



DDCP-YD/ETD (2016) 202

23 November 2016

Quality standards  
in education and training activities of the Youth  
Department of the Council of Europe

Revised in 2016

Adopted by the Programming Committee  
at its 36<sup>th</sup> meeting in December 2016

## INTRODUCTION

Quality in non-formal education and training is about *minimum* standards and definitions related to the essence or type of activities. It refers to what should be in certain activities and also relates to how they are prepared, delivered and evaluated. Quality in non-formal education should be seen as a permanent endeavour to those responsible for its practice

Quality standards in education and training activities of the Council of Europe's Youth Department (hereafter YD) should serve as an assurance to all partners involved and concerned (organisers, promoters, trainers, participants, sending organisations), that the stated aims and objectives of a given activity are adequately defined and will be pursued so as to be made fully achievable.

Quality concerns the whole spectrum of context, partners, people, methods and stages of the activity or project. It is defined implicitly or explicitly, but a *minimum common understanding* of what it entails is needed. These quality standards should be understood as this minimum.

The notion of quality is socially, institutionally and culturally marked and, therefore, not always understood by all partners in the same way. As the education and training activities of the Council of Europe are not value-neutral, the understanding and practice of quality standards must take this factor into account too.

Many of the quality standards described below may be difficult to measure in the short or even medium term; however, this does not mean that they cannot be evaluated. Their evaluation should take into account the risks of applying or seeking quantitative or quantifiable aspects and results alone.

This document, created in 2005 and revised in 2016 takes into account the results of the evaluation of study sessions carried out in 2014-2015 as well as the results of other relevant processes and activities. The quality assurance model for study sessions in the European Youth Centres should serve as inspiration for other activities. It should also be read in relation to the mission of non-formal education activities with young people in promoting the right to human rights education<sup>i</sup>, peace-building and intercultural dialogue<sup>ii</sup> where intercultural learning has a central role in content and methodology of the activities.

It is hoped these standards will contribute to deepening and widening the transparency, accountability, reproducibility, sustainability, quality and innovation of activities so that the Council of Europe can remain a trend-setter and a provider of high quality non-formal education in the youth field, based on the values of human rights and human rights education and sustained by reflected intercultural learning practices.

The standards should apply to all the activities organised *by* or in co-operation with the Youth Department having a predominant education or training nature, regardless of the place where they are held. They should be understood as *minimum* standards; stricter or more specific ones can/should be implemented at the European youth centres in their role as centres of intercultural educational innovation and development. The European youth centres contribute to the development of the quality of youth work and non-formal education; accordingly, these criteria should be reviewed and updated regularly.

## **15 QUALITY STANDARDS AND CRITERIA**

The purpose of these standards is to ensure that the education and training activities can benefit from the best conditions possible and are run according to the most efficient and effective usage of educational, financial and technical resources. Their explicit nature is a quality standard in itself because it helps to ensure:

- Relevance to the youth policy and priorities of the Council of Europe;
- Transparency in the learning and training process;
- Accountability towards stakeholders and participants;
- Reproducibility of good practices.

The quality standards as applicable to the activities of the YD are:

1. **A relevant needs assessment**
2. **Concrete, achievable and assessable objectives**
3. **The definition of competences addressed and learning outcomes for the participants**
4. **The relevance to the Council of Europe programme and YD priorities**
5. **An adequate and timely preparation process**
6. **A competent team of trainers and facilitators**
7. **An integrated approach to intercultural learning, participation and human rights education**
8. **Adequate recruitment and selection of participants**
9. **A consistent practice of non-formal education principles and approaches**
10. **Adequate, accessible and timely documentation**
11. **A thorough and open process of evaluation**
12. **Optimal working conditions and environment**
13. **Adequate institutional support and an integrated follow-up**
14. **Relevant visibility and communication**
15. **Concern for innovation and research.**

The accompanying criteria serve as indicators about the compliance with the standards.

### **1. A relevant needs assessment**

Basing activities on clear needs and expectations of the Council of Europe and its partners and on the political, social, cultural and educational reality they are meant to address is a prerequisite to ensure the activities are relevant, their results are sustainable and the various stakeholders see their expectations fulfilled. It also allows the trainers and participants to stay on course with the terms of reference and to be accountable for their work.

