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MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUTH



## 7<sup>th</sup> Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth

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“Human dignity and social cohesion:  
youth policy responses to violence”

**Report on the implementation of the conclusions  
of the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of European Ministers responsible  
for Youth (Thessaloniki, 7-9 November 2002)**

Activities conducted by the Council of Europe's youth sector between  
2003-2005



The 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of European Youth Ministers held in Thessaloniki in 2002 represented a significant step forward towards developing a common approach to youth policy, anchored in the core values of the Council of Europe, in particular democracy and human rights.

In the final text adopted at the Conference, ministers expressed their will to establish and develop cross-sectoral youth policies, ie policies that take account of the different realities facing young people in society, whether in the educational and cultural sphere or in the economic and social one, while at the same time emphasising the specific nature of these policies and the rationale behind them, namely:

- policies conducted in partnership with young people;
- policies that enhance young people's potential and encourage them to commit themselves to their community;
- policies that integrate the educational dimension in a long-term approach, with particular emphasis on non-formal learning;
- policies that encourage young people to volunteer, particularly through associations, in order to increase their autonomy and sense of responsibility, and encourage them to seek practical solutions to the challenges facing them.

This Declaration, together with the two resolutions adopted, one on the priorities of the Council of Europe's youth sector for 2003-2005 and the other on the situation of young people in conflict areas, has naturally served as a frame of reference for the Council of Europe's activities over the past three years. The main achievements in this context may be summarised as follows:

### **Suitable instruments for developing youth policies in Europe**

The approach taken by the Council of Europe and its member states to youth policy development has changed significantly since the first Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth in 1985. From a concept of youth policy centred mainly on support for educational and recreational youth activities, we have gradually moved towards a more comprehensive, "integrated" concept of youth policy, ie a cross-sectoral, structured, judicious approach that takes account of the need to co-ordinate services for young people while involving young people themselves in the process.

In the three years that have elapsed since the Thessaloniki Conference, the Council of Europe's youth sector has sought to promote this concept of youth policy, while continuing to develop a set of methods and tools designed to facilitate understanding of the issues involved and the importance of youth policy, and to help governments design, develop and implement their policies.

The compilation of **youth policy indicators**, finalised in April 2003, provides member states with a frame of reference and guidelines for undertaking a thorough evaluation of their youth policies, in terms of consistency, co-ordination between relevant domains and practical implementation.

A "**European framework for youth policy**" devised in 2004 maps out youth policy based on common principles and goals, by identifying what constitutes the "core" of this policy. It also provides guidelines for implementing youth policy, from local to national level.

The **international reviews of national youth policies** aim to improve governance in the youth sector of a particular country by developing dialogue and close co-operation between the government, members of civil society and young people. They also help to identify the various components of youth policy that could be used to build a Europe-wide strategy of this kind. Since the Thessaloniki Conference, this programme has continued successfully, taking into consideration the guidelines laid down by the CDEJ in this regard. In future, a special effort must be made to ensure effective follow-up to the recommendations made by the international teams of experts responsible for carrying out the reviews for the governments concerned.

The **youth policy advisory missions**, introduced in 2002, are designed to provide national authorities with informed advice on developing their country's youth policy and identifying possible follow-up activities that ought to be introduced. So far there have been six missions of this kind. As is the case for the international reviews of national youth policies, it would be useful to prepare a summary report on all of these missions, so as to identify the lessons to be drawn from these experiences, while at the same time respecting the confidential nature of the reports sent by the teams of experts to the governments concerned.

The **training courses for government officials responsible for youth affairs and youth NGO leaders**, commonly referred to as "50/50 courses" (half of the participants being government officials and the other half representatives of youth NGOs) are designed to promote co-operation and partnership between the governmental and non-governmental sectors in the spheres of youth policy and youth work. Between 2003 and 2005, the Council of Europe ran a series of such courses in those countries which so requested.

The "**European Knowledge Centre on Youth Policy**" was set up in 2004 in partnership with the European Commission. The Centre is basically a computerised database for individuals, institutions and agencies involved in youth policy development who wish to obtain information and data derived from research at European, national and local levels. The main areas covered by the Centre are youth participation, volunteering, better understanding of young people, youth information and EU and Council of Europe youth policy. The last three years have been devoted mainly to developing the concept and methodology of the Centre, to setting it up and training the national correspondents responsible for gathering data and incorporating them in the database.

