the difference between those that have an unquestioned belonging, and immigrants whose existence is often put into question or conditioned.

- Lack of knowledge among young people about the concept of social rights and social rights themselves; lack of consistency and clarity of all social rights.

- Poor housing conditions – denying justice to young people, such as denying their right to play, criminalizing youth activities. Counterproductive housing policy. Lack of transportation access, access to social and health services, information and communication technologies; poverty, high levels of unemployment.

- Diminished access to education; low expectations towards children at schools, resulting in low investment in these children; lack of occupational and social integration; early school drop-outs.

- Lack of resources and capacity for organised forms of disadvantaged youth: lack of financial and human resources, information, youth structures (NGOs, youth centres, funding, education resources, informal education, sports facilities etc.). Reduced availability of support.

- Delegation of neighbourhood work to associations; the need to cooperate with parents' organisations in order to reach children.

- Multiple disadvantages for and multiple discrimination of young individuals when their characteristics such as young age, migrant background and gender or disability intercross.

- Lack of political will resulting in lack of representation of the elected representatives on the ground except during election campaigns, resulting in lack of immediate or well-targeted response to challenges that may lead to marginalisation and to the development of parallel societies / economies and illegal activities; lack of trust in political parties and institutions.

- Not seeing young people as a resource. The lack of recognition of their potential to contribute, including their creativity. Need of ownership of the projects by young people in the process.

- Barriers to communication between police and residents of socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Several examples were of young people having their papers/ documents checked by the police once or twice a month merely on the basis of their skin colour.

- Stigmatisation of young people. Placing responsibility on young people for too many problems, including international challenges – such as problems related to religion. This may result in young people identifying with one side, e.g. in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

- Child abuse – the need to develop laws at the state level to protect children and young people from abuse.

- Impact of the economic crisis. In the current economic climate existing positive examples of good practices are unlikely to be duplicated.

4. Youth policy responses and mechanisms – where to put the emphasis in youth policy?

When we speak of young people, where should we put the emphasis in youth policy in relation to youth from disadvantaged backgrounds as opposed, or complementary, to the "regular" policy? After identifying the challenges in local realities, the participants split in groups again to explore the possible policy responses. The groups represented a mix of researchers, youth workers and policy makers and looked into policy responses from three intercrossing perspectives accordingly – the informed triangle of youth work, youth policy and youth research. The result of work in groups showed that youth policy should:

- Admit that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds face specific challenges and therefore require specific strategies and actions in addressing them. Be evidence-based and reflect the realities of young people – young people should be part of defining this evidence. Develop the definition of a "disadvantaged neighbourhood" concept with the direct involvement of young people.

- Ensure that whatever measures are taken they are rights-respective and not counter-productive to rights[3].

- Encourage the staff working in public bodies (such as civil servants, teachers, politicians, youth workers) to treat young people from disadvantaged backgrounds as individuals with different / specific needs.

- Be transparent, visible and understandable for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods should be informed on the existence and contents of the youth policies and the actions taken.

- Give tasks and responsibilities to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and consider them as full actors; thus provide them with an opportunity to gain different roles in the society and develop an individual sense of responsibility. Create places / spaces for young people, as well as provide young people with the ownership of the projects started.

- Consider the role of informal networks and informal partnerships meaningful and as important as formal cooperation (whereas, at times, forced collaboration can lead to weak relationships).

- Be fully based on participation of young people:
    - Be provided with the "local legitimisation"/ownership of the policy development process, where policy makers seek to genuinely involve young people as stakeholders and young people feel involved and consulted;
    - Ensure prior consultation with young people and create opportunities for dialogue; policy makers should maintain communication with their target group and vice versa, if the policy is to be meaningful and representative of the actual needs on the ground. The needs of young people should be analysed for the relevance and sustainability of the projects.

- On the one hand, youth policy should try to empower these young people and integrate them in all levels of decision-making process on issues that affect them; on the other hand,

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[3] The examples of counter-productive practices can be: the construction of large housing estates in line with house building policy, but without building community and recreational facilities – determining, thereby, that the only way children and young people can congregate is by breaking the law; or social services policy that will not place a recently homeless 16 year old into care thereby denying them access to education.

it should also empower institutions and organisations who work in the field of youth issues especially on the issues that affect young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods; policy makers should know the realities of the young people they seek to engage as well as work through their networks.

- Support youth work and the work of the promoters of the rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods through empowering institutions and organisations who work in the field of youth issues, especially on the issues that affect young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

- Be opportunity-based, supportive, realistic, sensitive to the specific needs of young people and, at times, address individual needs as well.

- Make better use of existing resources. To mobilize available resources within society and encourage all types of partnerships between relevant actors (private sector, local government, business sector, NGOs, schools, health institutions, social institutions) that might help in fully addressing young people's needs and interests.

- Secure an intersectoral, holistic, cross-cutting approach to policy-making. It is necessary to have ALL relevant actors around the table, not only those who have a long-standing relationship with youth work (e.g. where housing policy affects young people, housing officials should be part of policy development); create cross-sectorial management policies for promoting access to education, employment etc.

- Encourage more collaboration between all levels of decision making (for example in the United Kingdom and Germany issues affecting young people are spread across federal and local areas, these need to be connected in order to make effective policies).

- Have a double approach in its development; one that starts at the personal and local level, encompassing the work of youth and community practitioners with young people; and the other that tackles structural disadvantage (e.g. the issue of immigrants being born in Italy but not accorded full citizenship).

- Promote social cohesion, for instance, police relations with disadvantaged young people and promote safer neighbourhoods.

- Support young people to develop "neighbourhood citizenship" which engenders a sense of belonging to have a stake in their neighbourhood; to inform young people and make them aware of their social, economic and cultural rights.

- Bring public services as close as possible to young people in their neighbourhoods (socio-cultural service, small shops, etc.) and improve their quality.

- Enable young people to access social networks without difficulty. Youth workers have a major educational duty in this, thus the training of youth workers is necessary.

- Be based on long-term policies, yet remain flexible and participatory; time is therefore needed, although young people seek immediacy.

- Encourage young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to become multipliers and support them to influence policy not only at local and national levels, but at the regional and European level as well.

- Monitor progress.

- Follow the key words: analysis of needs, participatory approach, proximity of support providers; cross-cutting, long-term, evolving, realistic; knowledge of the public, organisation of opportunities for dialogue and discussion.

5. Rationale for the Committee of Ministers Recommendation

One of the aims of the seminar was to develop the rationale behind the future youth policy recommendation. The question aimed to assist in defining the rationale, was: what should specifically be taken into account for a youth policy in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in comparison to youth policies in general? Some groups of participants proposed dividing their suggestions in the categories of "structures and institutions" and "disadvantaged young people", i.e. to base the rationale in relation to structures and institutions as actors that have an important role to play in the access to social rights, and in relation to young people themselves, basing the arguments on the needs of young people in access to particular rights.

The content of the rationale in relation to structures and institutions was proposed as follows:

- The need to create more and better quality social services in order to protect the rights of young people.

- The importance of a double approach, working at a personal and local level with young people, but also at a structural level.

- The need for multi-disciplinary training for youth workers, to find the best ways of working with young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

- Encouraging partnership between public and private sector in order to ensure financial and other support for policy sustainability[4].

- Encouraging cooperation of local authorities, civil society and the media towards changing the way the media address and cover the issues related to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

- Avoiding formation of new disadvantaged neighbourhoods and encouraging integration of people from the existing neighbourhoods through mixing the population groups (people from disadvantaged backgrounds living with the people from different social and economic backgrounds).

- A capacity for speedy reaction to the problems in the neighbourhood.

- Access to information should be provided and shared by the various actors on the ground, and information should be disseminated beyond the area of their work as well.

- The requirement for all statutory and voluntary workers concerned with disadvantaged neighbourhoods to proactively and intensely work for the benefit of children and young people's access to social rights[5].

- Monitoring statutory and voluntary youth work practice to ensure that their work is fully respectful of children's access to social rights.

- Guaranteeing quality professional action for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods:

  o Ensure that social workers are well trained for their job
  o Ensure that social workers' competences are adequate for appropriate response to young people's specific needs
  o Guarantee the variety of quality action on the ground

- Acknowledging the work done by volunteers and NGOs:
  o Recognize the work done by different NGOs in this area and involve NGO representatives to actively participate in the development and implementation of the policies. A suggested method to carry this out is the encouragement of local authorities to organize regular and systematic meetings with NGOs

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[4] A concrete example of this approach is provided by Biljana Vasilevska, Centre for Human Rights "AMOS" Bitola (see Appendix)

[5] Accordingly with the UK Law, children's age is 0 – 18 years.

- Defining in detail the roles and responsibilities of each actor involved in policy development and implementation, such as public institutions and NGOs, without leaving space for false interpretation.

The rationale in relation to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods was defined as well. The need for disadvantaged young people to be a specific target group in social policy was emphasised under this point. The diversity of issues that young people face and consider specific needs of the target group, which might bring different challenges, must be recognised – and policies should be prepared to answer these challenges. Along the various sets of individual and group rights, the following conclusions emerged:

1. The right to participation and citizenship

Ensure participation of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in the development of the "disadvantaged area" concept, also through the use of peer research[6]. Opportunities for citizenship must be provided through enabling young people to have their say and to play a part in the shaping of public policies, particularly those concerning them. Opportunities for young people to develop competences in order to become active citizens should be ensured, and in relation to this, a connection is needed between mobility and citizenship. Not only local mobility could and should be promoted, but regional and international mobility as well. To ensure the appropriate use of local experience, an investment in local resources should be made.

Mechanisms of participation for non-organized youth, for instance, by offering flexible and informal activities for their participation in and influence on decision making, should be offered. One group suggested to replace the term "participation" by a more accessible term relating to "activities with and for young people".

Appropriate establishments / structures (such as youth clubs, youth centres) should be developed and set up. Apart from providing a permanent space for young people in each neighbourhood – such as a youth centre – the policies should promote the idea of mobile youth work as well. The "mobile youth work" approach implies that youth workers or social workers are encouraged to leave their offices and to go where the young people are – in the neighbourhood[7].

Last but not the least, the support for young people to influence policy at European level should be encouraged.

2. The right to quality education

Policies should ensure that all young people from such neighbourhoods obtain and benefit from a qualification making it easier for them to find a place on the labour market, through developing the supply of skills training and the validation of knowledge acquired through experience.

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[6] An example of this process is provided by Zorka Milosevic, Sombor Youth Office, Serbia (see Appendix)

[7] A concrete example of this approach is provided by Biljana Vasilevska, Centre for Human Rights "AMOS" Bitola (see Appendix)

3. The right to employment

There is a need to create specific solutions to promote employment for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and combat discrimination in the recruitment process.

4. The right to respect

There is a need to change the all too often negative image attached to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods by fostering exchanges with the world outside the neighbourhood and working with the media.

5. The right to self-development

There is a need to draw attention to the fact that young people are developing individuals who need to try things out. Penal measures should thus be adjusted so that they are not out of proportion to young people's transgressions. Educational aspect should be favoured to the penal.

6. The right to health

There is a need to guarantee quality health care for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

6. Suggested contents for the Committee of Ministers Recommendation

The main idea in this part of work was to indicate what aspects / positions / requests or solutions should be necessarily included in the recommendation. Following the suggestion of Mrs. Schmitt (from the International NGO Conference of the Council of Europe) to remind of the importance of monitoring the European Social Charter in a preamble, as well as the desire to strengthen the rationale behind the future recommendation, some groups came up with a preamble to the recommendation in addition to proposing the concrete contents.

Participants suggested that the preamble to the Recommendation should contain the following elements:

- ➢ Drawing attention to the specific socio-economic characteristics of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;
- ➢ Drawing attention to the social exclusion and discrimination to which they are subjected;
- ➢ Pointing to the fact that, where young people are financially unequal, extra resources need to be given to those experiencing the most difficulties;
- ➢ Drawing attention to the fact that young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods represent a resource in an ageing Europe;

➢ Encouraging the authorities to develop youth policies taking account of the specific characteristics of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds;
➢ Drawing attention to the wide variety of international and European mechanisms and legislation, and encouraging member states to abide by these (for example, the European Social Charter);
➢ Drawing attention to the need to maintain quality public services so as to ensure that public policies are both efficient and effective.

The other groups recommended various policy actions based on what had been discussed in relation to the specific emphasis in the youth policies towards youth from disadvantaged backgrounds. The concrete policy actions suggested were:

1. *Opportunities and spaces for participation*

Youth platforms should be set up to analyse the situation and work transversally with all the actors associated with young people's problems (youth workers, activity leaders, elected representatives, social workers, teachers, etc.), as well as with players involved in different ways, other partners, such as libraries and media libraries. It would be important to set up *help units* to help young people to solve problems relating to such matters as AIDS, homosexuality, etc., although these units could be an offshoot of youth platforms. For instance, France has a helpline service which young people can use anonymously. Although such arrangements sometimes exist, insufficient information is available.

Children's and young people's preferred forms of organisation and communication should be acknowledged, as well as the assets and capacities of the families to produce their own solutions (such as Nurture Development in Ireland's Asset Based Community Development practice[8]).

Cross sectoral approaches should be used – an example would be to set up an inter-ministerial commission taking place every six months, where they report on, and discuss the youth issues encountered in various ministry departments. This could lead to more holistic approaches to youth policy development.

Interdisciplinary approaches should be applied. This could be carried out through bringing relevant local community actors such as NGOs, police, media, schools, artists, architects etc., together to discuss youth issues.

Mobile youth work is an opportunity to reach young people directly that should be applied more often in different contexts, in its forms such as street work, individual aid, group work and community work. The balance of youth work should undergo a shift approach towards "go to them" instead of "come to us": visiting "them" (youth) at home, at play, at recreation,

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[8] Asset-based community development (ABCD) is a methodology that seeks to uncover and utilize the strengths within communities as a means for sustainable development, through assessment of the resources of the communities and determining how citizens can apply these resources (skills, experience, etc.)

instead of coming to "us" (youth centre, community centre, the office). The example of good practices can be found in experience of Germany where youth workers are deployed with this principle in mind.

Reference groups for needs analysis should be set up; on the other hand, it would be opportune to create a *youth committee to review the local legislative acts* adopted by the municipal council in order to ensure that young people have been taken into account adequately.

"Ambassadors" from neighbourhoods could be appointed as representatives and advocates of their own situation, and membership of discussion groups on specific matters (e.g. AIDS prevention).

2. *Mobility and citizenship*

The possibility for youth mobility should be encouraged, including, but not limited to education mobility, professional mobility, labour market mobility, travelling mobility. Furthermore, more links should be created between mobility and citizenship in the sense that the potential of the young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods should not be forgotten and be applied at the local and regional events; their contribution should be encouraged at the events organised in a city/area (such as a multi-location music festival) where young people and groups from other cities often perform instead. Young people should not be confined to their own neighbourhoods, but given an opportunity to play a direct part in activities organised by the city.

3. *Resources*

Procedures concerning youth, such as financial and bureaucratic, should be simplified for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as procedures for accessing public funds for young people.

Cooperation between public and private sectors is crucial. Scope and reach of the policies should go deep into the private sector and encourage contribution from the private sector through support or funding.

On the national level, governments would be recommended to set aside a budget for projects, and ensure that local authorities have the funds to carry out the projects.

4. *Access to information*

Youth sector actors who are in regular contact with young people should act as information resource centres for them, and thus need quality training in information management and in getting information across. The media also have a role to play in making this information more accessible and in reviewing / rethinking the image of young people that they convey.

The model of "community organisers" (practice applied in the United States) who link family and school, family and municipality, could be used in setting up an *information network.* People already passing on information can thus be encouraged to follow or establish this approach.

It has been stressed that young people should be encouraged to devise projects and policies for themselves. The youth policy pursued by all actors concerned (city halls, associations, socio-cultural centres) should be made known to all members of society, particularly its young people. For this purpose, effective *methods of disseminating information,* primarily to young people, but also to families and schools, need to be developed and established.