- 1.1. The activities should address contemporary society issues from the viewpoint of young people and their needs and include a youth policy / youth work dimension
- 1.2. Activities must have a clear reference to the needs and context of which they are part, including their medium/long-term function for all the partners involved
- 1.3. The description of activities should clearly indicate the contribution and relevance of the activities to the Council of Europe's mission and to the programme of the Youth Department, in particular. This connection should be made explicit to all those involved in the activity

- 1.4. The reasons why the Council of Europe is running or supporting the activity ought to be made explicit to the trainers, preparatory teams, participants, secretariat, partners and statutory bodies
- 1.5. Specific expectations (e.g. of partners or sponsors) should also be explicit
- 1.6. The needs identification should make use, when possible, of existing relevant research on the problems addressed and results of previous similar activities
- 1.7. Whenever possible, the learning needs of participants should be integrated in the overall needs assessment of the activity
- 1.8. The needs assessment and the institutional expectations should be taken into account in the evaluation.

## **2. Specific, achievable and assessable objectives**

Each activity, in addition to the overall aims that derive from the needs analysis, must always have specific educational and social objectives that will allow for an adequate programme to be developed, for the identification and recruitment of the best suited target groups, for an adequate evaluation process and for a consistent follow-up.

- 2.1. Activities must have identified and specific, achievable and assessable objectives, preferably with indicators that can be used in the evaluation
- 2.2. The objectives should be identifiable in the programme of activities; similarly each activity in the programme should clearly correspond to objectives
- 2.3. The definition of the aims and broader political and social objectives should be provided or adopted by the Youth Department's statutory bodies and partners in the activity
- 2.4. Activities with a capacity building function should have identifiable learning objectives;
- 2.5. The definition of educational and learning objectives should be the responsibility of the educational team of the activity and open for adjustment with the participants and their organisations (especially on longer-term training processes)
- 2.6. The objectives should also cover the activity's contribution to the YD's programme.

## **3. Definition of competences addressed and learning outcomes for the participants**

All educational activities should have explicit and identifiable learning outcomes. Training courses must have a clear set of competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) to be addressed and developed with and by the participants; other educational activities may be limited to presenting learning outcomes.

- 3.1. The competences and learning outcomes to be developed in an educational activity should be identifiable and made explicit to participants
- 3.2. The competences and learning outcomes should match with the participants' learning needs and expectations
- 3.3. The competences and learning outcomes should be identifiable through the objectives and programme of the activity
- 3.4. The development of the competences should be included in the activity's evaluation

## **4. Relevance to the Council of Europe programme and Youth Department's priorities**

The activities, especially when based on open calls for participation, are a means of making the priorities and programme of activities of the Council of Europe known and accessible to its target groups. They are one of the ways through which the Council of Europe pursues its longer-term and annual objectives in the youth sector, including support to youth policy development in member states.

- 4.1. The description of the activities should reflect clearly their role in the YD programme and objectives including, where appropriate, in relation to individual member states
- 4.2. The activities should also be evaluated against their role in the overall programme of which they are part
- 4.3. Each activity should take into account previous experience in similar activities and provide indications for other activities in the programmes to come
- 4.4. They should be monitored and evaluated by the statutory bodies against the results and using the same rationale of objectives that determined holding them.

## **5. An adequate and timely preparation process**

A successful activity depends largely on a timely, thorough and complete preparatory process, in which all major aspects of the activity are considered. Experience shows that cuts on the preparation time often have negative consequences on the results of the activity.

- 5.1. All activities must include at least one two-day preparatory meeting in addition to time for the selection of participants (when this is the responsibility of the educational team); this does not include possible preparatory meetings immediately before the activity
- 5.2. New training and educational activities, with innovative concepts or new topics, should have two preparatory meetings
- 5.3. The activities should be run by the same team of trainers/facilitators that prepared them
- 5.4. Long term training courses, composed of several phases, require preparation and evaluation consistent with their structure and duration. For the purposes of preparation and evaluation days adequate to this training format, each phase should be seen as an individual activity, requiring both preparation and evaluation
- 5.5. The first preparatory meeting should be held at the latest 8 weeks before the activity.

## **6. A competent team of trainers and facilitators**

Learning and competence development, as well as intercultural learning processes, rely heavily on the competences and abilities of the trainers and facilitators responsible for the activity. The YD bases its educational offer on multicultural teams of trainers and facilitators, with complementary roles and competences, recruited through a transparent process and accountable to all stakeholders. The presence of competent Council of Europe educational staff supports the coherence and consistency of the activity with the standards in place and the development of similar professional approaches by external trainers and facilitators.