Within the partnership with the European Commission also, youth research seminars on various topics collected detailed knowledge on the situation, needs and lifestyles of young people, in order to inform youth policy educational practice.

### **Youth policy development: examples of activities implemented between 2003 and 2005**

- Compilation of youth policy indicators;
- Preparation of a “European framework for youth policy”;
- Conferences on youth policy development in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the Russian Federation;
- 3 meetings of the European network of youth researchers;
- Consultation meeting on the preparation of a European Commission questionnaire on youth research;
- Training courses in co-operation and partnership for government officials responsible for youth affairs and youth NGO leaders in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, different federal districts of the Russian Federation (Far East Urals, Siberia), Turkey, Serbia and Montenegro (Serbia);
- Youth policy orientation seminars in Georgia and Serbia and Montenegro (Montenegro);
- International reviews of youth policies in Malta, Norway, Cyprus and Slovak Republic;
- Youth policy advisory missions to Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro) and Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- Seminar for youth policy experts on the relationship between child, youth and family policies;
- Preparation of two reports on youth policy: one on voluntary service among young people and the other on the recognition and validation of non-formal education;
- Conference on youth policy development in South-East Europe (Bulgaria);
- Research seminars on various topics such as: “Political participation”, “New generation Youth Programme”, “Non-formal learning”, “Voluntary engagement”;
- Conference on “Children and Young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods-integrated strategies within public youth policies in urban areas”, in co-operation with the Congress of Local and regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the German Federal Ministry for Families, Senior citizens, Women and Youth (in Berlin).

### **Strengthening young people’s commitment to human rights and social cohesion**

Young people’s commitment to human rights and respect for human dignity is without doubt the cornerstone of the European construction process and the Council of Europe’s youth policy.

The youth programme on human rights education, launched by the Council of Europe’s youth sector in 2000, really got into stride after the Thessaloniki Conference. It provides a practical response to the conference’s call for action to ensure that youth policies are anchored in “universal values of pluralist democracy and human rights”.

Since its launch, the programme has provided an unprecedented opportunity to introduce and develop human rights education and learning across Europe. It is based on the experience gained by the Council of Europe’s youth sector in the fields of intercultural learning, participation and the practice of non-formal education. Central to the programme is the COMPASS manual on human rights education with young people, which was produced in consultation with a wide range of organisations, networks and agencies and published in 2002 in English. The COMPASS manual provides a whole range of practical methods, activities and information on human rights issues. The manual is now available in fourteen languages and has an impact beyond youth work in that it is used in numerous schools across Europe. At the same time, thanks to the active involvement of a number of countries, notably in terms of financial support, a series of national and regional training courses on human rights education with young people have been run every year, the figure being 23 to date.

Over the past three years, the emphasis has been both on consolidating and extending the programme, ie:

- Achieving a better understanding of violations of human dignity (social exclusion, violence, racism, intolerance, discrimination) and finding ways of addressing these violations;
- Developing educational and training materials and support tools;
- Consolidating and widening European networks of trainers, multipliers and youth organisations involved in promoting human rights;
- Facilitating the design and implementation of pilot projects devoted to human rights education.

In addition to the above consolidation initiatives conducted in the field of training and the development of educational materials for human rights education, the work done by the youth sector between 2003 and 2005 has also focused on more specific social issues, closely related to human rights and human dignity: violence prevention, action against racism and intolerance, situation of young migrants, minorities, diversity and cohesion, preventing Islamophobia. The new partnership agreement signed in 2003 between the Council of Europe and the European Commission on Euro-Mediterranean youth co-operation has served as a framework, mainly for training youth leaders and youth workers in the countries of Europe and the Mediterranean area. This training has in particular helped boost the development of practical projects based on human rights and democracy.