Access to relevant documents concerning the rights of young people should be ensured (such as the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, the upcoming Committee of Ministers Recommendation). To ensure the "youth-friendliness" and accessibility of the information, young people should be involved directly in revision of the information. [9]

5. *Education for all*

While access to quality (formal) education is vital, the recognition of non-formal education that is more inclusive than formal education and provides life skills otherwise often unattainable though formal education, should be supported. The importance of non-formal education in preparing youth for active participation and adult life should be fully acknowledged.

The aim of educational programmes and actions should be to encourage young people to move away from paternalistic and protective schemes, enable young people to take responsibility for themselves and enable their treatment as citizens with their own rights and duties. Affirmation strategies and emancipation routes are needed to this end.

Opportunities should be created for direct contact with political agents, civil society (associations, NGOs, socio-cultural centres, etc.) and officials responsible for developing youth programmes and educational activities.

A "Living Library" methodology should be applied on places so that young people can learn about each other's experiences and possibilities[10].

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[9] An example of this process is given by Zorka Milosevic, Sombor Youth Office, Serbia (see Appendix)

[10] In Strasbourg a "living library" was organised where young people could find out about each other's experiences and various jobs (those of the butcher, police officer, teacher, prostitute, etc).

Provision of training on human rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods (and on any other relevant issue) should go beyond awareness-raising and embrace a holistic approach for the development of a young person.

Educational opportunities should be provided in the field of youth participation and social inclusion to local authorities (through the cooperation of the Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities etc.) and other relevant institutions. It is important that the local authorities / local institutions' staff benefit from the same training courses based on the educational approaches developed for and with young people, such as non-formal education methodology. In order to ensure real dialogue between the authorities / institutions and young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, all stakeholders involved in the process should have access to the same or similar educational tools and experiences.

Sources outside the education setting (formal and non-formal) that deny youth rights to education, such as social services, housing, transport policy, should be identified and reported to the structures within the legal system concerned with rights.

6. *Employment*

Meetings should be arranged with business representatives enabling young people to find out about potential job opportunities. Apart from these, meetings could be organised by parents at which young people can discuss what various jobs entail.

Closer cooperation with the employment agencies should be foreseen as well as reintroducing apprenticeship as a way into labour market.

7. *Mediation*

The field of mediation should be included in the youth platforms referred to. Relevant actors such as prosecutors, judges, the police, lawyers, etc, should be included. Meetings between young people and the actors could be organised, with a view to changing the mindset of both young people and representatives of law and order where tensions exist.

There should be support for coaching and mediation for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Policies should encourage the local institutions / authorities to provide coaching programs for young people and even implement the programme such as "youth mediators" following the example of the already existing programme "Roma Mediators"[11].

8. *Research*

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[11] Supported by the Council of Europe http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/roma/schoolmediators_EN.asp.

Research of the rights-based practices as one of the ways to ensure the evidence-based policy development, should be promoted and supported.

Beyond the recommendations, what else should be initiated? In the globalization context, it was argued, Europe needs to look beyond itself and to recognise the impact of globalization on young people in Europe. We should then use this knowledge to develop actions. One of the concrete suggestions was that the Council of Europe's Directorate of Youth and Sport could call for projects which develop youth participation in particular ways, e.g. through research, evaluation and promotion.

7. Questions that we attempted to answer – the need for further reflection

There were many questions raised at the seminar that mirrored the discussions from working groups to coffee breaks to plenary sessions. Not all of the questions were answered or found their way into the recommendations, but they call for recurrent reflection in the work of researchers, policy makers and youth workers. Some of the questions and concerns were voiced and discussed, some were hinted at or remained open for our continual analysis:

- Sense of identity and belonging – how do we cultivate it with young people?

- Given the current crisis, could the austerity measures and varying degrees of access to welfare contributions stoke the intergenerational problems between young people and ageing people?

- Agendas may differ from actor to actor; engagement from the private sector does not always or necessarily aim at the same outcomes as do public authorities or other stakeholders. How can we encourage the contribution from the private sector without triggering threats for possible future clashes / problems and conflict of interest between different actors?

- There is a tendency today to look at migration as "useful" (well-educated or higher qualified migrants who can bring certain benefits to society) and "not useful" (low-skilled migrants or migrants having to or preferring to integrate through taking low-paid jobs). But, should we have a labour focus on migration and look at migrants in terms of their usefulness to the market?

- How do we let young people express their protest without losing hope and trust for them?

- The nature of social policy focused on drug abuse, violence, crime, is condemning. The society needs to consider: how afraid are we of young people?

- Also, should our concerns lay with the groups that are excluded, or with the political powers that create excluded groups and disadvantaged neighbourhoods?

- Thinking of potential benefits, limitations and risks of the agenda of access to social rights…There could be counterproductive consequences – how can our work towards disadvantaged neighbourhoods avoid excluding other young people, children or adults, from the support and resource access they might require?

- How to generate greater political and public will to act?

- Finally, how can we influence the member states of the Council of Europe and relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the recommendation?

These questions and concerns can serve us all in reminding of the importance of the work that we do. As Mrs. Marie-José Schmitt from the INGO Conference of the Council of Europe said, we can't be aware of the changes our work will bring in the future. Every effort ends up bearing fruit. In the same spirit, an African proverb goes, *"if you think you are too small to make a change, try sleeping in one room with a mosquito"*.

IV. SEMINAR'S SESSIONS

1. Opening statement by Rui GOMES, Head of Education and Training Division, Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe

Welcome to the seminar. We are here because Directorate of Youth and Sport engaged together with other partners in the Council of Europe, notably the Directorate of Social Cohesion, in a project for promoting access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This is a medium-term project of three years, which was determined by the fact that many of our partners, especially non-governmental partners of the Council of Europe, but also the governments of the Council of Europe who cooperate with us in the youth field, felt that they should pay more attention to the social situation and challenges that young people are facing throughout Europe today.

And the common denominator that we found among these different situations and challenges, has been access to social rights – or, if you want, challenges in their access to social rights – represented by different levels of exposure to discrimination, to violence and to exclusion.

The Enter! project was set up in a way to identify what a European organisation and what the youth policy of such a large intergovernmental organisation like the Council of Europe or the Directorate of Youth and Sport can actually do in supporting or in promoting access to social rights for young people who are exposed to the forms of exclusion that are very different in terms of origin or in terms of the causes of those situations.

To do so, in the Enter! project we set up a frame of a series of activities which are meant to take us from the realities of youth work to the more global perspectives of youth policy.

In other words, our intention was and still is to take into account the realities and experiences of youth workers on the ground, in different cities or neighbourhoods across Europe and on their basis, to propose some policy recommendations or measures which could apply to different actors in youth policy, be them local, regional authorities, be them governmental or non-governmental.

So it is this connection between youth work and youth policy that we try to keep alive in the Enter! project and try to address, to a certain extent, this connection as an example of how certain situations could be dealt with.

The Enter! project, which I will introduce later on, is composed therefore of different activities. and the role of this particular seminar therein is to bring together different perspectives and experiences starting with youth workers, local authorities and taking into account the researchers, in a way that would help us to identify what could be – should be – the priorities for the future youth policy recommendation by the Council of Europe or the

guidelines for member states as well as other actors in youth work and youth policy to take into account.

This seminar is, in a way, the turning point in the project in which we have already quite some experience. From this accumulated experience we want to make a shift to start working on the potential policy recommendation.

This is what we are here for. We obviously bring together different experiences, different expertise, different points of view and, I am sure, also very different realities.

We believe that the framework of human rights – the framework of the Enter! project in general – hence the emphasis on access to social rights – is potentially the framework that encompasses all the different realities. We would like young people and youth workers involved in this project to look into their realities and problematic issues from a human rights perspective. We believe that this is the right framework to proceed.

Of course it is very important to take into account the diversity of experiences and perspectives that you represent here.

We are here to learn, to share, we are here also to – hopefully – identify what will be the priority issues that a potential future recommendation or other policy measures should take into account. We are not here to produce a recommendation, we are not here to produce a convention or a law or anything that would apply to the morale of everybody. But we are here, I think, for learning, understanding and potentially creating together.

It will be the task of other people – we hope – to take this forward then in other forms. And we hope that the other partners, starting with the partners in the Council of Europe involved in the project, also contribute, because obviously – as we will certainly see during the seminar – youth policy is more than youth policy: in the sense that it is more what can be done by Council of Europe's Directorate of Sport or youth service or by the youth institutions. Youth policy, at the end of the day, is also the expression and the concern of various sectors of policy or government, be it local government or national government, if you see what I mean.

2. Opening statement by Karl-Friedrich BOPP, Head of the Social Cohesion Policy and Standards Division, Directorate General of Social Cohesion of the Council of Europe

Good morning everybody. It is a great pleasure to be with you here in Strasbourg, on behalf of Mr. Alexander Vladychenko who is our Director General of Social Cohesion.

Now, Rui has just explained the essence of the Enter! project and he has said that he represents the Directorate of Youth and Sport. Though he already gave some explanations, I think you could always ask why we from the Social Cohesion Directorate are involved. Why have we been associated with the seminar whereas it is mainly and directly driven by the

Directorate of Youth and Sport? Now, before I will give you the answer to that, I would like to describe briefly the context of social cohesion and the work of the Directorate of Social Cohesion.

We have a steering committee which is the European Committee for Social Cohesion (CDCS). We have pioneered the concept of social cohesion on the European level. The Council of Europe's core values which are human rights, democracy and rule of law are the very basis of social cohesion. Social cohesion is not a legal instrument that can be defended in courts. It relates to the well-being and function of societies and the need to address inequalities and marginalisation.

Divided and unequal societies are not only unjust but also cannot guarantee stability in the long term. The Council of Europe has developed important legal acts on social rights and social protection. Rights provide the firmest foundation of social policy which is why the Council of Europe pursues a rights-based approach to social cohesion. For our social rights are inseparable from human rights and therefore must be guaranteed for everyone at the same level of protection without discrimination. The Council of Europe social policy guidelines and recommendations provide a practical complement to the legal framework by proposing measures to governments designed to ensure that all people, in practice, have access to their rights.

But social cohesion is not only about rights; it also depends very much on people accepting a shared responsibility for the rights and welfare of all. State, local and regional governments, civil societies and families – all have their role to play in building social cohesion. The Council of Europe's new strategy for social cohesion was approved in July 2010 and launched at the high-level conference in Skopje in October 2010. It sets out four priorities for the future work:

1. Reinvesting in social rights and a cohesive society

2. Building a Europe of responsibilities that are both shared and social

3. Strengthening representation and democratic decision-making and expanding social dialogue and civic engagement

4. Building a secure future for all

But most importantly, the new strategy reconfirms that a transversal approach is required in the field of social cohesion. And here in the last phrase are the keywords which allow me to come back to my initial questions which were: why is our Directorate of Social Cohesion involved in this seminar, why have we been associated with it? The key words are transversal approach and the theme of the Enter! project: social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods call for such a transversal approach. However, one thing is promoting the principle; another matter is actually doing it.

And indeed, since June 2010 after the conference we organised together with the Directorate of Youth and Sport on social mobility of young people, this seminar is now already the second occasion where our two Directorates have successfully collaborated in the areas which have many aspects in common. My colleague Ms. Lindsay Youngs will provide to you later more information about the June conference.

Among the social policy recommendations elaborated by the European Committee for Social Cohesion are those on access to social rights, access to employment for vulnerable people, access to housing for vulnerable groups or improving the situation of low income workers, and the empowerment of people experiencing extreme poverty. Since the main objective of this seminar concerns the drafting of a policy recommendation, we can provide useful input, particularly in view of our report "Access to social rights in Europe" but also the policy recommendations we have developed around. I am very happy that later today we will be joined by Mr. Kevin O'Kelly who has played a major role in a number of our social cohesion projects over the last ten years and that he has accepted to take part in this seminar. Now, let me close by wishing you a fruitful and successful seminar. Thank you very much for your attention.

3. Opening statement by Dmitri MARCHENKOV, Secretary of the Current Affairs Committee, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to Strasbourg, to the European Youth Centre, on behalf of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. First and foremost, I wish to thank the Directorate General of Social Cohesion and the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe for co-organising this seminar together with the Congress, and to welcome our cooperation in this matter.

We are here today to exchange experiences and best practices, and to discuss eventual policy proposals under the Enter! project. This new project is meant to improve access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. For the Congress, it is part of the broader work on social cohesion at local and regional level and in particular on the participation of young people in local and regional life.

Improving access to social rights is a matter within the direct competence of local and regional authorities and is also part of the new Congress priorities approved last October, which now include the assessment of the human rights implementation at local and regional level.

This is why the Congress is proud to participate in the Enter! project. The situation of young people, and in particular the problems of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, are of direct relevance and concern to the authorities that are closest to them – to local and regional authorities. They are the first to deal with these problems, and they are also the ones who can do the most to help with the situation and change it for the better.

Indeed, no national policies and measures will be a success unless they are implemented at grassroots and put into practice in our communities. This is why the involvement of local and regional authorities in this process is crucial. We are convinced that local and regional authorities can make a difference already now, without waiting for national governments to act.

To help them, the Congress has worked out a number of tools over the past two decades, starting with the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life in 1992. As recently as last month, the Congress adopted a number of proposals concerning young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, addressed to both local and regional authorities and national governments. Several representatives of the Congress will speak to you today – Congress members, experts and representatives of the Congress secretariat, to present our work in greater detail.

We hope that our discussions during this seminar will make a practical contribution to advancing this initiative, the Enter! project, with some practical proposals for all stakeholders, including governments and local and regional authorities. I wish you constructive and productive discussions. Thank you very much.

4. Introduction to work of the Directorate General of Social Cohesion within the framework of the Enter! project, by Lindsay YOUNGS, Social Cohesion Policy and Standards Division, Directorate General of Social Cohesion of the Council of Europe

I would like to draw attention to the major report on access to social rights drawn up by Mary Daly of Queen's University Belfast and published in 2002. It has been translated into a number of different languages and these versions can be found on the website[12]. The report tackled the issue from a multidisciplinary angle drawing on the work carried out by a number of experts groups covering social protection, housing and employment. Since 2002, we have directed our attention to two areas concerning social services:

- firstly, user involvement in social services, underpinned by the key principle of user participation in the planning – and the performance – of these services as a right;
- secondly, integrated social services which resulted in a report and guidelines addressing the concerns of many users faced with a lack of co-ordination of the services they need to access from a variety of sources.

Current activities – work on social mobility dimension

I would like to talk about a project which is drawing to a close at the end of this year concerning the promotion of social mobility - and to speak of how it contributes to social cohesion. The decision to work on this topic stems from a 2007 recommendation of a High-

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[12] http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/socialpolicies/publications_en.asp#socrights

Level Task Force report (2007) and the 1st Conference of Ministers responsible for social cohesion meeting in early 2009.

Social mobility – which is all about origins and destinations – can be defined very broadly as a movement within the social hierarchy between different class, occupational, income or wealth groups. Our work on intergenerational mobility has focused on what may facilitate or impede chances for children to climb the social ladder relative to their parents and about understanding social justice and equality – or inequality – of opportunities.

Social inequality is linked to disadvantages people face at birth which they are not able to overcome throughout their lives – these can be combined problems such as lack of access to housing, education and employment opportunities, as well as discrimination, poor health and family breakdown.

Economic inequality concerns those born into low-income households. An unequal distribution of wealth in society can be considered unacceptable and undesirable from a social justice perspective as a large gap between rich and poor undermines social cohesion and excludes many from the mainstream of society. But we have to accept that a certain degree of income inequality is inevitable and may provide an incentive to reward people for their effort, talent and innovation. What really matters is equality of opportunity, not equality of outcomes.