- 6.1. The activities should be planned and run by a multicultural and multinational team of trainers or facilitators composed of at least three people; activities should not rely exclusively on one trainer or facilitator
- 6.2. Whenever nominated by partners, the profile and competences of trainers and facilitators should be in accordance with the needs of the activity

- 6.3. All activities should be prepared and run directly with at least one member of YD staff; in case of activities held in cooperation with other organisations, they should be supervised by a member of staff of the YD
- 6.4. The educational teams (trainers, facilitators) should be composed so as to safeguard gender balance, geographical and cultural diversity in the team, complementarity of expertise and experiences and direct experiences with the themes of the activity; when activities are specific to a country or region, the presence of trainers and facilitators from that country or region should be guaranteed
- 6.5. The composition of the teams should reflect the specificities of the group of participants
- 6.6. The teams should integrate senior and junior trainers/facilitators except in justified cases (e.g. advanced training courses) and allow for the involvement of competent former participants (when relevant)
- 6.7. The trainers and facilitators should be acquainted with the values and work of the Council of Europe and able to introduce or put into practice its main standards, educational approaches and resources
- 6.8. The remuneration of trainers should be made according to standard rates and practices in the Department except in duly justified cases
- 6.9. The trainers should be informed about the financial conditions according to which they will be working before the beginning of the activity
- 6.10. Activities can make use of sources of expertise from outside the team whenever needed, but should not rely on a single expert nor should they be led by the expert or lecturer.

## **7. An integrated approach to intercultural learning, participation and human rights education**

The education and training activities of the YD are marked by the ethical and education standards of the Council of Europe as applied to youth work and non-formal education. This is commonly translated into three approaches that must be combined and articulated in each given activity according to its specificities: intercultural learning, participation and human rights education.

Intercultural learning enables the understanding of the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and ethnocentrism on the relations with and between people from diverse cultural backgrounds. In educational practice, intercultural learning should be part of the formal programme (in an explicit or implicit manner) and inform the overall methodology of the activities. Intercultural learning should enable everyone to contribute to and benefit from the activity regardless of, and in the respect of, their cultural backgrounds and identity affiliations.

Participation is central to all youth activities. In educational processes it also entails that young people consciously take part in making decisions about their learning, and that everyone is equally treated and included in the activity, and that measures or methods are adopted to facilitate everyone's active participation.

Human rights education is a fundamental human right itself, and in the work of the YD includes three dimensions – learning *about*, *through* and *for* human rights. Human rights education should be mainstreamed in all activities. This includes adopting human rights based approaches to the analysis of the issues; favouring awareness of the human rights standards of the Council of Europe and adopting educational approaches and methods that support learning through human rights.

- 7.1. Activities must have a minimum duration of four full working days
- 7.2. The teams of trainers and facilitators must have a multicultural composition, reflecting the linguistic, social and cultural realities of the group of participants
- 7.3. An optimal usage of the resources for interpretation and translation must be sought
- 7.4. Training activities should in principle be bi-lingual and every effort should be made to cater for the linguistic needs of all participants
- 7.5. Preparatory documents (and other essential educational resources, such as lecturers) should be provided in the working languages of the activity
- 7.6. The trainers and facilitators should be aware of their own cultural biases and be able to reflect on them with participants
- 7.7. The usage of educational concepts and references from more than one national reference or origin should be promoted
- 7.8. All working languages of the activity should be represented in education team
- 7.9. The trainers and organisers must adhere strictly to the principles of human rights, their implications in a European training activity and be familiar with the concepts and practice of human rights education and the respective standards and resources of the Council of Europe
- 7.10. The trainers must be able and committed to address cases of prejudice that may occur
- 7.11. The trainers and organisers should be aware of the existence and functioning of discrimination and its possible expression among the participants and how to deal with it; they should consistently value and take into account perspectives and points of view of minority or under-represented groups, participants' access needs (e.g. related to disabilities or to faith or religious beliefs) and show a commitment to gender equality
- 7.12. The programme should foster the direct participation and involvement of everyone and make use of the participants' experiences and realities
- 7.13. The team of trainers must be able to engage in conflict transformation with participants in the strict observance of human rights principles
- 7.14. The activities must be designed so as to offer participants a valuable intercultural learning experience ( including participants learning to take a distance from their social roles, developing empathy and tolerance of ambiguity, acting in the spirit of human rights values, questioning ethnocentric views and developing multiperspectivity.