**Human rights and social cohesion:  
examples of activities implemented between 2003 and 2005**

- Hearings between youth NGO leaders and the relevant Parliamentary Assembly committees on policies concerning immigration and education for refugees respectively;
- Publication of the COMPASS manual in Arabic, Bosnian, Croatian, Dutch, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Dutch, Polish, Romanian, Russian and Slovenian (COMPASS has also been published in English and French);
- Seminars on violence prevention: "Youth work with boys and young men"; "Youth work with fan clubs";
- Training course on preventing gender-based violence;
- Preparation of a draft recommendation on the participation of young people from minorities;
- 23 national and regional training courses on human rights;
- Funding of 130 pilot projects on human rights;
- Seminar on Islamophobia;
- Training course for members of the European network of trainers in the field of human rights;
- Training course on developing local projects to promote diversity and social cohesion;
- Training course on developing youth projects in the context of Euro-Mediterranean co-operation;
- Training course for trainers in the field of Euro-Mediterranean youth co-operation (two years), in co-operation with the European Commission;
- Symposium "All different - all equal: 10 years after the Council of Europe youth campaign against racism";
- Advanced training for trainers in the field of human rights education;
- Training workshop for Roma youth leaders on human rights and social cohesion;
- Training course on human rights education through Euro-Mediterranean projects.

## **Empowering young people to promote peace and intercultural dialogue**

In Thessaloniki, ministers observed that Europe was still confronted with widespread instability associated with open or latent conflicts and that youth policy had a key role to play in encouraging young people to contribute to intercultural dialogue as a vital condition for the development of stable, peaceful societies. In the light of this observation, and in response to the resolution adopted at the Conference on the situation of young people in conflict areas, the Council of Europe's youth sector has made a special effort to develop its activities geared towards fostering intercultural dialogue and a "culture of peace" with the focus on conflict prevention and transformation and dialogue between different cultures and regions as a way of promoting peace.

One of the highlights of these efforts was the "Youth and globalisation" event in May 2004, which brought together 317 young people from 83 countries to examine Europe's place in the world and to reflect on young people's contribution to harmonising the globalisation process, in order to become central players therein.

Participants had an opportunity to engage in various activities (forums, working groups, exhibitions, cultural activities, etc) centred around themes such as global governance and participation, human rights and global responsibilities, culture and diversity, sustainable development, peace, education and employment.

The event helped steer the future activities of the Council of Europe's youth sector towards greater co-operation with other parts of the world in order to promote the Council of Europe's values there and develop a sense of common purpose.

### **Peace and intercultural dialogue Examples of activities implemented between 2003 and 2005**

- Seminar for youth researchers "Resituating culture": reflection on diversity, racism, gender and identity in the context of youth (in partnership with the European Commission);
- Colloquy organised jointly by the youth sector and the culture sector "Intercultural dialogue, inter-religious dialogue: the role of stereotypes and prejudices";
- Training course for youth leaders on conflict transformation in the context of multicultural youth activities;
- Long-term training course on intercultural learning (25 projects implemented following the course);
- Long-term training courses on intercultural learning for the South Caucasus;
- Seminar for young democratic leaders on young people and conflict resolution;
- Seminar on conflict management and leadership skills;
- Seminar on intercultural dialogue in youth work (in Georgia);
- Training course for Turkish trainers to develop international youth activities with a specific focus on conflict management and leadership skills;
- Training course on intercultural learning and human rights education in the Mediterranean region (under the partnership agreement with the European Commission on Euro-Mediterranean co-operation in the youth sphere);
- Training course "Youth participation and intercultural exchange in Euro-Med youth projects (in partnership with the European Commission);
- Training course on the role of youth organisations in the reconciliation process (in Georgia);
- Training course for youth leaders from the Caucasus on co-operation and networking (in Armenia);
- Youth event: "Youth and globalisation: how big is your world" .

## **Empowering young people to become active citizens**

Promoting active youth participation, enabling them to become active citizens, capable of driving change: for the Council of Europe, this is one of the key tasks of youth policy, as reiterated in the Thessaloniki Declaration.

Faced with a situation, highlighted at the Thessaloniki Conference, where young people, although very positive about democracy, are often critical of the way institutions operate, the activities conducted by the youth sector over the past three years in the field of citizenship have focused more especially on promoting youth participation in public life. The programmes introduced in this connection were designed:

- to encourage young people to get involved in public life and in the democratic process;
- to promote participation on an equal footing between young women and young men;
- to support democratic youth structures and training for young people interested in taking a leading role in public life;
- to encourage dialogue between young people and policy-makers.

