

Intergovernmental co-operation in the youth field



**Youth
policy**

Social cohesion
Human rights
Participation
Research



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



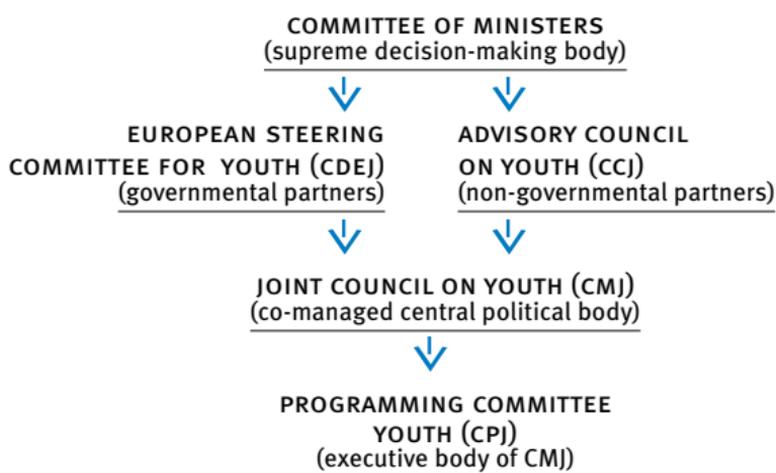
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



The Council of Europe – an international intergovernmental organisation – carries out its governmental action in the field of youth through the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ). This committee brings together ministries or public administrations in charge of youth Affairs in the 50 States Parties to the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18).^{*} The CDEJ supervises a programme of activities involving policy makers, youth researchers and youth work practitioners and focuses particularly on the development of youth policies in its member states.

ACTIVITIES

- ▶ International reviews of national youth policies;
- ▶ Summer University of the CDEJ;
- ▶ Youth information and counselling;
- ▶ The Council of Europe quality label for youth centres;
- ▶ Work on specific youth policy-related topics;
- ▶ Conferences of Ministers responsible for Youth.



^{*} All Council of Europe member states are Contracting Parties to the European Cultural Convention (ECC) but not all Contracting Parties to the ECC are Council of Europe member states.



INTERNATIONAL REVIEWS OF NATIONAL YOUTH POLICIES

The Youth Department of the Council of Europe embarked on its international reviews of national youth policies in 1997. Since then, at member states' request, about 20 reviews have been conducted by international expert teams recruited by the Council of Europe. The international review process has three distinct objectives:

- ▶ to advise on national youth policy of the host country;
- ▶ to identify components which might form a harmonised approach to youth policy across Europe, and
- ▶ to contribute to the knowledge, development and implementation of the youth policy of the Council of Europe.

As a result of the review, an international report is prepared by the expert team together with recommendations for the attention of the government of the country concerned. The report is presented to the country during a national public hearing and then to the Joint Council on Youth, the main co-management policy development body of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, comprising the governmental and non-governmental partners.

SUMMER UNIVERSITY OF CDEJ

Every year, at the invitation of a member state's government, the CDEJ organises a Summer University. The participants are CDEJ members, young civil servants of ministries dealing with youth affairs and members of the Advisory Council. Through various learning experiences they improve their capacity to actively participate in the work of the Council of Europe's Youth Department, particularly in its co-management structures. The objectives of the Summer Universities are:

- ▶ to improve knowledge and understanding of European youth policy;
- ▶ to be further acquainted with the values, objectives, programmes and structures of the Council of Europe and its Youth Department, including in relation to the European Union's youth policy and programmes;
- ▶ to learn about the reality of youth, youth policy and youth work of the host country;
- ▶ to exchange knowledge and views on topical youth policy issues relevant to the Council of Europe's Youth Department.



In 1997, the Council of Europe and the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA) signed a partnership agreement to:

- ▶ promote youth information and counselling as an important dimension of youth policy;
- ▶ facilitate and organise training for the persons involved in youth information and counselling;
- ▶ meet the demands in this field of all the Contracting Parties to the European Cultural Convention;

A joint co-ordinating committee composed of three CDEJ representatives, three ERYICA representatives and a representative of the Advisory Council on Youth draws up and supervises the partnership's annual programme.

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE QUALITY LABEL FOR YOUTH CENTRES

The Council of Europe grants its Quality Label for Youth Centres to youth centres in member states which have a structured relationship to a public authority and which:

- ▶ adhere to the Council of Europe values;
- ▶ contribute to the quality of youth work;
- ▶ promote international co-operation;
- ▶ contribute to the improvement of non-formal education;
- ▶ actively involve young people in their policy and programmes.
- ▶ benefit from the Council of Europe's standards and approaches to youth work and youth policy.

The European Platform of Youth Centres meets once a year and ensures knowledge sharing and networking among centres recognised by the Council of Europe with the quality label and those aspiring to its acquisition.



WORK ON SPECIFIC YOUTH POLICY-RELATED TOPICS

For 40 years the Organisation's Youth Department has been developing a wide range of training courses for youth leaders, youth workers and multipliers as well as young researchers and civil servants from across Europe, on a wide range of subjects such as human rights education, intercultural learning, youth participation, citizenship education, etc.

In this context, the Council of Europe has developed numerous innovative educational, training and research tools, for example on "young people, non-formal education and learning", "youth work and associative life", etc. Based on the results of this work, it has drawn up Council of Europe criteria and quality standards for youth policy and youth work.

The European Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers is an example of the commitment of the Council of Europe and its member states to promoting the recognition of non-formal education and learning of young people. It is a methodology which helps youth leaders and youth workers to identify, assess and record their competences.

Since 2010, the Youth Department has been actively involved in a cross-disciplinary project on the participation of children and young people. It has implemented policy reviews in three countries, resulting in the adoption of a Committee of Ministers recommendation on the participation of children and young people under the age of 18 (Recommendation CM/Rec (2012)2) and the preparation of an assessment tool for policy makers and actors in order to help them evaluate public policies on child and youth participation.



CONFERENCES OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUTH

Such Council of Europe conferences provide ministers with a regular opportunity to discuss topical policy issues and develop orientations for the work of the Council of Europe. In the youth field, they have taken place every three or four years for Ministers responsible for Youth Affairs from the 50 States Parties to the European Cultural Convention. Youth organisations are actively involved in their preparation and follow-up, as well as in the conference debates. National delegations include not only the minister and the senior officials but also youth representatives. This is an interesting feature specific to the ministerial conferences of the youth sector.

In addition, various national and international youth NGOs participate in a Youth Event prior to each conference. The results of the Youth Events are presented at the opening sessions of the conferences. The final declaration adopted at the end is submitted to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, which decides on follow-up actions.

www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE