



BUDAPEST 2005  
7TH CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN  
MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUTH



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

Budapest, Hungary  
23-24 September 2005

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

**Final Declaration**

We, the Ministers responsible for Youth, from the 48 States party to the European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe, meeting in Budapest, Hungary, on 23 and 24 September 2005, on the occasion of the 7<sup>th</sup> Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth;

Having regard to:

- the European Convention on Human Rights adopted on 4 November 1950;
- the International Convention of the United-Nations on the rights of the Child, as well as its two optional protocols;
- the European Social Charter, in particular Article 7 concerning the rights of children and adolescents to protection;
- the Plan of Action adopted by the Heads of State and Government on the occasion of the third Summit of the Council of Europe (Warsaw, 16-17 May 2005);
- the Final Declaration of the second Summit of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 10-11 October 1997), in which the Heads of State and Government affirmed their “determination to combat violence against women and all forms of sexual exploitation of women”;
- Recommendation (98) 14 of the Committee of Ministers to the member states on gender mainstreaming;
- the Human Rights Education Youth Programme implemented by the Council of Europe youth sector since 2000;
- the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non Violence for Children of the world, proclaimed for the period 2001-2010 by the United-Nations;
- Recommendation (2002) 5 of the Committee of Ministers to the member States on the protection of women against violence, adopted on 30 April 2002, and its explanatory memorandum;
- the final Declaration of the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth held in Thessaloniki in 2002 ;
- Resolution (2003) 7 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe;
- the Resolution from the ad hoc Conference of European Ministers responsible for violence prevention in everyday life “Preventing everyday violence in Europe: responses in a democratic society” (Oslo, 2004);
- the Declaration on intercultural dialogue and conflict prevention adopted at the Conference of European Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs “The new role and new responsibilities of Ministers of Culture in initiating intercultural dialogue, with due regard for cultural diversity” (Opatija, Croatia, 20-22 October 2003);

- the outcomes of and the follow-up to the Council of Europe 2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education;
  - the youth policy recommendations on young people and violence prevention resulting from the Council of Europe youth sector's involvement in the Integrated Project "Responses to violence in everyday life in a democratic society";
  - a. Increasingly concerned by the manifestations of violence, and by its consequences on human dignity and social cohesion in our democratic societies, including in conflict areas;
  - b. Stressing that violence is a phenomenon that concerns society as a whole, and that particular attention must be paid to young people, both as victims and as perpetrators of violence;
  - c. Bearing in mind the social and economic factors, such as unemployment, poverty, failure at school and the lack of perspective, problems within the family, a loss of bearings or stress, which may create favourable breeding grounds for the expression of violence, particularly amongst the most vulnerable groups;
  - d. Bearing in mind that violence is a phenomenon that cannot be stopped immediately and permanently, but which can be reduced and prevented;
  - e. Deeply concerned by forms of violence such as gender-related violence, violence against children and young people, homophobic violence, violence against young disabled, violence against young immigrants and minority groups, as well as violence motivated by racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia or by any other form of intolerance;
  - f. Preoccupied also by the situation of young refugees and internally displaced persons from conflict regions, who are often victims of violence;
  - g. Stressing also the importance of protecting children and young people from the risk of being exposed to trafficking, and therefore, encouraging all the member States to sign and ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings;
  - h. Bearing in mind that violence is not only expressed through a physical act but also through words, attitudes and ways of thinking;
  - i. Acknowledging the key role young people, youth leaders and youth workers and their associations play as protagonists of violence prevention;
1. Re-affirm that living in security is a fundamental human right;
  2. Convinced therefore that human rights education with young people must be an essential approach to violence prevention;
  3. Call upon the States Parties to the European Cultural Convention to put in place, in the framework of their youth policies and youth work policies, measures as well as educational and training programmes apt to support young people's commitment to reducing and preventing violence in everyday life;