## **8. Adequate recruitment and selection of participants**

The selection and recruitment of participants should be made in ways that secure transparency, objectivity and equality of chances for all those applying and the reaching of the intended target groups.

- 8.1. The activities must have a transparent and, where possible, open process of recruitment and a transparent set of criteria and procedures of selection
- 8.2. The calls for application must include a specific description of the target groups or profile of the participants
- 8.3. The activities must be publicised in the working languages expected to be used
- 8.4. Applicants must systematically receive an acknowledgement of receipt of their application and the results of the selection



- 8.5. The selection of participants should take into account the priority given to potential multipliers within governmental and non-governmental organisations, the need to associate groups under-represented in the activities or in the society structures and to secure a diversity of experiences and ideological preferences of youth organisations
- 8.6. The selection of participants should be completed 6-8 weeks before the start of the activity so as to enable enough time for participants to prepare themselves for the activity (including formalities for obtaining visas)
- 8.7. The activities should actively seek to involve young people or practitioners in the youth field not so far directly benefitting from the Council of Europe's youth sector.

## **9. A consistent practice of non-formal education principles and approaches**

The YD activities are primarily non-formal education activities. As such, they will respect and develop the commonly accepted pedagogical principles of non-formal education, notably participant-centredness, action-orientation and value-based nature.

- 9.1. The objectives, programme, methodology and number of participants are coherent
- 9.2. The activities take into account the participants' training needs and learning preferences/abilities; the trainers should be able to negotiate these with the participants using a participatory approach
- 9.3. The trainers and participants should recognise the value of the activity for transformative learning and education;
- 9.4. The programme and methods should provide a fair balance of development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and an awareness of the key values underlying the activity
- 9.5. The participants must be actively engaged in the learning process
- 9.6. The programme and methods should take into account and value participants' experiences and competence
- 9.7. The participants should not be subject to formal systems of individualised evaluation
- 9.8. The participants should be empowered and encouraged to evaluate and critically reflect about the learning process
- 9.9. The participants have the right to receive a certificate of their attendance in the activity that indicated the areas of learning addressed in the activity.

## **10. Adequate, accessible and timely documentation**

All activities must be documented especially with regard to their results and outcomes; this will also support the follow-up by participants and their synergetic effect on other activities and organisations.

- 10.1. The documentation should normally be ready within 4 months after the completion of the activity
- 10.2. The documentation should systematically be available to all participants and their organisations and potentially – even if in a different form – to all those concerned by youth work and youth policy; the documentation should ideally be made available in the languages in the which the activity was delivered



- 10.3. The documentation should respect the principles of confidentiality of data about participants in agreement with the provisions of Regulation CM (89)70 on a data protection system for personal data files in the Council of Europe and take into account possible concerns regarding their security
- 10.4. Preparatory meetings and evaluation meetings should be the object of specific reports available to YD staff.

## **11. A planned and open process of evaluation**

An adequate evaluation of the activities is crucial to secure, among others, stock-taking of the results, the evaluation of the quality of the learning process and the follow-up to be given. Evaluation of objectives and results should take into account that the impact and outcomes of an educational activity can often be assessed only on a long-term perspective.

- 11.1. All activities must be the object of a specific evaluation meeting which should be held at earliest 6 weeks after the activity and six months at the latest, with the exception of study sessions where an evaluation meeting may be held right at the end of the activity
- 11.2. In the specific case of field activities, an evaluation meeting may be held right after the end of the activity; this should not prejudice the need for other post-course or medium-term impact evaluations
- 11.3. The needs of evaluation should be addressed during the first preparatory meeting
- 11.4. The evaluation should take into account the perspectives of the participants, trainers and organisers and, in as far as possible, it should include recorded data and information and make use of qualitative and quantitative criteria; participants should have the possibility to express their opinion freely in a safe and secure space
- 11.5. The evaluation reports and their main conclusions should be made available to all YD staff and to the activity's participants, in the respect of confidentiality of personal data
- 11.6. The evaluation meetings should consider also ways to support the participants and follow-up the activity within the Council of Europe and by the partners.

## **12. Optimal working conditions and environment**

The working conditions and environment in which the activities are held play a crucial role in their success. As a general principle, the success of an activity should never be determined by the working conditions and facilities.