In this context, special attention has been given to youth participation at local and regional level. The activities conducted by the youth sector in association with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe are significant from this point of view: drafting of the revised European Charter on the participation of young people in local and regional life, adopted by the Congress in 2003; production of a CD-ROM and preparation of a youth-friendly version of the Charter; training sessions on the Charter; Council of Europe's "Young Active Citizens Award" designed to encourage participation at local and regional level, in co-operation with local and regional authorities.

### **Youth participation and democratic citizenship Examples of activities implemented between 2003 and 2005**

- Training course on management of youth organisations;
- 2 long-term training courses for youth leaders from different districts of the Russian Federation.  
1 training course for Russian trainers;
- Long-term training course for youth leaders in Turkey;
- Training courses on European Citizenship in youth work (under the partnership programme with the European Commission on training of youth workers and youth leaders);
- Revision of the European Charter on the participation of young people in local and regional life;
- Drafting of a recommendation on the participation of young people in local and regional life (adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2004);
- Seminar for representatives of the Russian Federation (civil servants responsible for youth affairs at local, regional and federal level, representatives of the Duma's Youth Committee, journalists and youth NGOs);
- 2 training courses in Azerbaijan on youth participation from local to national and from national to international levels;
- European training course on the role of young people as agents of social change;
- Seminar on the role of Turkish youth NGOs in the European integration process;
- Seminar on young women's participation in political life;
- Training course on "Young women and minorities' participation in political life (Partnership with the European Commission on Euro-Med co-operation);
- Drafting of a recommendation on the role of national youth councils in youth policy development;
- Symposium "Young people and democratic institutions: from disillusion to participation";



- Research seminars on political participation of young people and voluntary engagement (in partnership with the European Commission);
- Round tables between youth NGOs and the Parliamentary Assembly on the one hand, and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities on the other;
- Youth Summit alongside the 3<sup>rd</sup> Summit of Heads of State and Government.

## **Enhancing the quality of European youth work and policy**

A distinctive feature of the Council of Europe's work in the youth sphere is the practice of co-management between youth organisations and government representatives in framing and implementing the Council's youth policy. This principle was notably reiterated in the Declaration made at the Thessaloniki Conference.

The Council of Europe believes the co-management arrangement is important for teaching young people about democratic citizenship, including at national level, and encouraging them to play an active part in the development of civil society.

To this end, the Council of Europe's youth sector has spent the last three years implementing a wide range of educational and training activities for youth leaders, designed to support the work of NGOs in Europe and enable them to become fully-fledged participants in civil society. Notable examples of these activities are:

- the annual training courses for NGO youth leaders on different aspects of international youth work (organising international youth activities, working in international youth structures, training of facilitators of the study sessions held in the EYCs);
- the intercultural language courses for youth NGO leaders (in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Russian );
- the 30 annual study sessions held in the European Youth Centres, in co-operation with youth NGOs on topical issues relating to youth, society and Europe;
- the development of quality standards and criteria for the activities of the Council of Europe's youth sector;
- a long-term, advanced training course for experienced youth trainers (partnership with the European Commission);
- publication of reference material (training kits, Coyote magazine, research seminar documentation (partnership with the European Commission));
- production of a European Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers aiming to further recognise competences acquired within youth work.

In this context also, the role of the European Youth Foundation as a support instrument for supporting young people and youth organisations' contribution to the implementation of the youth sector's objectives should be particularly underlined. Between 2003 and 2005, the European Youth Foundation provided financial support for some 360 multinational youth projects throughout Europe and for more than 100 other types of projects (publications, educational materials, etc.). In addition, the Foundation made financial contributions to more than 240 pilot projects specifically linked the work priorities of the youth sector, including 130 projects in the field of human rights and human rights education. All together, these projects have involved some 30 000 young Europeans.

## **Strengthening co-operation with the European Union**

In the Thessaloniki Final Declaration, ministers emphasised the importance that they attached to co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union, in order to create synergies between the youth policies of the different member states and called on the Council of Europe to develop closer co-operation between the CoE and the EU by establishing partnership agreements.