4. And furthermore, agree that youth policies' responses to violence must be implemented taking into account the following principles:
  - 4.1. The importance of taking stock of all including hidden forms of violence, and of analysing their causes, and of increasing awareness of their impact on people who are both directly and indirectly affected;
  - 4.2. The need to develop violence prevention strategies, based on the specific approaches of youth policy and youth work, in particular non-formal education / learning; and in this context, the importance of actively promoting education for citizenship and participation;
  - 4.3. The need to recognise young people as potential actors in violence prevention, whilst raising their sense of responsibility and actively promoting their participation and co-operation in this domain;
  - 4.4. The need to implement policies in this area with the active participation of non-governmental youth organisations and networks, whilst encouraging them to develop partnerships with other civil society actors;
  - 4.5. The need to widely publicise and disseminate violence prevention programmes, notably those implemented by, with and for young people;
  - 4.6. The importance of establishing good practice in each country on reducing violence in mass media products aimed at children and young people;
5. In order to prevent gender-related violence, notably against children and young people, homophobic violence and the sexual exploitation of children and young people, governments should include a priority focus on gender equality, sexuality and power in their youth policy agendas;
6. In order to prevent violence motivated by racism and intolerance, governments should promote education for intercultural dialogue as a key dimension of youth policy and youth work policy, and support the development of international youth exchange programmes;
7. Furthermore, youth policies should pay special attention to promoting violence prevention in schools, training establishments and leisure facilities, as well as in the family, as these are places where children and young people spend the greatest part of their daily life;
8. As regards schools, governments should stimulate the development of democratic schools in which students can actively participate, together with the school community, in decisions which concern them, and this as a prerequisite for the development, in the school, of a safe and non-violent environment, without harassment, as well as a learning process for promoting such an environment in other living places;

In this context, youth policies should encourage and support initiatives aimed at strengthening violence prevention in schools and training establishments whilst ensuring that the experience from non-formal education/learning and peer education is taken into consideration in personnel training;

9. As regards the family, governments should encourage cross-sectoral co-operation, in particular between Child, Youth and Family policies with a view to developing strategies, particularly educational ones, aimed at preventing domestic violence as well as promoting the family as a place where children and young people can learn and adopt a non-violent lifestyle;

In this context, youth policies should encourage actors in the social and youth work fields to set up joint initiatives such as training programmes on dialogue and participation, conflict management and solving problems between parents and children, as well as support programmes for children at risk;

10. Youth policy responses to violence should be anchored in the reality of young people's lives. The revised Charter of the Council of Europe on the participation of young people in local and regional life provides a whole range of measures to facilitate this process. Therefore, governments should actively encourage local authorities to implement the Charter;

In view of the above, we encourage the Council of Europe:

11. To make human rights education an essential and permanent component of the programme of the Directorate of Youth and Sport, including the dimension of violence prevention, and to enable it to act as a knowledge and resource centre on human rights education for young people, based on its experience and practice of non-formal education/learning;
12. To pay special attention to the development of networks and partnerships between young people and non-governmental as well as governmental organisations and institutions at local, national and European levels, as well as to the training of youth leaders and youth workers, taking into account the need for a cross-sectoral approach to violence prevention;
13. To reinforce existing support measures for training of young people, youth leaders and youth workers as well as civil servants in charge of youth matters, aimed at the development of sustainable projects implemented at local, regional, national and European levels;
14. To increase the capacities of youth leaders and youth workers, through training programmes, to act as educators of young people in violence prevention, by promoting notably the learning of negotiation and confidence building skills;
15. To further support the development of European youth research in the field of violence, and make practical use of the extensive knowledge gained from research in this field;

16. To further develop the instruments of the Council of Europe youth sector, in particular the European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest and the European Youth Foundation, as support structures for the above proposed measures;
17. To create a sustainable space for dialogue between the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) and the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ), and the European Committee on Social Cohesion (CDCS), with a view to developing co-operation on issues of common interest, including violence prevention;
18. To encourage actors in the youth and the sport fields to work together on promoting the ideals of sport such as mutual respect, fair-play, tolerance and team spirit, among young people, as means of preventing violence in everyday life;
19. To prepare a draft recommendation from the Committee of Ministers to the member States on Human Rights Education with young people, including notably provisions for strengthening European co-operation in the field of violence prevention;
20. To actively support the organisation, in 2006-2007, of a European Youth Campaign on Diversity, Human rights and Participation in the spirit of the 1995 youth Campaign "All different-all equal", whilst making use of the experience and achievements of the Directorate of Youth and Sport in the fields of intercultural dialogue, conflict prevention and the promotion of peace, the fight against racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and intolerance, and human rights education.