The draft report to be submitted next year to the European Committee for Social Cohesion includes a cross-country comparison of literature covering social mobility in Europe as well as the results of case study visits to five countries over the two-year project (Denmark, Romania, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom). Accompanying public policy guidelines address issues related to topics discussed with experts during the study visits – as well as in committee work – on pre-school and school education, employment and welfare policy and social protection.

To mark the end of the project, a final conference will take place in Leeds in the second week of December 2010 to present the Council of Europe's report as well as work carried out in the field by the OECD.

5. Introduction to work of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities within the framework of the Enter! Project, by Joanne HUNTUNG, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

Our seminar this week is looking at youth policy approaches for access to social rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Being composed of elected representatives from both local and regional levels, indeed in its role as the voice of the local and regional authorities of the 200,000 regions and municipalities in the 47 Council of Europe member states, the Congress and its members are perhaps better placed than the national level to know what the citizens of our towns and our regions are looking for in policies that will affect their lives. This is the principle of subsidiarity: certain powers are best entrusted to the local level to strengthen links with citizens thanks to local and regional councillors' proximity to the people.

However, good policies are not made solely thanks to proximity. Only when citizens are closely involved with the policy making institutions will democracy work properly. The Congress is clear that policy making in the youth field should not be done by the authorities alone - young people must be involved. The Congress lays great store by youth participation and almost 20 years ago adopted its European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. The Charter was revised on its 10th anniversary to bring it up to date and the Revised Charter was adopted in 2003. For the Congress, youth participation does not just mean political involvement or participation in youth councils or parliaments. To participate means having influence on and responsibility for decisions and actions that affect our lives or decisions or actions that are important to us. The same goes for young people: they too must be given the opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their lives. And as the Charter states, participation applies to ALL young people, without discrimination.

In 2006, the Congress recognised that "Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) can be very powerful tools for arousing young people's interest in public life" and that they "offer huge scope for new forms of youth consultation and participation in local public life". A resolution on "young people and new information and communication technologies: a new opportunity for local democracy" was adopted which called on local authorities to "develop a specific policy, using ICTs in particular, to inform and consult young people and involve them in local public life". The resolution also suggested local authorities "pay particular attention to ICTs' potential to help young people who are marginalised, vulnerable, disadvantaged or experiencing learning difficulties to overcome these problems and reintegrate in society".

The issue of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and their access to rights was examined as early as 1999 by the Congress. In that year, an international conference was organised in Saint Petersburg and a resolution adopted on "policies for deprived children, adolescents and families" in which the Congress underlined the importance of ensuring "access to fundamental rights (housing, income, health and social protection, education)".

In 2004, the Congress became one of the main partners in the Berlin Process along with the Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport and the German Federal and French Ministries responsible for youth issues. In a major conference held in January 2006 in the framework of this process, the then president of the Congress Chamber of Regions, Yavuz Mildon, stated that "the social causes of poverty [are] rooted in the lack of integration, lack of

education and professional training, lack of employment – and public prejudices and stereotypes**".**

The Congress has also adopted policy recommendations with regard to children. It adopted a resolution on the "social reintegration of children living and/or working on the streets" in 2008. Increasing levels of unemployment and poverty as well as the breakdown of social welfare and security systems have put many children at risk, in particular the most strongly marginalised group of "street children". This is also relevant today as many citizens suffer from the fallout from the current economic and financial crisis. The resolution called on local authorities to draw up long term integrated local action plans, informed by the views of children themselves, and part of a comprehensive municipal strategy which, in particular, aimed at eradicating poverty, providing housing and reducing unemployment.

Also directly linked to children, the Congress adopted a resolution in 2008 encouraging cities to develop child-friendly cities which, amongst others, offer young families and vulnerable categories of people affordable housing.

In 2009, the Congress adopted a resolution on preventing violence against children which called on local and regional authorities to make use of and raise awareness on the Council of Europe's Policy Guidelines on National Integrated Strategies for the Protection of Children against Violence which are designed to promote the development and implementation of holistic national frameworks to protect children from violence.

The Congress's former Committee on Culture and Education has reflected on how local and regional authorities can best act to respond, at their level, to the exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Our discussions, involving different experts and people working in the field, resulted in a resolution, adopted last October by the Congress, on the integration of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Alison Cook, a member of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, will be presenting it at this seminar: this text contains the policy guidelines the Congress has issued to local and regional authorities with the aim of promoting the integration of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The Congress is looking forward to taking part in the discussions over the next two and half days and to see how, together, we can contribute to the policy guidelines to be drawn up for the Council of Europe member states as a conclusion to the Enter! Project.

6. Expectations and needs of young people in relation to European youth policy: examples from local realities, by Fadela AOUIR and Abdel BENHAKKI, City of Mulhouse

To reflect on the issue of the relationship between youth policy and social work in the field, participants looked at the examples of practices of this cooperation at the local level. Fadela Aouir and Abdel Benhakki presented their example of projects in Mulhouse, France, followed by the example from Torino.

Abdel Benhakki:

I work on a service called "Coordination Territoriale de Prévention de Sécurité" (Local coordination for prevention of security) that focuses on prevention of delinquency. It brings together various institutions such as national education, police, justice, the Mulhouse City Hall and the "Conseil Général", which is the key actor for the protection of infancy and children.

I would like to recall the fact that Mulhouse is a cosmopolitan city that has 136 nationalities and 6 problematic zones, or so-called "disadvantaged" zones. You know that in France usually such zones are located around the cities, while in Mulhouse these zones are located in the very city centre.

Crime problem stems from the problems of young people; since I serve as a special educator for the prevention of delinquency and offences, I am giving individual support to these young people, especially in facilitating their access to social rights.

When we were working in one especially difficult area that has no social services department, our daily work was on matters of leisure and cultural life. Still, we should understand that providing leisure and cultural life is not the solution to problems young people face in these areas. I also think the term "disadvantaged neighbourhoods" is not quite appropriate, as we should take into account the cultural richness of these neighbourhoods.

With Fadela we also work on the most important problems in the neighbourhood such as the education and economic problems. Many of young people get out of the educational system without any qualification, which has negative implications for their employment. This leads to frustration, which many of young people express through acts of incivility.

One sociologist said a few years ago that if in the rich city we are afraid *for* our youth, then in the circumstances as we have in our city, we're afraid *of* our youth. And this is a huge problem because the opinion is formed that if young people are dangerous, they should be sent to jail or some other distant place – whereas in fact the correct approach is to work together with them on their situation. For example, in the service where Fadela works, if young people have

difficulties in school, they are simply expelled from school. It is very simple to exclude a person; school has nothing more to worry about, but a person is left with the same unsettled problems.

Many of these young people, unfortunately, come to the attention of police, get taken to the police and are brought up for trial, despite the fact that the committed offence can be very minor. They are at a distinct disadvantage in this situation. Furthermore, they are disadvantaged from birth because of a very high population density in Mulhouse, which creates obstacles in their daily life. Apart from this, they have additional problems due to low level of tolerance towards them. Recently, a schoolboy who had insulted a teacher (which is of course unacceptable) was expelled from school. Nevertheless, this situation should have not led to expulsion from school and, as a result, to exclusion from society.

Fadela's organisation helps such young people with school orientation, social reintegration and rehabilitation. It works with their families as well in order to look for positive solutions. It is a very difficult task in our society today, but we do not lose hope.

We carried out a project "Youth platform" in one of the poorest areas in which we operate. We decided to bring together social workers, teachers, animators, administrative staff – and to brainstorm the question: what are the real problems of the youth in the areas where we work?

Sometimes it is hard to solve the problem because we need more resources and more means. But, as it developed, it is not necessary to look for new resources – we can use the tools that we already have. There are volunteers in these areas who can apply their work in different ways. We decided that we will try to offer new solutions. A rather simple but effective approach is to conduct educational activities for youth and children – education in matters of civic awareness and human rights.

Fadela Aouir:

When I got involved in the Enter! project, I started working with organisations and programmes that I previously did not know, such as the Youth in Action and others. When we did projects on participative democracy, it became clear that there are pressing issues as to how young people perceive themselves in the context of Europe and whether they feel Europeans. After the start of the project and the courses in Strasbourg and Budapest European Youth Centres, I saw that young people do not understand their rights or know how to apply them.

So within the Enter! project we started our project on non-discrimination. In particular, we managed to give young people a better understanding of their rights as Europeans and an awareness of themselves as Europeans, regardless of whether they come from disadvantaged backgrounds or not.

Abdel Benhakki:

Last year we took the kids from sub-Saharian Africa, Maghreb and Turkey to Spain to a football tournament. There, some local people started singing racist hooligan songs and shouting "white power". Some of them sprayed svastikas on the walls of the hotel where we were staying. At first, our kids did not grasp the situation, because they cannot speak English.

We therefore began to work to ensure that these young people become aware of their rights and understand that the concept of European citizenship is at the core of these issues: whether to relate to Turks and Arabs as to strangers, to treat them as "dirty Arabs" and "dirty Turks" – or to accept them as citizens of Europe. Fadela did a great job in this, but much remains to be done so that these young people are aware of themselves as citizens of Europe; so that they understand that we live in a multicultural world, and that there are deviations, but these deviations are not the norm representative of the European community.

7. "Sao Paolo" project, by Maria Grazia ZUNNUI, Municipality of Turin and Lorena VITAGLIANO OSHIRO PONCE, "Equal Association"

Our project is called "Sao Paolo", and it takes place in our own San Paolo neighbourhood located in Turin. Turin has 10 neighbourhoods in general, and this is one of the largest, comprising of a lot of immigrant groups such as Romanians and Peruvians. We want to work specifically with the Peruvian immigrants on prevention of violence and social exclusion, and help them in solving many problems, because it is difficult for migrants to acquire citizenship in Italy.

The episodes of neighbourhood violence that were reported by social services, schools and the police, were an impetus for starting our project. Some of these episodes involved young Latin Americans, including young Peruvians who had come to Italy in order to reach their families. However, the families in Turin are composed mainly by mothers who are engaged in domestic work. The young Peruvians come to Italy when they are 10 or 11 years old to find a family that is not close to them – they only had sporadic contact by telephone. Their mothers work all day long outside the house; and the youngsters often have communication problems with them. This context seems to contribute to the creation of the gangs of the Latin Americans which are present in other Italian towns as well, for instance, in Milan and Genoa.

As a result of the reported violence, our neighbourhood Council decided to organise a meeting for all social actors of the neighbourhood, in order to get the full picture of the situation. We had schools, the urban and the national police, the social services, the street workers and the municipalities, the local and the central authorities, the tribunal, and neighbourhood NGOs. We even had migrant NGOs which are very important in this political and social cohesion of Turin, and the churches. Everyone in the meeting had the possibility to

express their vision and to tell about the problems they had. In this way, we integrated many perspectives on the neighbourhood situation.

The first challenge that arose was that not all participants knew the problems we were discussing, and there was a lack of knowledge about the specificity of the problems. At the end of the meeting, the Municipality decided to increase the common understanding of the problems. To do that, they decided to involve youth NGOs directly and not the "usual" suspects.

In particular, they chose an association with a young Peruvian girl. We think that only direct participation of a person from a migrant community who has a thorough knowledge of it, can bring other people in touch with the problem. We also realised that we need research and started seeking researchers for examining the situation.

Then, we developed a following strategy: we should not only target young Latin Americans, but, for example, to set a youth centre that will gather all youth of different nationalities present in the neighbourhood. We need the involvement of all the people living there and we hope to really get to know the phenomena as well as to organise concrete actions to prevent it.

An important aspect of our work is that we try to work on prevention instead of waiting when something serious happens. We try to identify the signs of the emerging problems, and to provide a response together with young people. Another important aspect is that we not only listen to young people's opinions but try to entrust them with direct responsibility in our project.

The second challenge we faced was that work with a big number of actors takes a long time and a lot of efforts. It proved very difficult to find the trust in the institutions because we are young, are women, and it is about immigrants. And since we are young, we have to work harder to get our opinion across. It is not easy to make young people's voice heard.

Discussion:

There were a number of questions and issues raised by the audience:

1. Work with the organised youth groups can be difficult because they are not often not represented in official organisations – how to reach out to them?
2. Identity issues clashing with citizenship restrictions: though young migrants feel themselves Italian, they have difficulties in obtaining formal citizenship status.
3. One should probably find engaged young people among those to be reached, and let them act as mediators. These engaged young people have the connection to and the trust of their peers. In this way more groups of young people can be reached effectively.

4. Active young people could be found, but in some cases they would be speaking only for themselves, in the sense that it is very difficult to organise young people in such a way that they are together involved in discussions on how to develop a policy, or how to run a youth centre, or work in relationship with the local police.

One of the challenges in the project work was dealing with the second generation of migrants and with the parents' organisations which was not always a feasible means to outreach to the young people. In this case support from the Municipality office that was in good contact with the target groups, was crucial in the beginning of the project.

The problem of the acceptance and access to social rights is multifaceted: firstly, there is a widespread lack of acceptance of people of migrant background as Italian. Secondly, difficulties to get Italian citizenship prevail. The example of the Albanian community in Italy was cited where migrants have to get their permanent residences approved every year. There is a problem of renewing permanent residences at the age of 18 – young people are only allowed to stay in Italy if they have a special reason for it. Most young migrants might be perfectly integrated into Italian society, have only Italian friends, feel Italian, but the Italian state will force you then to face reality that might turn out very different from what one might feel or how one identifies him/herself.

8. How can the Social Charter support a recommendation on the access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods?, by Marie-José SCHMITT, INGO Conference of the Council of Europe

It is a great privilege for me; firstly, I am very happy to be here and to hear everything that is being said. I am very privileged to be my age, as I was involved, when a law student, in the birth and promulgation of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights. Later I was involved in the first version of the European Social Charter, and then, including drafting a small part of it, in the revised European Social Charter.

When I say it's a privilege, it is because it gives me a different perspective on time. You have to understand that the work we do in this building always takes a lot of time. It ends up bearing fruit, but you need to remember that defences take a lot of time. So, be patient. You will make your recommendation. It will not necessarily end up in the waste paper bin tray, it will end up not exactly as you expected, but it will always produce results. I want to tell you that in my role as a grandmother.

Human Rights - including Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

I also want to say that you have to be careful not to speak simply, and only, about social rights. Don't forget there are three types of rights – economic, social and cultural – that cannot be disassociated from human rights. So, each time you speak of human rights, add

"including economic, social and cultural rights". This is extremely important, because the right to live in a country is also the right not only to take on the culture of the country – but also to bring your own. In this enriching exchange on diversity, it is always important to remember the cultural aspect.

I am going to make another small point: it is that people are forcing an open door. You know that we are at the end of the welfare state, at the end of a system that tended to resolve the problems with a bit of money, and using a system of distributive legislation. We are now in another system, with legislation that attributes rights. It is very good, but people need to be aware of their rights, and we have to equip ourselves with instruments capable of attributing these rights, of making people aware of them, of revising them so that we understand what they are about – to make them available and explicit at the same time. It is very important.

I am involved in the implementation of the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015. The first stage, which lasted a year, was about mobilising the states to translate this Action Plan into their own languages. For once, something positive: there were 25 different languages in one year. In these 25 languages, 10 were translated into Braille and, still in the same year, around 10 were produced in an easy-reader format. That shows that when we want and insist, we achieve in creating information. I think that for the population, for the young people you are speaking about today, the biggest problem is the lack of information about their rights. We must not forget that.