In 2003, to complement the joint programme on training youth leaders and youth workers (signed in 1998), two new memoranda of understanding were signed between the Council of Europe and the European Commission: one on research and the other on Euro-Mediterranean youth co-operation. From 1 May 2005 to 31 December 2006, moreover, the programmes implemented under each of the three agreements are being merged under a single new agreement.

The aim of the training programme for youth workers and youth leaders is to promote European citizenship and human rights, to develop high-quality training modules at European level, to secure recognition for non-formal learning in youth work and to publish reference documents in the youth sphere. The two flagship initiatives in this programme are the training courses on European citizenship in youth work and the advanced training courses for trainers at European level.

The programme on Euro-Mediterranean co-operation (EURO-MED) is geared towards intercultural learning and co-operation between the partner Euro-Mediterranean countries and the member countries of the European Union and the Council of Europe.

The programme on research is aimed at paving the way for a better common understanding of the youth sphere and increasing co-operation between youth researchers, policy-makers and youth leaders/workers at European level.

All of the activities are centred around issues of European citizenship and human rights education, intercultural dialogue and co-operation, the quality of youth work and training, recognition of youth work, better understanding of young people, youth policy development, understanding and respecting cultural diversity.

The main activities are training courses, seminars and meetings of networks involving youth leaders and workers, trainers, youth policy makers, experts and practitioners. The results are disseminated via the transfer of training modules, web sites, publications and research, theme-based training kits and the "Coyote" magazine.

## **Conclusions**

The 7th Conference of European Ministers responsible for youth in Budapest will be held at a most important time for the Council of Europe, namely just after the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government and its adoption of an Action Plan for the Organisation.

Under the heading "Building a more human and inclusive Europe", the Heads of State and Government re-affirmed their conviction "that social cohesion, as well as education and culture, are essential enabling factors for effective implementation of Council of Europe core values in our societies and for the long-term security of Europeans. The Council of Europe

will therefore promote a **model of democratic culture**, underpinning law and institutions and **actively involving civil society and citizens**".

The Council of Europe youth sector's work over the past 30 years, and particularly in the course of the last three years following the Thessaloniki Conference, is already in keeping with this dynamic. The priorities of this sector for 2006-2008, which will be presented to the ministers during the final session of the Budapest Conference, are the concrete translation of the commitment of all of the Council of Europe youth sector's partners to "empower young people to actively participate in democratic processes so that they can contribute to the promotion of our core values" (Action Plan, Chapter III, 4).

The European Youth Campaign on Diversity, Human Rights and Participation, which will be launched in 2006, will represent an essential step in the implementation of the Action Plan. In the spirit of the 1995 Campaign "All different-all equal", there will be a call to give new impetus to the building of a more human Europe, notably with the active contribution of young people.

## APPENDIX I

### Summary of the results of the previous Conferences

Six ministerial conferences and one informal ministerial meeting have been organised so far.

**The 1<sup>st</sup> ministerial Conference, organised in Strasbourg in 1985** on the theme “Youth participation” confirmed the governments’ will to promote ambitious youth policies within the member States and at European level, to consider young people as partners in the implementation of youth policies, to formalise support to the development of youth activities within the European Youth Centre and the European Youth Foundation and to elaborate European legal instruments on youth-related matters (recommendations, conventions, etc.).

In order to promote youth participation in society, to implement coherent youth policies and a more dynamic European co-operation in this field, it encouraged:

- the promotion of co-management at national and international levels,
- the development of youth information and counselling services,
- equal opportunities in the field of mobility for all young people, including those from disadvantaged localities and regions,
- research and documentation on youth issues.

This first Conference resulted notably in the reinforcement of intergovernmental co-operation in the youth field in order to better co-ordinate the member States’ action in this respect and increase the profile of co-management within the Council of Europe’s youth sector. On a proposal of this Conference, the Committee of Ministers recognised the need to make this form of co-operation permanent, and in 1988, decided to transform the Ad hoc Committee of Experts on Youth Questions (CAHJE) into a European Steering Committee for Intergovernmental Co-operation in the Youth Field (CDEJ).

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference, organised in Oslo, in 1988** on “the strategies for European youth policies towards the year 2000” focused on the development of the basic conditions for an exhaustive youth policy at local, regional and national levels, stressing in particular the need for a better social and professional integration of young people, notably girls and young women, into society, as well as young disadvantaged and marginalised young people. It also focused on the importance of international co-operation in the development of youth policy development in the framework of the activities of the Council of Europe.