- 12.1. The activities should take place in an appropriate, accessible and favourable physical environment for learning
- 12.2. Activities should operate at an optimal level of technical quality, taking the European Youth Centre as a standard;
- 12.3. Standards related to the venue, working conditions or technical resources, are to be analysed within the broader social and economic reality in which the activity is placed, while making sure that the quality of the educational process is safeguarded;
- 12.4. The European Youth Centres should be open to new pedagogical and technological tools and their facilities should be at the forefront of training standards and practices;
- 12.5. Financial and human resources must be consistently allocated to secure the success of each activity.

### **13. An adequate institutional support and an integrated follow-up**

The institutional and educational support of the Council of Europe should create synergies for the advancement of cooperation with youth organisations. Activities contribute to processes, strategies and expected results. Their full impact can only be harnessed when the results give an input to, or benefit of the work of the Council of Europe and its partner organisations beyond and after the activity. A consistent and realistic follow up plan is also necessary to ensure that these activities reach a multiplying effect and that their results are consolidated.

- 13.1. Activities must be planned with a consistent and realistic follow-up, by participants, organisers and partners involved
- 13.2. The follow-up should consider the initiatives to be taken up by the Youth Department and those to be taken up by its partners
- 13.3. Follow-up measures should relate to both to education and training and to policies
- 13.4. The planning of the programme of activities must take into account the conclusions of previous evaluations and seek synergies between activities
- 13.5. The activities must be effectively reported in view of their monitoring and evaluation by the statutory bodies.

### **14. Visibility and communication**

Visibility supports the recognition of the value of the activities, a condition for their viability and an effort in transparency of the organisation.

- 14.1. All activities should be promoted using the offline and online communication channels of the YD and of the partner organisations
- 14.2. Where relevant, the activities should make use of the social media presence of the YD and the developments in online communications available, while respecting ethical, human rights and security considerations in relation to organisations and participants
- 14.3. Documentation and reports of the education and training activities of the YD should be made available online
- 14.4. All education and training activities of the YD must carry the logo of the Council of Europe, the logo of the YD and logos of partner organisations, where relevant. The visual identity guidelines of the Council of Europe should be respected
- 14.5. The results of projects initiated within the framework of activities (e.g. LTTCs) should be the object of specific publications or visibility measures.

### **15. Concern for innovation and research**

Innovation and research should secure that quality will develop and respond to the needs of an ever-changing society and youth scene.

- 15.1. All education and training activities of the YD should make use of relevant research and should seek to bring in specific expertise relevant to the topic addressed.
- 15.2. The methodologies and methods applied to educational activities in the European Youth Centres should leave room for new methods, approaches and interpretations of issues affecting young people in the respect of the competences of the trainers and facilitators and the primacy of the needs of the participants and programme.

## GLOSSARY

The glossary below is an attempt to clarify some of the terms used in this document, especially for readers less familiar with the “jargon” of the Council of Europe’s youth sector. It should not be understood as an official definition of the Council of Europe of those terms.

Bi-lingualism	The usage of two working languages in an activity, typically facilitated by simultaneous interpretation. The Council of Europe has two official languages: English and French. Interpretation is usually provided for these two languages or other combinations according to the needs of the participants. Bi-lingualism may also cover sign language and Palantyping. Bi-and multi-lingualism remains important to allow for multiple perspectives and limit ethnocentric perspectives, in addition to enabling communication.
Call for expressions of interest	Restricted call for tenders for trainers. It contains: project/activity specific information, desired profile and competences of the trainers to be contracted, the selection procedure, the application form.
Course director	In a study session, the main person in charge on behalf of the youth organisation, and as such, responsible to make sure that, from the organisation’s point of view, the activity is a success. In a training course, the team member (usually from the Education and Training Division) in charge of the activity and coordinating the team of trainers.
Documentalist	The person responsible for documenting, compiling and editing of the results and outcomes of an educational activity.
Documentation	Documentation of educational includes the collection and systematic organisation of all materials connected to the activity, with special regard to their results and outcomes. Other parts of the documentation are primarily aimed at participants and the educational team, i.e. educational materials, reading, audio-visual materials and session outlines.
Education and Training Division	Is an operational division within the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, in charge of the implementation of the programme of education and training activities of the youth sector, primarily in the European Youth Centres.
Educational advisors	Educational advisors are part of the staff of the Youth Department (Education and Training Division) and are based in the European Youth Centres whose programme they serve. In educational activities they can have various roles: course director, supervisor, trainer, administrator, and so on.
Educational Team	Within the Youth Department, reference to the “Educational Team” means the Head of the Education and Training Division and the educational advisors.
Facilitator	Primarily a member of the preparatory team of study sessions held in the EYCs. In other cases also a trainer facilitating larger-scale meetings, conferences or fora.
Field activity	Activity of the Council of Europe taking place outside the European youth centres, usually organised in partnership with local/national actors (governments, NGOs)
EYC staff	The EYCs host and provide administrative and educational support for activities by the Youth Department, including study sessions co-organised with youth organisations. Besides Educational Advisors other staff members of EYCs are also directly involved in supporting the implementation of activities, such as the Executive Directors of the European Youth Centres; Administrative Assistants, staff at the reception, Accountants and Financial officers, Technical staff, etc.
Junior trainer	A trainer who, within the context of a specific team and activity, has less experience with respect to topic, methodology and particular working context. The junior trainer is expected to support the work of the senior trainers. Differences between senior and junior are explained in the document.
Long-term training courses (LTTCs)	Training activities which include more than a single residential seminar and its minimum preparatory and follow-up process. LTTCs typically involve participants in an educational process of several months or years, consisting of one or more residential activities of at least 6-8 days, e-learning and work on projects developed by participants with their organisations.
Partners and sponsors	A variety a possible institutions, governmental and non-governmental organisations with whom the Council of Europe may cooperate with to implement activities and create synergies. Sponsors refer to co-funders of an activity who are not part of its organisation.
Rapporteur	The person responsible for documenting and producing a final report for an educational activity. Often, the work of the rapporteur involves placing the activity