The European Social Charter

The Social Charter was created after the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights to guarantee economic, social and cultural rights that were not included in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights. The Charter covers different areas, including the right to work. For example, you can look at the Article 10 when defending the importance of professional training, so that people from migrant populations can find work. There is a set of articles on health, social matters, and on social, economic and legal protection. Remember this. The Charter provides you with ways of defending people's rights, as it covers the legal aspect. This concerns migrants too, knowing that there is, with regard to migrants, a damper, a limit, in that it relates to migrants residing legally in a particular country. The Charter is a whole is a set of commitments by the states. These commitments culminate in the final two articles: Article 30 on the protection from poverty and social exclusion, where you will find material to help you prepare your future recommendation, and a no less important article, the final Article 31, on the right to housing. Regarding the right to housing, it was the questioning of France in relation to Article 31 that in the end led to the adoption of the law we in France now call the "legally enforceable right to housing". I am not saying it is a good law, I am merely saying that it at least led to there being a law. The other matter is whether it's good. That's another story.

How does the mechanism of the Charter function?

There are two ways to apply the Charter. Firstly, it is a monitoring procedure carried out every year by all states on a quarter of all the Articles. The Charter has been divided into four parts and every year the states have to report on a quarter of the articles. These reports are very boring to read. Don't attempt to read them; they're terrible. But they do mean something very important, and here I come back to my own area of people with disabilities, in that every four years, there will be questions about people with disabilities in every state, as each state has to respond to a series of questions determined by the Committee of Ministers in charge of monitoring of the Charter. So, light is thrown on this particular social problem every four years, and I think that is already something very important in itself. It is something we all can of course use ourselves, and we're going to try and think about that.

The other monitoring system is the system of Collective Complaints. An agreement accepted wisely by a certain number of states envisages that non-governmental organisations can submit a Collective Complaint against a state. These organisations have to be international. Why? Because a national organisation that depends on the state for its ability to operate and for paying its staff, or maybe only half its staff, is not going to attack a state if it is going to lose its staff by doing so. So it needs to be a third party – an international organisation – that submits this Collective Complaint. It is very important because it is the Committee of Ministers that has final responsibility for implementing the conclusion of the Social Rights Committee that examined this Collective Complaint.

The example is a Collective Complaint submitted by the NGO Autism-Europe against France, as France was not honouring Article 15, which provides for the right to education for children with disabilities, and because France was also not honouring one very important Article in the Charter, an Article E in part five dealing with non-discrimination. So it was considered that France was not only failing to do its job of promoting access to education among autistic children, but, furthermore, was discriminating them. France was condemned. In a Collective Complaints system (that is always the same, comprising a party in acquisition and a party in defence), France defended itself, like all states, a bit craftily, saying, "But we have created places in special schools." It was necessary for the NGOs to verify firstly that these places exist and secondly that these places are for the people in question. And that no one comes to tell us that a school for deaf children is a school for autistic children (it is what was written). So in the end France was condemned.

How can the NGOs make the Charter work and apply its mechanisms?

We believe that non-governmental organisations are again important. It's about having a reason to be happy. The Charter doesn't provide any indemnity. The Charter doesn't give any financial support. France, condemned, didn't have to pay anything. It had to create a certain number of places, and it was obligated to create 2,400 places, either in mainstream schools, or in special schools reserved for autistic children. You would think that the Committee of Ministers, in its wisdom, would insist and ask every two years if these places have been

created, but those who are driving the creation of these places are NGOs, and on condition that information about them is circulated and we can say to parents or a local association that has a project relating to autistic children, "You are in a good position because France has been condemned and still hasn't been able to create the 2,400 places." We were therefore able to create a certain number of establishments. We are starting to make our demands by saying, "We are going to help you to fulfil your obligations to the Council of Europe's Council of Ministers. You are French, you are unhappy. You have 2,400 places to create. You don't know how to do it. We are going to help you." I'm simplifying the answer somewhat, but the mechanism is there. It is participatory mechanism within a legal system that is not as complex as one thinks.

I recommend it if you encounter major difficulties on the ground, and if you think that these difficulties could be contrary to the Charter's stipulations, then you have to re-read the Charter. But you have to read it very carefully. If you are thinking at that point of approaching the Secretariat of the Social Charter, it will direct you to one of the NGOs that is capable of submitting a Collective Complaint, and, on the condition that your country is a signatory of the Charter and the Protocol at that point, it is possible to submit a Collective Complaint. It is not going to produce results in two weeks and it is not going to bring you any money. But it will move the legal system forward, which should move the right forward in your country and which should make it mandatory that a certain number of things get done.

Now a completely different example. In Article 19 about migrants, there is a paragraph that talks of facilitating the regrouping of families, and I am thinking of this with our Italian friends in mind. Facilitating the regrouping of families is nonsense, and it would be necessary to establish a legal system – and that is nonsense if we don't allow regrouped families firstly to live properly and secondly to live as citizens, as all the rights are linked. The economic and social rights of regrouped families are automatically linked to civic rights, and consequently to the rights of citizenship and the right to vote. This is how the Social Charter can help you to make progress with the problem you are dealing with.

In the preamble of your recommendation, you could perhaps remind the Committee of Ministers of the importance of monitoring of the Social Charter, of the importance of the role of the monitoring procedure, and perhaps you could remind them of Article E concerning non-discrimination, stating clearly that all the rights included in it are for everyone, including young people, and including the rights particularly for young people, and perhaps say that, since all the laws are for everyone, it is not a question of inventing integration – it is about developing reciprocal acceptance of the richness of diversity. Thank you.

9 . ACCESS TO SOCIAL RIGHTS, SOCIAL COHESION AND YOUTH POLICY IN EUROPE, by Kevin O'KELLY, Associate Researcher, European Trade Union Institute

Kevin O'Kelly was a director of the anti-poverty agency in Dublin in Ireland before retiring. Currently he is associate researcher for European Trade Union Institute in Brussels, and does consultancy work on social cohesion, social inclusion and poverty.

Good afternoon. Does anyone of you know the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin? It is the Social Policy Research Centre for the European Commission at the website, well worth looking at, www.eurofound.europa.eu. I was a research manager there for nearly 14 years. Then I coordinated the European Commission's projects for the Combat Poverty Agency in Ireland that provides policy advice to the Irish government on poverty and social exclusion. I have been involved in the Council of Europe's work for nearly 25 years now. We recently finished a project which was published by the Council of Europe, on people living in extreme poverty and the working poor.

Today in my talk I will briefly look at the European Social Charter, discuss "Access to Social Rights in Europe" report in a little more detail. Then, I would like to discuss education as a key to empowering people, and in the end, I will tell about a study of teenagers' attitudes to civil and political rights.

I.   A changing global environment

First I thought to put all of this into a context of global environment. What is happening in the world today?

We are going through a period of major social and economic change. There is the whole climate change debate which is new. Some of the new things that are happening are in fact the failure of global leaders to find an agreement on climate change – this is going to have an impact on our lives in the future both economically and socially. The other thing that is changing, certainly in a European context, is the current demographic shift. Europe is getting older and pensions problems arise, so it is going to be very difficult for future generations, for older people, to have the standard of living that they are probably used to. In particular, there are difficulties that governments are going to face after the financial crisis in meeting the pension demands. One of the things we are seeing in recent decades is the growing social gaps between those who have access to services, resources, facilities for education, for social advancement – and people at the lower income levels, immigrants, one-parent families. Migration is another global issue and a big challenge for society and communities. I was interested in the point made by Mrs. Schmitt about the Social Charter: while trying to integrate migrants economically and socially, you have got to respect their cultural diversity.

The other issue important to remember in the global environment is the continuing use of information and communications technologies, including the use of these technologies to

shop, to engage with the social services, with the public services and with the government. Lack of access to a computer leads to lack of access to a lot of services and e-exclusion.

After the current economic and financial crisis, presumably we will get back to growth, but what will be the result of the crisis? Will we have a new social, economic, business order, or will it be just business as usual? Are we at an apex of economic and social change as a result of the collapse of the banking sector, and the impact that has had on the economies? And in particular in Europe? All of these things, how will they impact on jobs? As regards education and skills, with automation and new technologies, a lot of unskilled, semi-skilled jobs are disappearing, so if you want to get into the labour market, the threshold to get into the labour market is increasing all the time. This is a challenge that brings us back to the whole educational aspect. It is estimated within the European Union that around 10% to 12% of those in work at the moment are living in poverty.

II. European Social Charter

As regards the Social Charter, it is the basic, I suppose, "Bible" – from the point of view that a lot of the research and the projects come from the Social Charter. The basic rights set out in the Charter are: housing, health, education, employment, social and legal protection, free movement of persons and non-discrimination. The Charter guarantees the economic rights, such as: in employment – the right to work, within labour market – safe and healthy work environment, and within industrial relations – fair remuneration as well as freedom of association. Social rights enshrined in the Charter deal with health protection and social security. I will specifically mention Article 7 that deals with the rights of children and young people and sets out:

- *Minimum age for workers.* All member states of the Council of Europe should have a minimum age for people entering the labour market;
- *Access to continued education / vocational training;*
- *A fair wage and holidays.* Protection of young people from the point of view of a fair wage, from exploitation through child labour, and provision of the right to holidays;
- *Safety and health protection.* Some of the sub-articles within Article 7 cover safety and health protection of young people.

The Social Charter is therefore very important as a basis for a lot of the work that goes on within the Council of Europe.

III. "Access to social rights in Europe" report

The Council of Europe report "Access to social rights in Europe" was adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2002. To carry out this interesting project, the Council of Europe set up a number of study groups comprised of experts from the member states, such as a

group on improving access to social protection, group on access to housing for disadvantaged people, and a third study group on promoting access to employment which I worked on.

By the way, – it is my view and I don't know if anybody shares it – it seems that what caused the financial crisis is the fact that the United States don't have a policy on social housing. They actually pushed people into taking out loans since they couldn't afford to buy houses because there is no social housing in the United States.

The representatives from all groups were brought together onto a committee to work with the secretary, Mary Daly from Queen's University of Belfast, to draft the "Access to social rights in Europe". The committee also included representatives from the education steering committees and a group of specialists who had been looking at healthcare services. This dynamic group worked for two years to produce the report. The report set an agenda for the past decade of work for the Council of Europe and served as a basis for further studies:

- o Access to social rights for people with disabilities
- o A number of reports around social policies for families and children
- o Rights of children at risk
- o Corporal punishment
- o Social services
- o Housing
- o Social mobility

With regards to employment, the guidelines for employment on marginal groups and guidelines for local partnerships for the development of employment were published.

IV. Barriers in access to social rights

The report examined the present situation with social rights across the Council of Europe member states, and identified barriers that were causing problems for people to access their rights:

- o *A lack of clarity in legal and other provisions.* People find it very difficult to wade their way through the legal jargon and to find out what their rights were.
- o *Inadequate monitoring and enforcement* of a lot of the rights. Public policies should always have measurements in them and the monitoring system of application of the public policy and evaluating them - this is the fundamental principle in introducing public policy.
- o *A lack of resources, in terms of both funding and human resources* – staff, facilities, etc., both for the providers of the rights and those who were trying to access the rights. Very often people did not have the education or the financial wherewithal to follow through, to try to ensure that they would get the rights.

o *Fragmentation of rights across different administrative levels* – both from the national level down to the regional (in a federal structure), and down to the local level. Very often it wasn't clear to people at what level they should access their rights.

o *A lack of information on one's rights.* This also relates to difficulties in terms of language access: migrants did not have sufficient knowledge of the language of the country they had moved to and could not get the information as to what they were entitled to. In France, when homeless people were brought together with the providers of services, the homeless people who spoke different languages, were complaining that they were getting this information in a very official bureaucratic language, that they couldn't really understand.

o *Prejudice on the part of a) providers* towards ethnic minorities, to different social classes and levels *and b) recipients*, in terms of attitude of the service providers towards them.

o *Inadequate attention, at different levels of administration, is paid to vulnerable groups / communities / or even regions.* Some regions were better than others in dealing with particular issues. The idea of a uniform approach to the provision of rights across member states doesn't work.

V. Policy guidelines

We looked at the barriers, we debated them, and then we drew up broad policy guidelines around how these barriers should be addressed by the member states:

o *Make entitlements to social rights and their provision comprehensive and explicit* – in legal language as well as in other provisions that set out what the various rights are in different aspects of public policy.

o *Better monitoring after provisions* – there should be a measurement of how policies are being provided and monitoring on an ongoing basis to ensure that they do what they were set out to do. Social rights policy proofing is needed – that is, if a policy is developed it should have built into it the impact that it would have on the social rights of vulnerable individuals. We also talked about charter for users that sets out in clear, understandable language to users what their rights are and how they can access the social services.

o *Adequate resources for providers and claimants of the social services*, both in terms of funding and staffing.

o *Greater integration of and reduction of fragmentation of the services across different levels of administration.* Cross-cutting approaches to the administration of social services are needed.

o *Better communications and information exchange*; tailoring information to different groups in terms of language and respect for the cultures of different immigrant groups – so that providers could understand what the requirements of the users are – and claimants could understand what their rights and the limits of their rights are.

o *Finding approaches to counter stigmatisation of and negative attitude to certain groups* as well as between the service providers and the claimants.

o *Focus on vulnerable groups and communities.* Dealing with the different regions within the member states is essential so that that aspect of social rights would not be forgotten. Vulnerable communities and less well-off regions very often get ignored in a situation where public policies are developed at the national level and are not tailored to every aspect of the country.

VI. Social Cohesion approach in Europe

The report on access to social sights came out of the work that the Council of Europe had been doing since 1996 in the social cohesion field. We talked about the Charter, the European Code of Social Security and a Disability Action Plan. As you know, the three pillars of the Council of Europe are human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Social cohesion, to a large extent, cuts across these three pillars and is part of the fundamental Council of Europe objectives. In 1996-1997 the Council of Europe adopted its first Social Cohesion strategy that has been revised a few times; its latest launch to the Member States was in October 2010. These are some of the points that have been covered by the Social Cohesion strategy over the years:

- Reinvesting in social rights and in cohesive societies
- Building a Europe of responsibilities
- Strengthening representation and democracy – including at the local level
- Building a secure future for all

The focus of the Social Cohesion strategy coming out of the "Access to social rights in Europe" report has been around dealing with the problems of vulnerable groups and building a civil dialogue between the providers and the recipients of social rights:

- Supporting employment for vulnerable groups and those excluded from the labour market;
- Improving access to quality public services;
- Promoting sustainable communities;
- Building civic dialogue, local employment and a sustainable environment.

VII. Education and skills

I would like to talk about the importance of education in access to social rights. Education is the key to dealing with social rights and with social mobility. The European Union's indicators for 2008 indicate that about 15% of the 16-25 year olds in the European Union are early school-leavers. It is an enormous amount of people to leave school without a basic education, with low literacy, low qualifications and low skills to access the labour market. As I mentioned earlier, unskilled, semi-skilled jobs that a lot of early school-leavers would have gone into, are disappearing. One of the things I have seen in Ireland over the last years was the massive increase in people working in the construction industry. A lot of the jobs in construction are unskilled or semi-skilled jobs which early school leavers could get. Suddenly, construction just stopped dead in 2008 – and young people in the industry have no jobs, they have no abilities to get skills, or no education, and there is an enormous challenge to get them back into the educational system.

As regards the formal educational system, very often it simply doesn't suit a lot of early school-leavers. An approach to try to reinvent the educational systems to ensure that these young people are not lost through the safety net of education, is a big challenge for governments in the future. Young immigrants are, in fact, a higher percentage of early school-leavers than others. All of this means exclusion from the labour market.

The other point I would make about education is: if you want to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty, education is the only way to do it. In Ireland, we put an enormous amount of resources into trying to deal with education at a very early age, even pre-school education. Research that has been done in the United States and the United Kingdom shows that children who go into education at pre-school, 3 or 4 years of age, stay in education longer, perform better, and have a much better career. In the United States they've tracked children from that age who have been in pre-school education through to their middle-age, and they show that their earning capacity is much greater. So, the investment in education at the very early stages of a child's life is tremendously important for breaking this intergenerational transition of poverty.

VIII. Attitudes of young people in Europe to civil and political rights

The last thing I wanted to talk to you about is a study by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement of a 190-odd young people aged 14-15 – 140.000 young people in total in 38 countries. It looked at their attitudes to civil society, their perception and knowledge of civil society, and how engaged they were with public and political life.