One of the first results of this Conference was the adoption, by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, of Recommendation No R (90) 7 on youth information and counselling, which defines the quality criteria in this respect. This was the first international legal text recognising the right of young people to information.

**In Lisbon, in 1990, during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference**, the Ministers considered the recent developments of democracy in Europe and noted with satisfaction the increased mobility of young people from Eastern and Central Europe. They recommended the promotion of

youth mobility in Europe, in particular by drafting international legal instruments or others, in order to offer sufficient guarantees for the implementation of co-ordinated measures in favour of youth mobility in Europe. These efforts in favour of youth mobility resulted in:

- the creation of a Partial Agreement on the Youth Card for youth mobility in Europe, in 1991;
- in 1994, a Recommendation from the Committee of Ministers on the promotion of voluntary service for young people in Europe;
- in 1995, a Recommendation from the Committee of Ministers on the promotion of youth mobility in Europe.

**The 4<sup>th</sup> Conference organised in Vienna in 1993** was of particular importance as it took place in the context of the enlargement of the Council of Europe to new member States. The Ministers agreed on the continuation of European youth policies aiming to further promote the contribution of young people to the development of civil society.

In order to increase the participation of young Europeans, notably those from Central and Eastern Europe to the activities of the European Youth Centre and the European Youth Foundation, and to further extend the co-operation and training policy and programmes of the Council of Europe's youth sector, the Ministers supported the idea of creating a second European Youth Centre in a country of Central Europe, the development of a European network of national youth centres as well as the creation of a Special Fund, within the European Youth Foundation. They also recommended that appropriate measures be taken to combat racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, intolerance and all forms of exclusion. The recommendations of the Conference resulted in:

- Recommendation No R (97) 3 from the Committee of Ministers on youth participation and the future of civil society;
- the creation of a partnership between the Youth Directorate and the International Union of Railways creating a Mobility Fund in favour of disadvantaged young people;
- the opening of a second European Youth Centre in Budapest, in December 1995;
- the establishment of a European network of youth researchers and documentation within the Youth Directorate;
- the development of co-operation with other international organisations and the European Union;
- the launching of the campaign "all different, all equal", as a result of the proposal of the Norwegian Prime Minister adopted by the Summit of Heads of State and Government (Vienna, 1993).

**The first informal Conference, Luxembourg (1995)** dealt with questions such as the building of a multicultural Europe through the improvement of democratic and social cohesion, co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union, co-operation with the new member States.

As a result of this informal Conference, new activities and instruments were initiated such as:

- the process of national youth policy reviews;
- a partnership agreement with the European Agency for Youth Information and Counselling (ERYICA);

- a Convention on Trans-national long-term Voluntary Service for young people.

**The 5<sup>th</sup> Conference in 1998, in Bucharest**, the first Conference to be organised in a new member State of the Council of Europe, Romania, gathered for the first time, most of the states of greater Europe - 41 member States of the Council of Europe and 6 Parties to the European Cultural Convention.

In this new social and geopolitical environment, it recommended to the Youth Directorate to further develop youth participation and active democratic citizenship. It also recommended promoting non-formal education/learning and reinforcing cooperation with all the relevant sectors of the Council of Europe and other international organisations on youth related matters. This resulted in particular in:

- a reform of the youth sector aimed at adapting its structures and programmes to the new reality of contemporary society, young people and youth work;
- the opening of the Council of Europe's youth sector to new partners involved in youth work;
- the formalization of co-operation with the European Union through the signature of a covenant in July 1998;
- working on new forms of youth participation and the obstacles in this respect;
- the elaboration of a draft recommendation on the promotion and recognition of non-formal education/learning;
- the creation of a Council of Europe Award to promote youth participation.

