



8th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth

Kyiv, Ukraine
10-11 October 2008

“The future of the Council of Europe youth
policy: AGENDA 2020”

Declaration

We, the Ministers responsible for Youth from the 49 States party to the European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe, meeting in Kyiv, Ukraine, on 10 and 11 October 2008, on the occasion of our 8th Conference, are committed to actively promote, in all the member states of the Organisation, the development of youth policies which are likely to result in the successful integration of all young people into society.

In this regard, we are determined to pursue the objective of ensuring young people's access to quality education and training, to decent work and living conditions, as well as developing the conditions to enable them to contribute to the development of society.

Having regard to the Declaration and Action Plan adopted by the third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe in Warsaw in May 2005, which, in particular, stated that "The Council of Europe will further develop its unique position in the youth field...", thus reaffirming the pan-European character of the Organisation;

Having regard to the Parliamentary Assembly's Recommendation 1844 (2008) on refreshing the youth agenda of the Council of Europe;

Underlining the specific contribution of the Council of Europe's youth sector, since 1972, to the objectives of the Organisation and its capacity to develop appropriate responses to new situations and challenges;

Bearing in mind that the aim of the Council of Europe youth policy is to provide young people, i.e. girls and boys, young women and young men with equal opportunities and experience which enable them to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies to play a full part in all aspects of society;

Bearing also in mind the cross-sectoral dimension of this policy and the importance of involving young people in its formulation, implementation and follow up;

Considering the challenges young people face, both in terms of greater opportunities offered to them as well as increased risk of precariousness, but convinced nevertheless of their considerable potential and therefore fundamental role in promoting the Council of Europe's core values;

Convinced of the need for a dynamic youth policy in the Council of Europe, which includes children as well as young people;

Stressing the importance of following up the Action Plan adopted in Warsaw in 2005, particularly the youth Campaign on diversity, human rights and participation "All different-all equal" as well as the programme "Building a Europe for and with children";

1. We agree that the following issues should be regarded as priorities for the Council of Europe youth policy and action :

1.1. Human rights and democracy, with special emphasis on:

- Ensuring young people's full enjoyment of human rights and human dignity and encouraging their commitment in this regard;
- Promoting young people's active participation in democratic processes and structures;
- Promoting equal opportunities for the participation of all young people in all aspects of their everyday lives;
- Implementing effectively gender equality and preventing all forms of gender-based violence;
- Promoting awareness education and action amongst young people on environment and sustainable development;
- Facilitating the access of all young people to information and counselling services.

1.2. Living together in diverse societies, with special emphasis on:

- Empowering young people to promote, in their daily life, cultural diversity as well as intercultural dialogue and co-operation;
- Preventing and counteracting all forms of racism and discrimination on any ground;
- Supporting initiatives of young people and their organisations in conflict prevention and management as well as post-conflict reconciliation by means of intercultural dialogue, including its religious dimension;
- Supporting youth work with young refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced persons;
- Further encouraging the development of sub-regional youth co-operation in Europe and beyond;
- Encouraging young people to promote global solidarity and co-operation.

1.3. Social inclusion of young people, with special emphasis on:

- Supporting the integration of excluded young people;
- Ensuring young people's access to education, training and the working life, particularly through the promotion and recognition of non-formal education/learning;
- Supporting young people's transition from education to the labour market, for example by strengthening possibilities to reconcile private and working life;
- Supporting young people's autonomy and well-being as well as their access to decent living conditions;
- Ensuring young people's equal access to cultural, sporting and creative activities;
- Encouraging intergenerational dialogue and solidarity.

2. We agree that the implementation of above priorities should be based on the following approaches, methods and instruments:

As regards youth policy development and co-operation

- 2.1. intergovernmental and international co-operation on youth policy development, with particular focus on setting standards and supporting their implementation ;
- 2.2. service to countries, in particular through international reviews of national youth policies and youth policy advisory missions;
- 2.3. co-operation with the European Union;
- 2.4 partnerships with other stakeholders and services involved in areas which are relevant to the Council of Europe youth policy;
- 2.5 co-management, as a unique and valuable co-operation mechanism between governments and youth organisations;

As regards youth work, education and training,

- 2.6. multilateral youth co-operation as an appropriate way of promoting international understanding in the spirit of the core values of the Council of Europe;
- 2.7. working with multipliers as well as supporting the development of quality youth work and its recognition;
- 2.8. intercultural learning as a non-formal educational/learning method particularly relevant for promoting intercultural dialogue and combating racism and intolerance;

2.9. the European Youth Centres and European Youth Foundation as unique instruments for developing European youth co-operation;

As regards youth research and knowledge of youth

2.10. youth research and co-operation between youth researchers and policy makers in order to promote evidence-based youth policies and support the work of practitioners in the youth field;

2.11. the realisation of studies, publications as well as educational and training material in order to support youth work and policy;

2.12. the further development of the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy;

3. In view of the above, we recommend to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe,

3.1. to support the present Declaration as a contribution to the further implementation of the decisions adopted at the Warsaw Summit in 2005;

3.2. to invite the relevant co-management bodies of the Council of Europe's youth sector to develop programmes of activities based on the present Declaration;

3.3. to invite these bodies to review, where appropriate, the working methods of the youth sector, and, if necessary, to submit their proposals to the Committee of Ministers;

3.4. to strengthen the Council of Europe's youth sector and further enhance co-ordination and co-operation on administrative as well as political levels between child and youth – related activities;

3.5. to take the necessary political and administrative measures to encourage all Council of Europe sectors, in co-operation with the youth sector, to take into account a youth dimension when defining and carrying out their programmes of activities;

3.6. to further support the role of the European Youth Centres and European Youth Foundation;

3.7. to foster the Partnership with the European Commission in the youth field as an example of good co-operation between the two partners;

3.8. to further develop a communication strategy to ensure the best possible visibility of the youth sector of the Council of Europe, inside and outside the Organisation;

3.9. to endeavour to secure, when planning the annual work programme, adequate budgets for the youth sector.

4. We will take the present Declaration into consideration in the development of our youth policies, and support the contribution of young people and youth organisations to the implementation of the priorities included in it, at local, regional, national and European levels.

5. Furthermore, we will encourage and support the development of youth mobility, voluntary activities and exchanges across Europe and beyond.