It came up with some really interesting findings: girls had a significantly higher civic knowledge than boys in most of these countries. Students from non-immigrant backgrounds

recorded higher civic knowledge scores than students from immigrant backgrounds. Students whose parents had higher-status occupations also gained higher scores in this survey. It also found that the influence in the home as regards discussions with parents on political and social issues, meant that the children were much more engaged in these issues. In homes where there were more books, children were also much more engaged in social issues.

We did a project in the Combat Poverty Agency where we looked at the linguistic and rationalising abilities of 6-year olds, and we compared children's abilities in schools from deprived communities to children's abilities in schools in middle-class and better-off communities. Already you could see the impact that the environment had upon children at the age of 6. Our researchers had a problem with one particular lad who didn't fit in to the pattern of children from deprived area in the south-west of Ireland. This one lad was way ahead of his peers in the class. When the researchers investigated a bit further, they found that the parents, although they lived in a very poor area, liked to read and they used to go to the library. So he had already got into the habit of going to the library and reading. It comes true in this particular research, that where there are books at home or newspapers, where there are discussions going on, children are much more socially and civically aware.

The other thing that came out of this was: what institutions do young people – 14, 15 years of age – trust? Political parties were typically the least trusted of all of the political and civil institutions. There was a very strong endorsement right across all of the 38 countries for gender equality, but obviously female students were significantly more supportive of gender equality than their male counterparts. (I present now the Council of Europe member countries specifically).

Free speech – most students were in favour of free speech. Cyprus was a little bit below the rest, but on the whole it was quite interesting, this commitment – again of 14-15 year olds – to protection of free speech.

Social and political rights for all – again almost universally accepted. Interestingly, again Cyprus was below the other countries, while the Russian Federation was ahead of all of the other countries. Still, all countries showed results within the 90%-100% range, which was quite impressive.

A very, very strong commitment to free elections across all of the countries is observed. Some of them had a greater commitment, for example in the Czech Republic, however Malta, Belgium and Latvia were a little bit behind the others, but still within the 90% area. What I found a bit concerning about this study was the area of conventional citizenship. It brought together a number of questions in a measurement of 1 to 100, such as:

Would you:

• Vote in every election?

- Join a political party?
- Learn country's history?
- Follow political issues in media?
- Show respect for government representatives?
- Engage in political discussion with your peers and colleagues?
- Take part in promoting human rights?
- Take part in activities to protect the environment?

The results were quite disappointing: out of a score of a 100 they were all around the 50% mark. While in some areas there was a strong commitment to free speech, free elections, on the background of an overall view on citizenship, the results in the dimension of civic activity were far less encouraging. It is interesting to look at the attitudes of the generation who in 10 or 15 years' time will be responsible for running their countries and the economy.

To close my speech, I invite those of you who are interested as to how different cities have tackled the integration of migrants, to look at the webpage of the Cities for Local Integration Policy for migrants (CLIP) network project run by the European Foundation. The CLIP project has brought together 22 cities across Europe to share experiences in policies on the integration of migrants and has come up with some terrific findings[13].

Discussion – first session:

A number of questions and issues was raised:

1. Mr. Régis Brillat, from the European Social Charter stated that access to housing is the absolute basis from which one should start with access to social rights. But someone else in the group said: "No, it starts with employment, because if you don't have a job…" Where do we actually start with all these social rights we want to address? Are there any challenges we consider specific to disadvantaged neighbourhoods?

2. What is the actual relationship between education and poverty? The Real Choices Project in Britain showed that children born with a high cognitive score living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods end up at 16 with a much lower cognitive score, and children with a low cognitive score living in rich neighbourhoods end up at 16 with a higher cognitive score. There is connection between wealth and cognitive development. How to get out of this cycle where the child poverty in itself diminishes their education when we want to look at education as a way out of poverty?

3. In education the goal posts are constantly shifting. Europe has an ageing population, yet they create "Fortress Europe" keeping people out. But immigrants are immigrant

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[13] http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/populationandsociety/clip.htm

citizens – so there are tensions in terms of identity, race as well, and ethnicity. How can these issues be tackled?

The housing is very important, since if people are living in poor housing, for a start adults and young children can have health problems which hinder access to employment. The resources in disadvantaged areas are usually not what would be considered essential within the wider community's standard of living. In regard to education, it is a very important part of a social jigsaw where the physical and social environment in which children are brought up, is also very important.

Examples from the poor areas of the United Kingdom and Ireland were cited where children don't have a public library to go to or schools are under-resourced and don't have the essential infrastructure for proper education. Lack of sports facilities is the other pertinent problem in disadvantaged areas, while sports facilities are a substantial part of the educational process. Solving these problems is a matter of providing resources to vulnerable communities to ensure that children in those communities have an equal opportunity to other children within the country. Housing and the physical environment are really important – but the educational resources within communities are equally important as well.

In regard to identity issues, it is tremendously important for communities and young people to be aware of their backgrounds: they should understand both national and community and family history. As Mrs. Schmitt was saying: economic rights and social rights are there, but cultural rights are incredibly important in the development of society and of every individual.

As regards the tensions between the demographic changes that are taking place in Europe, in the context of the pensions problem and growing dependency ratio, Europe needs immigrants for the economy to continue to survive into the long term. For example, Bulgaria has had a major crisis around the dependency ratio: for every 1,4 people at work in Bulgaria there is one dependent, either an older person or a child, but mainly an elderly person. In Ireland, its former economic boom was built on the back of immigrants from Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and other countries.

Discussion – second session:

More questions and issues were raised in the second session:

1. In the Netherlands, 60% of all kids go to vocational training, about 20 to 25% of all kids who started basic vocational training drop out of school. That is not only because they live in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, but also because they come from communities that have less background in learning vocational jobs. Will we really get larger groups of disadvantaged kids finalising their training? Has there been done any research on those differences?

2. There is a conflict between the need for a cheap labour force and desire for social insertion. If Europe demands a cheap labour force, why we are interested in improving access to social rights? How the charters that are being drafted are addressing changing needs in the labour market?

3. There is a tendency in Europe to push migration policy in the direction of labour market desired immigrants (people with qualifications who have something to offer to the society) – and to keep out everybody else. So there is an idea of local immigrant citizens – or denizens (because maybe they don't have formal citizenship) – who would occupy very dirty, low-paid and not well recognised jobs as this gives access to a certain kind of social and economic integration, and then of "higher qualified" immigrants. How the idea of this "useful" and "not useful" migration fits with the changes in the labour market and the current crisis?

4. In fact, we have within the immigrant communities a lot of layers from several groups of immigrants who are just as racist for newcomer immigrants as a lot of white people are. When talking about immigrants, one should remember it is not a homogenous group.

There is a need to rethink education and the way of delivering educational services. The formal educational systems in many countries are not meeting the social requirements now. The situation when young people go into vocational training, but don't stick with it and don't come out at that end with any skills or qualifications, is a major problem. What has been lacking in a lot of educational systems, is effective career guidance from an early age, directing young people to develop their interests and their abilities, and to give them a right course as regards their future careers.

As regards to migrants, the research by University of Limerick in Ireland found that in the wave of immigration that Ireland experiences over the last 8 to 10 years, the immigrants were 40% better qualified than the Irish workforce. But due to lack of jobs availability for immigrants, the latter had to do much lower jobs than they were qualified for. This manifests an economic problem of wasting manpower and resources.

The access to quality education is a big challenge at the time of ending economic recession, due to a cut-back in investment in a range of public services and a possible reduction of resources for education which is the long-term social investment as well as labour market investment.

In relation to the "useful" and "not so useful" migration: at the European Union level there has been the debate around the employment strategy to increase the female participation in the labour market. However, it is very much a labour market driven policy, and child care is one

aspect of that. For instance, the focus on provision of child care simply with the aim of having the mother go back to the workplace, is an incorrect way to approach that particular issue. Child care is not a labour market policy, it is a much wider issue – it is an educational, a developmental policy. The question therefore arises: should there really be a totally labour market focus on migration?

10. The role of local youth policies/authorities in access to social rights - Presentation of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities Resolution on integration of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, by Alison COOK, Current Affairs Committee - Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

I'm delighted to be here and to be able to contribute to this important seminar. I am here today representing the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe by reason of being an elected local member on Sevenoaks District Council serving a population of around 120,000. The Congress, or its predecessor the Conference of Local Authorities, was set up over 50 years ago because the Council of Europe understood that local councillors, being closer to their communities, are in a better position to understand residents' needs and wishes at local level and are therefore better able to help local people. Your member of parliament can seem a long way away, in your country's capital city, but your local councillor is just around the corner. We are known, approachable and directly accountable to them and seen to be "on duty" 24 hours a day.

Local and regional authorities have a very important role to play in addressing the issue of the integration of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods – these neighbourhoods are part of our communities, and these young people are citizens of our catchment areas.

This is why the Congress adopted a resolution addressed to all local and regional authorities in its 47 member states on this issue during its session in October 2010. This text contains specific proposals for policy and action, and is the result of the work done by the former Congress Committee on Culture and Education. The Committee discussed the matter on several occasions, hearing from experts in the field, including Dr. Howard Williamson who compiled the report which accompanied our discussions, and exchanging our own best practices from our cities, towns and regions.

One thing that was clear to us from the outset was that our proposals must conform with the Congress' principle of promoting active youth participation as laid down in our European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. This is the reason why the resolution stresses that young people's voices must be heard when policies are formulated and calls on local and regional authorities to raise awareness on the Charter and ensure its implementation.

Young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods are less secure and more susceptible to be dependent on chance, if they have few or no qualifications, if they are from minority ethnic

groups, have disabilities, or are from a family which often faces unemployment or other factors that complicate matters further. These young people seldom face just one difficulty in isolation; often, it is a constellation of problems such as drop-out, lack of self-belief, alienation, perhaps substance misuse, criminality, homelessness and problems with mental health.

The multiple difficulties faced by young people from disadvantaged areas mean that a "one-size fits all" policy approach is not appropriate. The challenge we, local and regional elected representatives, are facing is to be more inventive in the definition of our youth policies so we are able to reach out to young people from all walks of life.

I represent an area that is deemed to be affluent yet we have pockets of considerable deprivation including one of the highest populations of settled Roma/travellers in England. To be disadvantaged in such a district is to be doubly disadvantaged in terms of access to medical care, jobs, leisure activities, transport, etc. One way that we have tried to address this imbalance is by targeting and working with 8 to 12-year olds in these underprivileged wards to give them experiences that they might otherwise have no knowledge or ability to enjoy – and by encouraging them to set their own parameters and rules which celebrate their traditions, beliefs and abilities. This has already had a significant knock on effect both by improving their academic achievements and in encouraging their parents to realise that they also have something valuable to offer to the community. This in turn has raised both their and their children's self-esteem and their aspirations. From this simple approach, these youngsters have been encouraged to get involved in their school's council.

I am also involved with a charity concerned with Restorative Justice particularly working with young offenders and their "victims", though in reality both parties are victims. By working together, both "sides" begin to recognise each other as people, fellow human beings. Often it is a lack of education, of self-esteem which has led these youngsters into anti-social behaviour. The system has failed them but mediation can be a first step in addressing their problems and getting them back into education or work.

A young person struggling with homelessness and substance misuse is less likely to engage in new activities than someone who is in employment, has experienced formal and non-formal education or has built up social and professional networks. Their needs will be completely different. Local and regional authorities must take this into account and incorporate programmes into youth policy which enable young people to build relationships and establish communication and understanding. More time, effort and imagination are required to convince such young people of the capacity of policies to improve their situation.

What conclusions did we draw from our discussions? The first step in our eyes is that local and regional elected representatives must ensure that municipal and regional youth departments are set up, or strengthened if they already exist, and that they have the capacity and competences to design effective, evidence-based policies and programmes. In the spirit of our Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, we must do this with the full and meaningful participation of young people from

disadvantaged areas. There is a great opportunity to engage the support of the voluntary sector providing that we don't strangle them with bureaucracy or deny them the necessary financial resources.

Local and regional authorities must also set aside the misconception that adults know better than young people. By involving young people in the planning and decision-making processes, not only will we ensure that policies and programmes are responsive to their needs and expectations, but young people will feel motivated and, hopefully, develop some feeling of ownership and responsibility for these programmes and for their own future. We must find the ways and means to engage with young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

One of the examples provided by a fellow committee member shows that listening to the wishes and needs of a group of disadvantaged young people can enable local and regional councils to provide appropriate responses. In this case, complaints were received about a group of young people committed to skateboarding in Saint-Priest in France. Local residents felt the skaters should not be skateboarding in public places. The skaters had nowhere else to go. The municipality asked the skaters what they needed. Far from being complicated or costly, it turned out that their demands were reasonable and easy to meet. So the municipality agreed to support both procedurally and financially the young people to plan and implement their own skate-park. The skaters were happy, they had an appropriate, dedicated space in which to pursue their activity. The local residents were happy and stopped complaining because they were no longer disturbed by the skaters.

I experienced a similar situation in my district where a group of young people were engaging in anti-social behaviour, loud noise, litter, graffiti. They were encouraged to take their case for a skate park to the local Parish Council. The Council supported them and encouraged them to design what they wanted. Young people even did some fundraising to show that they could take responsibility when they were taken seriously. They continue to have a voice on the Parish Council putting forward views and concerns for their peers on a whole range of subjects.

One of the elements of the Enter! project LTTC for youth workers and youth leaders working in disadvantaged neighbourhoods is the implementation of a comprehensive project through which the participants will develop their skills and competencies in setting up projects to help youth in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The members of the Congress Committee on Culture and Education feel that supporting youth-initiated and youth-run projects is a particularly constructive and positive approach. Firstly, it is a good means of ensuring that youth projects meet young people's needs and aspirations because the projects have been designed by young people, for young people and are based on an analysis of young people's needs. Furthermore, and very importantly, projects initiated and led by young people give some purpose to their lives, providing them with experience in project management, the opportunity to interact with project partners and gaining self-confidence.

Thus, we urge local and regional authorities to provide accessible and meaningful opportunities for disadvantaged youth to promote their social integration by establishing

frameworks for co-operation and development, proposing advice and guidance, as well as organising activities, and in particular supporting, either financially or in kind, their projects with a social, economic or human purpose.

I spoke earlier about the skaters in Saint Priest who in fact just needed a dedicated space for their skating. Dedicated space is very important because so often in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, it is what is lacking. Our Resolution invites local and regional authorities to provide facilities, such as youth or community centres, or recreation areas where young people can meet or carry out their activities. In the spirit of the Participation Charter, we must not forget to give young people from disadvantaged areas a say in how these spaces are organised and used.

In his report, Howard Williamson gives a couple of examples of mentoring schemes. One very interesting project was set up by a young man in the Netherlands for 9 to 16-year olds. He established weekly indoor soccer training coupled with compulsory school and work guidance as well as training in social behaviour skills and respect for older people. This experience has evolved into a 'peer-to-peer' system whereby former participants in the training sessions support new participants. Peer support can help young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds to acquire a certain level of self-confidence and competence as a basis for effective 'life management'.

This is why we encourage local and regional authorities to explore the possibility of setting up mentoring systems. We also invite them to offer away-from-home opportunities so that young people can learn from new horizons and are able to see themselves as part of the global society.

Over recent years, we have worked with young people from all backgrounds to develop a Young People's Action Plan which is driven and monitored by the young people themselves. Often as Councillors, we are both surprised and humbled by their insight and sense of social responsibility.

The Congress Resolution on the integration of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods – proposals put forward

The Resolution recognises that policies seeking to achieve the social inclusion of young people from disadvantaged areas should be opportunity-focused and support young people's integration into society, for example by promoting access to education and training, facilitating their entry into the labour market, by providing decent housing and healthcare, access to public services, social rights and social services, to basic services such as transport, leisure, culture, access to media and communication tools, as well as to legal and financial services such as loans.