**The 6<sup>th</sup> Conference in 2002 in Thessaloniki**, on the following theme "Young people building Europe", re-affirmed the principles and core objectives of youth policies in Europe, namely:

- youth policies need to be as comprehensive as possible, taking into account the overall needs of young people and recognising their diversity and their many facets and resources;
- youth policies should be implemented in partnership with young people and facilitate their active participation to decisions that concern them, whilst encouraging them to commit themselves in their community life;
- youth policies should have a cross-sectoral dimension as well as a local, regional and national dimension; in this context, they should facilitate the access of young people to the labour market, by means of appropriate training schemes;
- youth policies should promote appropriate forms of recognition of experiences and competences acquired by young people through non-formal learning, in particular through youth work;
- youth policies should promote youth mobility as well as access of young people, notably from disadvantaged groups, to information and new technologies.

At the end of this Conference, the Ministers also adopted two resolutions, one on the situation of young people in conflict areas, and the other on the priorities of the Council of Europe's youth sector for 2003-2005.

## **APPENDIX II**

### **Instruments and implementation of the programme of the Council of Europe's youth sector**

#### **Instruments**

In order to implement its programme, the Council of Europe youth sector has at its disposal the following instruments:

- Two European Youth Centres, one in Strasbourg and one in Budapest, allowing for the organisation of the educational and training activities of the youth sector,
- A European Youth Foundation aiming to provide financial support to multinational projects carried out by young people and their organisations and networks, as well as to organisations and networks themselves,
- A Solidarity Fund for Youth Mobility enabling European disadvantaged young people to take part in bilateral or multilateral projects,
- A Partnership Agreement between the Council of Europe and the European Commission concerning, for the time being, the training of youth workers and the development of models and quality standards in this respect,
- A Partnership Agreement between the Council of Europe and the European Agency for Youth Information and Counselling (ERYICA),
- A Partial Agreement on the Youth Card.

#### **Implementation of the programme**

One essential feature of the Council of Europe's youth sector is the active involvement of young people, through their organisations and networks, in the decision-making process of this sector. An Advisory Council of non-governmental youth organisations and networks expresses opinions and makes proposals concerning the orientations of the youth sector. The members of this Advisory Council meet with the governmental representatives, members of the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) in a Joint Council in order to define these orientations together. Finally, a Programming Committee comprising an equal number of members of the Advisory Council and government representatives, draws up and follows up the implementation of the annual programmes of the European Youth Centres and European Youth Foundation in particular.

Another feature is the constant attention given to ensure that experience acquired by the beneficiaries of the youth sector's programme be further multiplied at local or national level. This is why this programme is primarily directed at young people who have a responsibility within their organisation or network and are likely to make other young people or leaders profit from the experience they have gained.

Another aspect is the importance given to the intercultural learning process in every activity carried out within the programmes of the youth sector and the use of appropriate educational methods to enable this process to take place. This dimension implies a continuous search for balanced representation of the participants in the activities of the youth sector, be it geographical, cultural and social as well as in respect of gender.

A last element is the importance paid to the development of appropriate tools for the evaluation and follow-up of the activities implemented by the youth sector, in order to ensure that its action has a real impact and can meet in an efficient manner new challenges in the youth field.

Based on this practice, and principles, the youth sector pursues its above-mentioned objectives through:

*Education and training,*

- with an annual programme of study sessions, seminars and symposia organised in co-operation with non-governmental youth organisations and networks, as well as with other partners implementing projects for and with young people;
- with training activities for youth leaders also aiming to develop criteria and quality training modules, to be recognised as such;

*Co-operation in the development of youth policies in Europe,*

- with a programme involving all the governments of the States Parties to the European Cultural Convention and calling on intergovernmental cooperation methods (the analysis of national youth policies, comparative studies, exchange of information on good practices, the drawing-up of legal instruments if necessary). This programme is implemented by the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) in close co-operation with the Advisory Council;
- with assistance activities comprising training sessions for leaders active in non-governmental youth organisations as well as civil servants responsible for youth affairs, help and advice to national governments, and support to youth projects, in particular pilot projects linked to certain priority themes of the youth sector (South-East Europe and Human Rights).

*Research,*

- with activities aiming to encourage research and co-operation among researchers as well as exchange of information concerning youth policies and the situation and problems young people face in the member States of the Council of Europe. Within this context, special attention is given to the development of documentation and information on youth matters, also for external publics interested by this domain.



*Inter-sectoral and inter-institutional co-operation,*

- with transversal and integrated actions carried out in collaboration with other sectors of the Council of Europe, other international organisations and the European Commission.