	within a youth policy context and building up on the conclusions and outcomes of the meeting to further suggest potential ways of follow-up.
Senior trainer	A trainer who, within the context of a specific team and activity, has extensive experience with respect to topic, methodology and particular working context and can take a leadership role in the educational processes.
Statutory bodies	The bodies responsible for the setting up, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policy and programme of the Youth Department according to a mandate of the Committee of Ministers. Also referred as co-management bodies. The <b>European Steering Committee on Youth</b> (CDEJ) brings together representatives of ministries or bodies responsible for youth matters from the 50 States Parties to the European Cultural Convention. The <b>Advisory Council on Youth</b> (CCJ) comprises 30 representatives of non-governmental youth organisations and networks. It provides opinions and input from the youth NGOs on all youth sector activities and ensures that young people are involved in the Council's other activities. The <b>Joint Council on Youth</b> is a co-decision body, bringing together the CDEJ and the CCJ. It establishes the youth sector's priorities, objectives and budget. The <b>Programming Committee on Youth</b> is a co-decision body comprising 8 members each from the CDEJ and the Advisory Council. It establishes, monitors and evaluates the programmes of the European Youth Centres and of the European Youth Foundation.
Study session	Study sessions are international youth activities lasting between 4 and 8 days which bring together multipliers from youth organisations or networks and experts for discussions on a specific subject leading to conclusions relevant to the priorities and programmes of the Council of Europe Youth sector. They are organised by the Youth Department in co-operation with youth organisations and networks, and are held at one of the European Youth Centres.
Trainer	In the context of the Trainers Pool a trainer is an educational consultant, with a solid experience in non-formal learning/education, youth work and/or youth policy. Trainers are typically contracted to form a en educational team together with the educational staff of the Youth Department.
Training course	Capacity-building activities, based on non-formal education, responding to specific needs of multipliers and actors youth work actors concerned with the implementation of the thematic priorities of the programme of the Youth Department. A training course typically involves at least one residential seminar and some e-learning.
Transformative learning and education	Transformative learning is a process which implies a perspective transformation of the person going through it. The three main interconnected directions of transformation may include changes in understanding of the self, in belief systems and in behaviours (lifestyle). As such, educational activities based on transformative learning are meant to contribute to the changing and shaping of attitudes of the learners.
Type of activities	Activities of the Youth Department include study sessions, training courses, training seminars, seminars, conferences and fora. They are all different in their length, as well as in educational aims and methodology, while still keeping the principles of non-formal education.
Youth Department	The main structure in the Council of Europe responsible for elaborating guidelines, programmes and legal instruments for the development of coherent and effective youth policies at local, national and European levels. The Youth Department encompasses the work of the European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest, the European Youth Foundation, the Intergovernmental cooperation in the youth field, the Youth Partnership with the European Commission and the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility. It is part of the Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation which is itself part of the Directorate General of Democracy (DG II )

<sup>i</sup> Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education

<sup>ii</sup> Notably, the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, the Council of Europe Competences for Democratic Culture, and the Guidelines for intercultural dialogue in non-formal learning/education activities.