The Resolution provides some concrete means as to how local and regional authorities can go about reaching out to these young, often marginalised people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and promoting their social inclusion. We propose that local and regional

authorities provide access to decent housing and to free healthcare. Drug, alcohol and sex education and information programmes and activities are needed. Access to free education, free learning materials and free or subsidised transport to educational establishments will go some way to encouraging young people to pursue their education.

Work experience and training should be offered to young people as they can help them to develop the capacity to reason, a critical eye and a better understanding of themselves and the world. Any work experience and training that is provided for young people should be closely linked to job opportunities and job creation.

Combating exclusion and promoting the integration of young people from disadvantaged areas also requires local and regional authorities to provide information, advice and guidance in careers, training and educational possibilities – both formal and non-formal – to facilitate the transition from school or joblessness to active life, and to facilitate access to ICTs to promote e-participation.

All of these aspects are covered in the Resolution. It is now up to us, local and regional elected representatives, youth workers, youth organisations, researchers, and young people themselves to make sure these policies are implemented.

For its part, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe welcomes the opportunity to co-operate on this initiative, aimed at devising policy guidelines on the access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In this regard, the Congress' new Current Affairs Committee, which will be taking up the issue, looks forward to continuing the fruitful co-operation with the Directorate of Youth and Sport and the Directorate of Social Cohesion.

Discussion:

There were a number of questions and issues raised by the audience:

1. Youth participation in disadvantaged neighbourhoods is less advanced than in many other environments, and it is very important to be supportive to the initiatives by these young people.
2. Problems experienced in disadvantaged neighbourhoods are similar across Europe. There seems to be a tendency at the moment, to build and design new disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and battling with planners. How do we stop the super-tanker of current policies continue to design these disadvantaged neighbourhoods? How are we going to make sure that these resolutions get traction and stop the current bad practice?
3. Provision of physical space alone is not enough for young people's participation. The Rights, Means, Space (which is not limited to physical space but implies representation as well), Opportunities and Support (RMSOS) framework should be applied as a holistic approach.
4. The lack of respect for the young people (in schools, etc.) that manifests itself in structural discrimination – how do we cope with it?

5. Not all conflicts are a practical matter that can be solved; sometimes conflicts is "the thing" to take a stand against the parents or the older generation as such. How do young people survive as being a part of the older generation? How do we manage not to lose hope in young people, and let them protest while keeping respect for them?

6. Respect and punishment: acknowledging the fact that people shouldn't be punished by being rudely treated if they're elderly or being bullied or beaten up if they are young, as this is again punishing the innocent party.

7. Impact of the economic downturn and decreased funding from the local and regional authorities: is cooperation with the private sector and their support feasible?

8. Is a recommendation still needed when we have this Resolution?

9. What is the next step now that the Resolution is adopted, and how the Congress is going to work with it?

10. What is the expectation of the Congress towards the Enter! project?

11. If you need this project to find out what the young people want, how come you have already written the recommendations, before we have the conclusions?

The policy may allow, in writing, for creating leisure areas within communities and for sustainability for transport. But the reality falls down. As an example, the "green belt" policy in the United Kingdom was cited, which prevents from building new constructions.

The easiest thing for a local authority to do during the economic crisis is to stop providing support that is not seen as absolutely essential – or is not statutory for the authorities to provide. In this context, the voluntary sector can contribute with a lot that does not necessarily cost a great deal of money. However, the current tendency to pay a lot of attention to health, safety and concerns of possible legal action makes communities less comfortable at coming forward to contribute. There is a need to persuade the authorities that money contributed to young people's issues is an investment and not an expense. The more partnerships with other organisations are established, the more the resources can go around.

From the sides of young people and older generation, there seem to have grown a reciprocal fear that neither side quite knows how to approach each other. An assumption was made that this phenomenon has possibly something to do with the changing role of the families.

In terms of cooperation with various sectors in the neighbourhood, the arguments were voiced that though cooperation with the private sector is important, cooperation with other local statutory bodies such as health, police, and organizations who are or should be involved in the future of young people, is crucial. Where the voluntary sector is involved there is an opportunity for the private sector to help in terms of grant aid, which is often designed for very specific activities or needs. A 3-year or at best, 1-year grant could be received, and such short-term initiatives require a good strategic planning. Importantly, by working with various agencies it is also possible to develop a greater pool of experts for advising and supporting the projects.

On the Congress in relation to the Enter! project

The resolution is addressed to local and regional authorities only – it's not addressed to the governments of member states. The Congress does also adopt recommendations which we address to member states, but in this particular instant, because of the Enter! project and its aim to draft a recommendation for the Committee of Ministers, the Congress deliberately chose to not to do their own recommendation and to await the results of the Enter! project.

The resolution has now been sent to local and regional authorities by the government – it is up to them to start its implementation. The Congress had been undergoing revision and changes in its structure, working methods and priorities, and one of the Congress new priorities is following up the adopted resolutions more closely.

All levels of government need to try and improve the situation of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and local and regional authorities need to work with young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to find out what they should be doing: this is the whole point of working with the Enter! project to find out how the Congress can encourage local and regional authorities to implement the right policies and the right approach.

The Congress has no means of forcing the authorities to do this work, so this may be a role for youth organisations, youth workers, young people themselves to get in touch with their local and regional authorities and say: "Hey, did you know that the Congress of the Council of Europe has adopted this Resolution? Do you think we can work together on these proposals?" The same thing refers to the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life: young people can go to their local and regional authorities and say: "We have this Charter, can we do something?" Hand in hand work with local authorities, the Congress and young people is needed, hence is the reason for the Congress's cooperation on the Enter! project.

11. On the role of the Advisory Council in youth policy development, by Ramiza SAKIP, board member of the Forum of European Roma Young People, Representative of the Advisory Council on Youth in the Reference and Support Group of the Enter! project

Ramiza Sakip gave an introduction to the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe – a statutory body comprised of 30 representatives of the youth national and international NGOs and networks who provide opinions and input on all youth sector activities. The Advisory Council also ensures that young people are involved in other activities of the Council of Europe.

Ramiza explained the specificity of the Council of Europe's youth sector that is based on the principle and practice of *co-management*: a unique international model of partnership between governments and youth representatives for setting out the political and strategic priorities of the youth sector, and establishing and monitoring its annual programme. The European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) and the Advisory Council on Youth, representing

governments and youth organisations respectively, work together within the Joint Council on Youth (CMJ) in making recommendations for future budgets and programmes. These proposals are then adopted by the Committee of Ministers, the Council of Europe's decision-making body.

Ramiza Sakip expressed the concern that sometimes in the Advisory Council they forget about excluded young people on the background of general youth policy agenda, and she continuously tries to raise the issues related to disadvantaged young people. Recently the strategic youth policy document "Agenda 2020" was adopted, but still a lot needs to be done to ensure that it responds to the challenges faced by excluded young people.

As a representative of the Reference and Support Group of the Enter! project, appointed by the Advisory Council, Ramiza tries to give support to young people to fight for their rights and be present in local realities. She is also responsible for supporting the development of ideas and projects in the Western Balkans related to ethnic minorities and Roma young people, for monitoring projects in the region, providing information and resource persons to participants, as well as contributing with information and tools on gender equality.

Discrimination is becoming even higher than before. As Marie-José Schmitt from the INGO Conference of the Council of Europe noted, one might not be aware of what changes will happen thanks to the work of youth work and youth policy activists. Ramiza Sakip stressed that even when the recommendation is ready and adopted by the Committee of Ministers, it is necessary to press the governments to ensure its effective implementation. The unique model of co-management that implies a judicious combination of consultation and co-decision processes, should be adopted on national levels as it will allow youth organisations and young people – including, hopefully, disadvantaged young people – to be heard and considered equal partners in the decision-making.

12. What is behind the youth policy at the Council of Europe?, by Rui GOMES, Head of Education and Training Division, Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe

Already back in 1960s, Council of Europe developed several youth policy instruments that support the involvement of young people into the activities of the Council of Europe on the one hand, and on the other hand, that develop a common understanding about the purpose and the meaning of the youth policy today – youth policy response to the needs of young people.

The framework of the current youth policy action was defined by the 8th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth in 2008 in the strategic document "Agenda 2020". The "Agenda 2020" restated that the aim of the Council of Europe's youth policy is to provide young people with equal opportunities and experiences that enable them to develop their competences being able to play active role in all aspects of society. The Council of

Europe takes on a youth policy that should address and concern everyone. Therefore youth policy also has to pay specific attention to groups or sectors of youth population, who can be at risk of seeing their access to social rights – or simply do not see their relation to social or human rights.

Priorities of the Council of Europe youth sector

As we work in three year priorities and projects, the focus of our current ones, of 2012, is on four projects:

1. **Living together in diverse societies: youth policy and youth work promoting intercultural dialogue.** The expression "living together as equals in diverse societies" has been used in the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue. Intercultural dialogue concerns as much the relations across borders, especially the relations in our multicultural cities, societies and countries.

2. **Human rights and democracy: youth policy and youth work promoting the core values of the Council of Europe.** This dimension of our work especially comprises human rights education and democratic participation of young people.

3. **Policy approaches and instruments benefiting young people and children.** The third area is precisely developing standards, common approaches to youth policy implementation. This is very much within the framework of our intergovernmental committee – the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ), which comprises, for example, youth policy reviews and the work for integration of children, since children issues and youth policy are closely interrelated.

4. **Social inclusion of young people.** This area is precisely where the Enter! Project is placed and where it takes the biggest share in social inclusion work.

The Enter! project within the Council of Europe framework

As said before, our emphasis in the Enter! project has been very much human rights based approaches, because we felt that any other approach would always be either excluding or perhaps overemphasising certain aspects which were not necessarily understandable. And of course because we also place the role of youth workers as supporting overall aims and objectives of the Council of Europe in relation to human rights. Within the Enter! project, we have started with a LTTC for youth workers during which the participants are supposed to learn more about how to implement rights-based approaches in projects with young people. They are also expected to initiate concrete projects with young people that address the challenges to social rights.

We have focused on specific issues related to challenges to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, especially in multicultural youth work situations. Those situations do not necessarily have to do with the fact that all social exclusion is multicultural nor that multiculturalism is exclusion, but they have to do with the fact that many people

involved in the process or our partners, face problems that are also connected with discrimination, exclusion or different forms of multiculturalism that in the process has been somehow recognised.

We want young people to have direct input and a direct role. The role of young people is very important in shaping of the project and learning from it: the project is an intervention that we try to make as a learning process for the organisations and for everybody involved. It is centred around the idea that all those involved base themselves on youth work realities and youth work experiences. Then we (Council of Europe) try to translate them into youth policy orientations. The project is a very broad inter-sectoral cooperation which in the Council of Europe involves not only the Congress and the Director General of Social Cohesion, but also, to a certain extent, the Director General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs, and the European Social Charter. Besides, we also involve youth organisations represented for example by the European Youth Forum and youth researchers, e.g. European Pool of Youth Researchers.

We like to see this project as interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral. We also want its participants to work through various sectors and I would very much like to pay tribute to the participants in the LTTC who have, through the training course, initiated different approaches with their local authorities. The project is very much based on using the potential of the non-formal education - non-formal education that is not just an alternative to formal education but is complementary to it and helps young people to gain needed life skills that are not necessarily learnt in the formal educational system.

As you may know, in the Council of Europe we tend to confirm the necessity to involve youth work practice, youth research and youth policy as one approach to define and carry out youth policy interventions.

The Enter! project, a large gathering of young people, shall help us to involve young people from the single projects with the help of the elder participants. They shall be involved in the drafting of the youth policy recommendations. This is the way to engage them directly in youth policy and not just the professionals.

The Council of Europe and existing youth policy instruments

Within the Council of Europe, youth policy seems to be driven by the desire to associate young people with youth policy cooperation and this was years back already, when the Council of Europe had only 15 or 16 members. In such a large organisation, it proves itself often difficult to find common grounds. Furthermore, the accelerated process of globalization during the last 20 years has led to a rapid spread of issues and problems concerning young people as well as the perception of them across borders.

Among the Council of Europe structures the most important is the Council of Ministers as the representation of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the governments of the 47 Member States. This is the body which can make recommendations on behalf of the Council of Europe to its Member States. Another organ is the Parliamentary Assembly, which is the

representation of the parliaments of the member states, as the representatives of the people. The Parliamentary Assembly has interrelations to young people through subcommittees. The Congress about which you have heard so much about plays obviously an important role too. There are more institutions: the European Court of Human Rights, the European Committee of Social Rights which rules on the conformity of the situation in States with the European Social Charter. All these organisations and institutions are coordinated by a Secretariat which is led by the Secretary General. The Secretariat work is organised across many sectors, Directorates and departments. Among the Directorates, especially important for youth policy, is that of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

Our primary partners on a governmental level are Ministries, state secretariats, departments, councils in charge of youth affairs in the member states. We do not only work with governments, however, but directly with youth representatives as well.

The Council of Europe has developed many instruments to support youth policy: there is one European Youth Centre here in Strasbourg and the one in Budapest. There is the European Youth Foundation, which provides money for youth projects. We also closely cooperate with the European Commission within the European Commission - Council of Europe Youth Partnership, notably in the last years in developing knowledge, training young people's development. It is within the realm of governments to carry out intergovernmental youth cooperation in youth, education, culture and sport.

Most addressed issues are directed to youth in general and not to a specific group. Mobility of young people is a very important issue among them: you can take the < 26 Card as an example. But, there is also an exception: the Mobility Fund by Rail for the Young and the Disadvantaged was especially designed for economically weak young people.

There are the classical intergovernmental committees in charge of youth policy and the Advisory Council on Youth which is the representation of youth NGOs. Both organs sit together in the Joint Council that guides and supervises the policy and the committees. This Joint or Steering Council decides about the financing of projects. The Advisory Council on Youth that comprises of youth NGOs has the same weight in it as the governments, although the latter ones provide the funding.

We emphasize equal opportunities for youth throughout Europe, especially concerning developing skills and competences to take part in society. We have four important projects in this context. Among them there is the project on youth development that is interrelated with the Enter! project. It shall provide social inclusion for young people, by means of training life skills and supporting access to education, especially non-formal education. This project is about equal access to culture, sport, creativity and social opportunities.

In the Council of Europe, you will find youth policy work on two levels: first, there is the Directorate of Youth and Sport with the other departments and Directorates in so far as they

are concerned with youth issues, and then, there is the level of work done by the Advisory Council on Youth.

Four areas are important in the youth policy field:

1. The well-being (physical and mental health)
2. Learning, education, transition to labour life or better to autonomy
3. The prevention of exclusion through projects carried out by different groups
4. Social participation/social rights as part of democratic citizenship

Those areas are organised in many different ways. Categories are children and youth policy. Here we have to differentiate between the needs of both groups. There are differences between the member states as to into which age scale the one category distinguish itself from the other. But in general the line is 10 or 12 years. However, the United Nations defines the age line for children as 18. And another category is the field of training, education. It involves also learning citizenship.

Primary groups of our attention are peer groups, meaning young people who can influence other young people. Then there are the young adults. Beginning with the age of 18 it extends, depending, on the context, to 25, 26, 29 and so on. Policy regarded to them is often a policy that concerns society as a whole.

We have already talked about the triangle of governments, youth organisations and youth practitioners. The latter ones are involved because we stress that youth policy must be evidence-based and addresses clear needs of young people. We are developing together common standards in the member states. We drive for the recognition and support of youth workers as an important tool for implementing youth policy.

The member states cooperate directly in youth policy reviews. Those are voluntary recommendations, work on which consists of inviting other countries' governments or authorities to examine their youth policy and by that way to learn from each other. Besides the advisory function, work on youth policy reviews is a way of a monitoring process in a soft manner. There are no sanctions involved. Furthermore, you can ask the Council of Europe to provide you with experts on the youth field, for example in the juvenile or in the legal field. Additionally, the Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth is held every three or four years that sets the direction of youth policy for the forthcoming years.

What is a recommendation?

Recommendations are means to implement a certain policy and are announced by the Committee of Ministers. We have one convention in the youth sector that is about long-term voluntary service, but unfortunately, no member state has signed it yet. This shows how much the member states keep to their autonomy.

A Council of Europe recommendation is:

1. a document of the Committee of the Ministers (the representatives of the Foreign Ministries of the 47 member states)
2. not binding (nobody is obliged to implement them)
3. a recommendation has essentially political weight (persuasion, but no sanctions like those connected with the Charter)

Recommendations in the youth field are finalised by the Joint Council on Youth which brings CDEJ and the Advisory Council together in a co-decision body. The Joint Council on Youth then submits it to the Committee of Ministers, which will eventually announce it. A recommendation can be 2 or 50 pages long, but most of them are relatively short. A charter is much more specific. In a recommendation we therefore add exemplifying documents to it, which are more detailed. For us here, it is important to bring attention and political recognition to youth as well as to implement the multiplying effect. Youth practitioners can do this best and it is exactly what the Enter! project is focused on.

Discussion:

1. Is it within the scope of the work of the Directorate of Youth and Sport to make statements e.g. concerning health care, legal or migratory matters? Is this also your jurisdiction?

2. Does that mean that the Directorate of Youth and Sport can make statements on his own behalf if they are not asked for?

The role of the Directorate of Youth and Sport is primarily a counselling one – it tries to bring social and youth aspects to attention. The Directorate of Youth and Sport can make statements on relevant issues at any time and concerning any subject. In fact, the Directorate produced a lot of statements concerning, for instance, trafficking and on the issues that were in the focus of the media in the recent years, such as the use of internet.

APPENDIX I

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities - Integration of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods - Resolution 319 (2010)[14]

19 th SESSION

26-28 October 2010

1. The transition of young people to adult life can be a very unequal process: while some benefit from new opportunities, others experience vulnerability and exclusion. The challenge to local and regional authorities is to reduce this "youth divide". In doing so, they need to find a balance between proactive policies and reactive support mechanisms in ways that will benefit the most disadvantaged and promote the inclusion of all young people.

2. When devising these youth policies and support mechanisms, local and regional authorities should remember that the active participation of young people at local and regional levels in policies which concern them, as actors and not just objects of youth policy, is a key objective of the Congress as laid down in the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. The array of youth parliaments and councils across Europe bears out the importance engaged young people attach to their participation in decision-making processes. Young people's voices must be heard when policies are formulated – they can contribute to the identification of problems and solutions as well as to the definition of appropriate responses.

3. Young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods face a variety and often a combination of difficulties: exclusion from the labour market, drop-out, lack of self-belief and alienation, as well as substance misuse, criminality, lack of decent housing or homelessness, poor mental health, financial exclusion and reduced participation in community life.

4. Local and regional authorities have a duty to guarantee citizens' human rights, including social rights, and ensure these rights are accessible to all through the formulation of relevant, evidence-based policies. In view of the multiple difficulties facing young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, a "one size fits all" approach is inappropriate: policies must be flexible, reflect the differing needs, ideas and expectations of each individual; they must not only address social and economic problems but also the political, cultural and spiritual dimensions; and rather than have one specific objective, they should work towards a range of desirable outcomes. They must also be devised with the full participation of young people in the spirit of the Congress Revised European Charter on Participation. A framework should be

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[14] Debated and adopted by the Congress on 28 October 2010, 3rd sitting (see Document CG(19)15, explanatory memorandum) Rapporteur: E. Campbell-Clark, United Kingdom (L, NR)

developed to strengthen local capacity for devising and delivering programmes and practice, to produce positive outcomes for and generate self-belief in young people.

5. Policies seeking to achieve the social inclusion of young people from disadvantaged areas should be opportunity-focused and support young people's integration into society, for example by promoting access to education and training, facilitating their entry into the labour market, by providing decent housing and healthcare, access to public services, social rights and services, to basic services such as transport, leisure, culture, access to media and communication tools, as well as to legal and financial services such as loans.

6. Whereas motivated and organised youth readily participate in the formulation of policies, it is more difficult to engage young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. To convince such young people of the capacity of policies to improve their situation requires more time, effort and imagination.

7. Policies and programmes should be designed with the full participation of young people and adapted so as to enable young people from disadvantaged areas, who find it more difficult to engage, to identify with and believe in policy goals, and to be motivated to take responsibility for those goals so as to actively engage in their own transition, gaining new skills, motivation and confidence along the way.

8. *In the light of the above, the Congress invites local and regional authorities, in partnership with voluntary sector organisations, to:*

a. set up or strengthen municipal and regional youth departments, so they have the capacity and competences to undertake the research necessary to design effective, evidence-based policies and programmes;

b. provide adequate resources to ensure effective implementation and evaluation tools. Evaluation should consider both inputs and outputs, the policy effects on individual cases should be assessed, and conclusions drawn for future action;

c. engage in dialogue, consultation and collaboration with young people from disadvantaged areas and involve them in planning and decision-making processes, both to motivate them and to ensure policies and programmes respond to their needs and expectations;

d. provide accessible and meaningful opportunities for disadvantaged youth to promote their social integration by establishing frameworks for co-operation and development, proposing advice and guidance, as well as organising activities, and in particular supporting, either financially or in kind, youth-initiated and youth-run projects with a social, economic or human purpose, with a view to building their confidence;

e. ensure the provision of facilities, such as youth or community centres, or recreation areas, and give young people from disadvantaged areas a say in how these spaces are organised and used;

f. explore the possibility of setting up mentoring or 'buddy' systems to help young people from disadvantaged areas gain in life management skills, or offer away-from-home opportunities, including in different countries, in order that they experience and learn from new horizons and are able to see themselves as part of the global society;

g. promote gender equality in youth work and devise methods to prevent and combat violence against women and girls in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in order that they may reach their full potential and integrate into society;

h. ensure information is available to all those working to support social integration (local politicians, local managers, practitioners) and to young people using all appropriate means, whether through social networks or more traditional methods;

i. raise awareness of the Revised European Charter for the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life and ensure its implementation.

9. With regard to their youth policy relating to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, the Congress further invites local and regional authorities to:

a. work with the voluntary and community sectors, health authorities, schools, social and prison services, local businesses to provide specific, youth-focused services and guidance;

b. facilitate access to decent living conditions and housing and provide information, support and guidance to those who are homeless;

c. co-operate with health authorities and the voluntary sector to ensure access to free healthcare and information, as well as support and guidance on well-being and healthy lifestyles;

d. ensure the delivery of drug and alcohol education and information programmes and activities, for example in schools, youth clubs or by means of mobile services in disadvantaged neighbourhoods;

e. ensure free access to education, libraries and cultural institutions, free learning materials and free or subsidised transport to educational establishments;

f. work together with civil society, social partners and local businesses to provide work experience opportunities to develop work skills and increase employability;

g. ensure that any training provided for young people is closely linked to job opportunities and job creation, for example in small or medium enterprises and on municipal projects in the construction sector. This training should enable young people to develop their critical faculties and capacity to reason and gain a better understanding of themselves and the world;

h. provide information, advice and guidance in careers, training and educational possibilities – both formal and non-formal – to facilitate the transition from school or joblessness to active life;

i. promote active democratic citizenship by helping young people to develop citizenship skills, encouraging them to participate in citizen initiatives, associations, organisations such as charitable or sports associations, political parties and trades unions;

j. facilitate access to ICTs to promote e-participation.

10. In the framework of the preparation of a recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on "youth policy approaches: access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods", the Congress invites its members to provide details of relevant good practices from their municipalities and regions for the expert seminar to be organised in December 2010 on the same theme.

APPENDIX II

Participants' List

BELGIUM
Thierry Dufour, Bureau International Jeunesse
Claire Morvan, Bureau International Jeunesse

BULGARIA
Alexandra Raykova, FERYP
Tania Tisheva, Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation
Diyana Videva, Regional Direction for Social Assistance

FRANCE
Fadela Aouir, Centre Sociale et Culturel Papin
Abdel Benhakki, Ville De Mulhouse
Chafik Hbila, RésO Villes
Romina Matei, Youth Express Network
Elisa Martinez, student, Mémoire sur l'Impact d'une politique jeunesse sur un quartier défavorisé "Le Neuhof"
Pierre-Luc Moreau, Ministère de L'Education Nationale Et de la Jeunesse
Pieter-Jan Uyttersprot, E Ki Libro

GERMANY
Yael Ohana Forbig, Frankly Speaking - Training, Research and Development
Frank Tillmann, German Youth Institute e.V. Research Group on Youth in Transition

GREECE
Athanasios Krezios, Kids In Action

IRELAND
Fiona Joyce, Canal Communities Regional Youth Service

ITALY
Matteo Fornaca, LTTC trainer
Lorena Vitagliano Oshiro Ponce, Associazione Equal
Maria Grazia Zunnui, Comune di Torino, Settore Rigenerazione Urbana e Integrazione

THE NETHERLANDS
Currun Singh, Institute of Social Studies
Ton Sonnevelt, International Debate Education Association

RUSSIAN FEDERATION
Alexander Razumov

SERBIA
Zorka Milosevic, SOMBOR YOUTH OFFICE (Municipality of Sombor)

SPAIN
Alba Casadella Almar, Licence en SciencesPo., Master en Coopération Internationale et Médiation socioculturelle

APPENDIX III

Programme of the seminar

08:00 Breakfast

09:30   Welcome and opening of the meeting:

- **Rui Gomes**, Head of Education and Training Division, Directorate of Youth and Sport;

- **Karl-Friedrich Bopp**, Directorate of Social Cohesion;

- **Dmitry Marchenkov**, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe

10:00   Introduction to the Enter! project, the organising bodies and the seminar

10:40   Introduction to participants and expectations

11:00 Coffee break

11:30   Expectations and needs of young people in relation to European youth policy: examples from local realities, **Fadela Aouir** and **Abdel Benhakki**, City of Mulhouse; **Lorena Vitagliano Oshiro Ponce** and **Maria Grazia Zunnui,** Torino

12:15   How can the Social Charter support a recommendation on the access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods? **Marie-José Schmitt,** NGO Conference of the Council of Europe

13:00 Lunch

14:30   Access to Social Rights and Youth Policy: Expert input: **Kevin O'Kelly,** Associate Researcher, European Trade Union Institute

Discussion: Where to put the emphasis for a policy recommendation?

16:00 Coffee break

16:30   Working groups on: "How should youth work/ youth policy respond to the challenges in access to social rights?"

18:00   Conclusions of the day

18:30   Reception offered by the Head of the Youth Department, Directorate of Youth and Sport, **Ulrich Bunjes**

Solemn moment and transmission of gift from the Chief Constable of the Devon and Cornwall Police (addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe)

19:30   Dinner

08:00 Breakfast

09:30 The role of local youth policies/authorities in access to social rights

Presentation of the Congress resolution on the integration of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods: **Ms Alison Cook,** member of the Current Affairs Committee of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 Presentation of practices on access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods

13:00 Lunch

14:30   Youth policy's role towards young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods: Jan Van Hee, Flemish Community Agency for socio-cultural work for youth and adults (apologized)

Presentation by **Thierry Dufour**, Bureau International Jeunesse, Belgium

Presentation by **Ramiza Sakip**, board member of the Forum of European Roma Young People (FERYP), representative of the Advisory Council on Youth of the Directorate of Youth and Sport in the Reference and Support Group of the Enter! project

15:30   What is behind the youth policy of the Council of Europe? Presentation by **Rui Gomes**, Head of Education and Training Division, Directorate of Youth and Sport

16:00 Coffee break

16:30 Working groups on the scope and contents of the recommendation

18:30 Daily conclusions

19:30 *Dinner in town*

08:00 Breakfast

09:30   Continuation and presentation of working groups

11:00 Coffee break

11:30 Where do we go from here? Next steps

12:00 Conclusions by the general rapporteur

12:45 Evaluation

13:00 Closing of the seminar

13:00 Lunch

       Departure of participants

APPENDIX IV

Examples of practices on access to social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods

1. TR14ers

Target group: Children between 11 and 18 living in and around Camborne (post code TR14)

Aims & objectives: To offer an alternative to crime and disorder

Summary: The TR14ers began as a police response to children saying 'there is nothing to do around here' [1]. The police worked with Danny Price, a professional dance teacher, to set up a Dance Workshop; available for free to all children between 11 and 18 living in and around Camborne in Cornwall. It became a highly popular organisation with 750 children joining and participating; about 20 volunteering to become dance leaders and 4 joining the board of directors at the age of 16

Background / context: Camborne is a post-mining town which suffers from high levels of unemployment and child poverty. It was experiencing social problems related to children drinking alcohol in the street and consequently being criminalised and failing to thrive [2].

Step by step - story:
- The local police team recognised that doing more of what they already did would not change anything for the local children – they had to work differently [2].
- Huge promotional activity for the first session followed by word of mouth through children's social networking
- Rules[3] (no smoking, drinking or violence – respect for yourself and others) were agreed with the children and enforced uncompromisingly by the police with the children

Role of young people in the project: Children were included in the planning and delivery[4]

What made the project successful?: The crime and disorder outcomes were extraordinary; children stopped drinking and started to do better at school [3 and 5], eventually organising their own Royal Gala Performance[6.] This success is attributable to the police officers disempowering themselves by allowing the children to make decisions, thereby empowering the children. This was achieved through the understand that to engage with the children the police officers had to be engaging – this could not be achieved from a position of power within a relationship - so that they can use their own assets for the benefit of themselves and the community.

What did you learn from the project in relation to access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods? In order to empower children to access their

social rights it is necessary for the authorities to disempower themselves in a relationship with those children.

Practical information:

- Resources (optional): Determination to do good for local people
- Time schedule – 5 years
- Contact: David Aynsley, daynsley@cornwall.gov.uk

1. European Commission – your story

http://www.picturehouses.co.uk/yourstory/entry33.html

2. BBC http://www.healthcomplexity.net/files/dance_workshop_interview_2006.mp3
3. BBC http://www.healthcomplexity.net/files/tr14_radio_cornwall_26-01-07.mp3
4. BBC http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/the_daily_politics/6238322.stm
5. The Times http://www.healthcomplexity.net/files/Camborne_Dance_Club.pdf
6. Crashburn productions http://www.crashburnmedia.com/film-tr14ers.html

2. Governmental Program "Local Capital for Social Purposes/ Strengths on site"

Target group: People in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, mostly youth

Aims & objectives: Provide incentives and support for communities to tackle local problems in a more strategic way using the insights they have about their disadvantaged neighbourhoods
Intentions of the program: The German Government spend 80 Million EUR per year to fund about 4000 Micro-Projects in disadvantaged neighbourhoods alover Germany which are about 400, funded by the ESF. It is part of the program that the communities setup a local action plan as well as an Attendant Committee. This network should bring people from different sectors and from different political levels together to tackle the problem of social exclusion. This Attendant Committee is in charge to fulfill the goals of the local action plan by projects. Everybody can apply for finance of local projects (individuals, youth initiatives, associations, schools, business), mostly measures for social and vocational integration of young people. About 180 communities and rural regions take part.

Approach of the program:
- The philosophy of the program implies that the agents in the district know best what has to be done and what projects are needed. That's why there are quite few restrictions how the funds are to be invested.
- Through the collaboration within the attendant committee there is the opportunity to combine legal and economic capital of the local authorities with the social and cultural ones of the local NGOs in pursuing problem-solving for disadvantages neighbourhoods.
- Already small budgets can spread a spirit of hope and an atmosphere of recommencement in the disadvantaged urban district.

Role of young people in the program:
- As members of the attendant committies they are involved in the development of local goals and as a prior target group they benefit from measures and projects.

What are the preconditions of the success of the programs implementation?
- On the strategic level local regimes differ in view of cross-sectoral cooperation and involvement of local agents which effects success of the program. Thus the most successful Communities in running the program were those ones which showed a strong cross-sectoral colaboration and a consequent involvement of peripheral but relevant local agents.
- One centralized Coordinator can turn out unfavorable in the long term. In View of sustainability it can be disadvantageous to install one coordinator of the program only, so multi-centered networks turn into mono-centered. So if the program is finished and this coordinator is withdrawn the network could collapse.

What did you learn from the program in relation to access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods?
- In view of education it is advantageous for the addressees of measures to involve also participants from out of social hotspots, rather also to involve some from other parts of the touwn. So they can profit from new contact to other "average" young people.

- A big extent of practics and voluntariness helps to engender "Flow experiences". For instance short internships are often quite beneficial.
- In terms of social security measures connect to offers of the care system and can evolve motivation for further occupational activities. A lot of measures that seek to impart skills require a lot of motivation, that some youngsters couldn't provide.

Practical information:
Time schedule: The duration of the program exceeds at least until 2013.
Contacts: More information can be found at www.staerken-vor-ort.de

by Frank Tillmann

3. HIV prevention among young people in Bitola – "Get more knowledge and skills"!

Target group: Minimum 300 young people from 15 to 25 years of age that live in Bitola.

Aims & objectives: The aim was to prevent HIV infection among young people in Bitola, by increasing the knowledge and skills of 300 young people from 15 – 25 years of age that live in Bitola about HIV risks, ways of transmission and ways of protection by (objectives):

1. Establishing a network of young peer educators that will provide information and education related to HIV infection;
2. Straightening the cooperation between young people from our organization and local authorities and institutions on a local level;
3. Educating 300 young people in secondary schools in Bitola and in other NGOs, on HIV/AIDS through peer educational sessions;
4. Raising public awareness of specific ways for protection of young people concerning HIV infection and promoting the development of a sense of an individual responsibility (inspiring behavioral changes)

Summary: The main idea was to increase the sexual education of young people with the accent of the protection of their health and prevention of HIV/AIDS, Sexually and Blood transmitted diseases. The target group as mentioned were 300 young people from Bitola who were supposed to be integrated in peer educations done by 15 new trained peer educators (multipliers) on sexual education with the accent to protection of health and prevention of HIV.

Rights we addressed:

- Sexual and reproductive rights of young people
- The right for protection of health
- The right to education
- Social/Human rights in general
- Youth participation

Partners and supporters: Council of Bitola (Local government), NGO Via Vita[15], Local media (TV Tera, Radio B 97), the European Youth Foundation, DYS, Enter! LTTC team.

The project was based on non-formal education methods[16] and standards[17] so as to provide age appropriate information and practical skills for young people to use that information in everyday life.

Background / context:
In the National HIV strategy of the former Republic of Macedonia 2007 – 2012[18] young people are considered a part of the high risk group for HIV infection. We are a very heterogeneous group, a small subset are much more vulnerable to HIV infection than others,

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[15] http://viavita.weebly.com/
[16] http://eycb.coe.int/compass/
[17] http://38.121.140.176/web/guest/education-resources
[18] http://moh.gov.mk/eng/index.php?news=289

namely those who buy/sell sex or inject drugs and young men who have sex with other men. We chose to act in the Municipality of Bitola as a disadvantaged neighbourhood since we are small district, and we all as young people fell the same challenges and obstacles (exclusion from the labour, from a family, dependence on the parents, reduced participation in community life etc).

Step by step - story: Preparations and meetings (team meetings, meetings with local authorities, target group, school representative, health institutions, media....)

1. Five days training of 15 peer educators;
2. Preparing and printing educational materials;
3. 2 media shows[19] addressing HIV infection and the right of special protection for young people concerning the infection: (addressing the infection itself and addressing young people's needs for protection of HIV infection and the specific ways to respond to these needs) example – peer educations as youth participation and gaining clear roles in health protection process);
4. Street actions with media coverage: Distribution of prepared informational and educational materials and condoms among young people in Bitola; Condom party at the end of the project.

<u>**Outcomes**</u>

For young people:

- Established network of young peer educators (multipliers) that will continuously provide information and education related to HIV infection:
- Straightening of the network between young people, local authorities and local governmental and non- governmental institutions:
- 15 young people trained in standards, methods and ways of organizing and realizing peer educations – empowered for youth participation;
- 366 (381 with the peer educators) young people empowered with information and skills as well as confidence to avoid risky behaviour and make informed choices about their behaviour and health, (inspired behavioural change)
- Provoked development of a sense of an individual responsibility in protection of health;
- 366 (381 with the peer educators) young people gained knowledge on HR/SR and HRE, youth participation and institutions for further informing and consulting;
- More than 2000 got free condoms and information on where to get free information, counselling, testing and condoms in the future

For the community:

- People empowered with information to avoid risky behaviour and make choices about their health;
- Informing of the general local population about HIV infection and specific ways of protection of young people

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[19] http://tera.mk/index.php?option=com_hwdvideoshare&task=viewvideo&Itemid=104&video_id=1435

- Familiarization with peer education as an available form of youth participation and method for development of the individual responsibility in health protection;
- Provoked behavioural change;
- Trained multipliers who will continuously provide information and educate the population on prevention of HIV infection;
- Constant sexual education and free condoms
- Easily accessible Informative services in AMOS
- Easily accessible informative services online (web, facebook and skype in the future)

For the organization:

• Straightened capacity of the organization (new activists and volunteers)

• Inspired new actions for realization of the strategies and goals of the NYS

• Straightened relations and improved co-operation with local authorities and institutions

• Improved teamwork

Role of young people in the project: Planners, organizers, representatives of the organization, leaders, peer educators, representatives in the media, reporters, evaluators, negotiators ....

What made the project successful?

1. The fact that the project was based on the real needs of young people (young people themselves detected their needs and consulted researches to analyze the situation)

2. The fact that young people participated in every step of the process of making decisions, (developing the project idea, searching for funding and everything needed for the implementation of the project, through implementation of the project activities and evaluation of the results etc.)

3. The fact that the team was constructed of young people and adults as a desired team combination in every youth policy and youth participation document,

4. The fact that the young people were empowered and lead the activities with the help and support of the adults

5. The fact that it was multispectral meaning there was an excellent cooperation and joint work of young people, the Centre for human rights AMOS, the partner NGO Via Vita, schools, health institutions, local government and media

What did you learn from the project in relation to access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods?

We can overcome the low level of familiarization of young people on their social rights and every day violations of these same rights by making active participation of the young people in their promotion and protection possible and by supporting it. Young people are a valuable source of ideas and energy that can and should be used in providing access to social rights.

Practical information: Resources (optional): This is everything we needed and secured with the help of our partners and supporters.

Budget : 11090 = 6.090€ from EYF + the rest from the organization and the local authorities .

Time schedule: Start: 01. 03. 2010   End: 31. 09. 2010.

Contacts:

Mr. Kochankovski Sasho: kochankos@hotmail.com

Vasilevska Biljana: bvasilevska@gmail.com

Photos available on facebook:

http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=175663072319&v=photos&so=30

http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=114967051857352&v=photos&ref=ts

4. Soundscapes of Devon Avenue: Creating an Aural Map of a Disadvantaged Neighborhood

Target group: Migrant teenagers of the Devon Avenue neighborhood in Chicago, university students, school teachers

Aims & objectives: (1) To aurally capture the vitality of cultures along Devon Avenue, a disadvantaged neighborhood in Chicago and (2) to drive creative collaboration between youth, universities and community organizations.

Summary: University of Chicago students teamed with the Indo-American Center and students of Mather and Lane Tech secondary schools to create a bank of audio recordings. This audio bank, termed *Soundscapes/Devon*, includes oral histories, conversations, and ambient sounds that document and interpret the cultural vitality of Devon Avenue, one of North America's largest and most diverse immigrant neighborhoods.

Background / context: / Step by step - story: / Role of young people in the project:

Over a series of recording sessions, ethnomusicology students of the University of Chicago trained neighborhood youth in field-recording techniques and facilitated group exercises. The youth participants were handed iPod nanos with attachable microphones to record sounds of their daily lives. The goal was to equip the youth with technical skills they would employ well beyond the duration of this project.

The students' efforts resulted in the creation of an "audiowalk," a sequence of ten tracks that fuse original music, clips of interviews with residents, and field recordings of quotidian life. Listeners guide themselves along neighborhood streets in a "museum without walls" and listen to tracks through headsets or their iPods at points designated on an accompanying map. Through sound montage, the audiowalk transforms conventional perceptions of urban space, interrogates the borders between past and present and real and unreal, and repaints Devon Avenue as a breathing artwork.

What made the project successful?

Through a partnership with the mayor's office and the Indo-American Heritage Museum, the audiowalk debuted in May 2009, as part of a community showcase day. The audiowalk was also a feature of the 2009 Summer Teacher Institute of Changing Worlds, a Chicago nonprofit whose mission is to foster inclusive communities through oral history, writing, and art programs that improve student learning and enhance cross-cultural understanding.

The creators of *Soundscapes/Devon* also shared their work in May 2009 at the Sound Works symposium on media in South Asian cities, organized by Professor Kaley Mason of the University of Chicago. Professor Mason and his students were later invited to present their reflections on *Soundscapes/Devon* in a roundtable discussion titled "Activating Urban Sound Worlds in a Chicago Neighborhood: Conversations on Community-Led Aural Mapping Projects" at a conference at the University of Montreal in October 2009, "Musical Heritage: Movement and Contacts."

What did you learn from the project in relation to access to social rights for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods?

Amid heightened attention to civic engagement locally and globally, the urban environments we inhabit and our rights to freedom of expression can no longer be considered in isolation from each other. Creative cross-pollinations between communities like *Soundscapes/Devon* enrich all participants. This project moves bodies across cityscapes (socially transformative) and sounds across soundscapes (artistically avant-garde), and encourages us to think more deeply about cultures, languages and diasporas within our built environment.
Practical information: Currun Singh, currun@post.harvard.edu

By Currun Singh

5. *Peer research*, Sombor Youth Office, Serbia

Description in brief: During revision of the first year of Local Action Plan for youth in Sombor from 2010 – 2012 (made by Youth office of Sombor, Ministry of youth and sport of Serbia and different professionals) we found out that is important to precisely define disadvantage groups in Sombor, and to set a measures for them in our Local Action Plan.

Youth office has located different groups of young people in Sombor who are not having the same chances and opportunities, and are discriminated (for examples: youngsters from rural places, unemployed youngsters, young single-parents etc)

Concept of "youth friendly researching": we also wanted to investigate whether the wider population of youth notice some other or even more discriminated groups of youth, than the institutions and statistics do. This is the reason why Youth Office of Sombor decided to make a "youth-friendly" research upon representative number of youth: students and high - scholars (we were not focused just on groups that we assumed they are discriminated).

Youth office determinate what is the main aim of the research (main aim was revision of Local action plan in order to include a set of measures involving discriminated groups of young people). Research was carried out by youth:

a) The questionnaire was prepared by activists of several youth and NGOs (non-governmental organisations) from Sombor, under the supervision of professionals who deals with methodology of research;

b) The Youth Office has announced public call for high scholars and students who are interested in realizing questionnaires in high-schools and University in Sombor. The results were that 14 pupils and students have made a research upon to 840 high school pupils and students

c) The analysis of research was made by activist of NGO under the supervision of Youth Office of Sombor

The research didn't discover a bigger number of areas affected with discrimination than the one the authorities assumed initially, but it gave us a picture of:

a) what are the types of discrimination from the viewpoint of youngsters, and what are the young people's attitudes towards discrimination;

b) what kind of institutions from their perspective are reachable for solving the problems of discrimination;

c) what kind of information channels they often use for finding out more about discrimination (peers, school, non-formal education, family, Internet, newspapers etc). Also, through this peer researching came out what is the opinion of youngster about non formal education on this topic (does it have effect on their attitudes etc).

Using the "peer questionnaire" turned out to be a good method to find out about the attitudes of young people. We assume that it is more adequate to prepare questions in the "youth friendly way" and to carry out research by their peers, which adds a greater value to its results.

Contact for further information: Zorka Milosevic (zorkamilosevic@yahoo.com)

6. *Cooperation between the private and the public sector,* **Centre for Human Rights "AMOS" Bitola, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia there is a link of cooperation between NGOs, governmental institutions and the business sector in variety of ways. Some of the examples of this cooperation are the following:

a) NGO sector empowers young people with necessary knowledge and skills required to do certain work. After the "training" several business companies provide voluntary working experience for further deepening of the knowledge and practicing the skills. After or simultaneously with this voluntary experience the National Employment Agency or the Business Centre provides financial help for young people with the purpose of starting up a small or medium business;

b) Second type of cooperation; young people, apart from being in school education, are trained in the NGO sector. Their training experience is certified and the certificate indicates that young people do possess specific skills and knowledge for social projects – the business sector or governmental institutions validate these certificates as a proof for possessing required skills or knowledge when employing new employees.

Contact for further information: Biljana Vasilevska **(**bvasilevska@gmail.com**)**

7. *Mobile youth work – going where the young people are,* **Centre for Human Rights "AMOS" Bitola, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

Reaching unorganized youth – Field work example:

One way to reach the "unorganized" (at least not officially/formally organized) target group is through field work or as some might want to call it - mobile work. It requires actual stepping out of the offices and getting into the field (in the neighbourhood). Everyone should do it: not just social workers and youth workers but the authorities and other institutions as well since they all work for the good of the society and that can't be done if we are stacked in offices and hug the computers); Here is one example of how we reached our target group through this kind of work.

We stepped out of the office, mapped the places in our neighbourhood, talked with people in different neighbourhood about the problems in the neighbourhoods and possible spots where we would find our target group Than we went to those places sometimes even at night where there was nobody else there, because we were trying to find a group of young people that don't want to be found. Whenever we found some of the young people we talked with them and introduced ourselves and the thing we do. By doing this for a long time we managed to get to know some of the "leaders" in the neighbourhood and other young people that fit in the profile that we were trying to find. We tried to integrate in their group – we were working on getting their confidence – (which is a process with no end) and few years from then, meaning today, a lot of those young people are working for the programme constantly making connections between newcomers and the programme team.

Our team is constantly on the field providing different field services and meeting the young people, talking with them about the problems they face and the possibilities for their solution and doing a lot of different things which finally should improve the living situation of these people.

Contact for further information: Biljana Vasilevska (bvasilevska@gmail.com)

8. *Youth Friendly Approach,* **Sombor Youth Office, Serbia**

In the process of explaining what the Local Action plan is, and how can NGOs, institutions, pupils and students organisation use budget lines for its implementation, youth office "translated" this official document into an easier and more accessible language.

This was not just a regular "translation": we re-structured this document in a few fragments, which can be readable without paying attention to the whole brochure. One can simply read one charter in which you are most interested in, and one will receive all needed information.

We divided brochure on several chapters:

- explaining what Local action Plan, and higher documents (Regional Action plan, National strategy, National Action plan, Law of youth etc) actually are

- what was the process of creating Local Action Plan

- how one can contribute to its implementation

- who are the institutions and NGOs which deals with youth and implementation of LAP

The brochure was created by the local Youth Office of Sombor. For the revision we had a professional youth worker from the Regional Youth Office that is a part of Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Serbia, and, two high school students from the high school from Sombor.

After recommendations of the both / (actually three) sides, we finalized electronic brochure named "Guide through Local Action Plan". It was very important that the students from the high school were involved too. Their task was to see if the brochure "fits", is it enough informative but not a boring one, and it is interesting to them, and if the language that we use is not too official one.

This brochure is just an adequate supplement of informing pupils and students about local youth policy, and is not a main tool of it.

Contact for further information: Zorka Milosevic (zorkamilosevic@yahoo.com)