

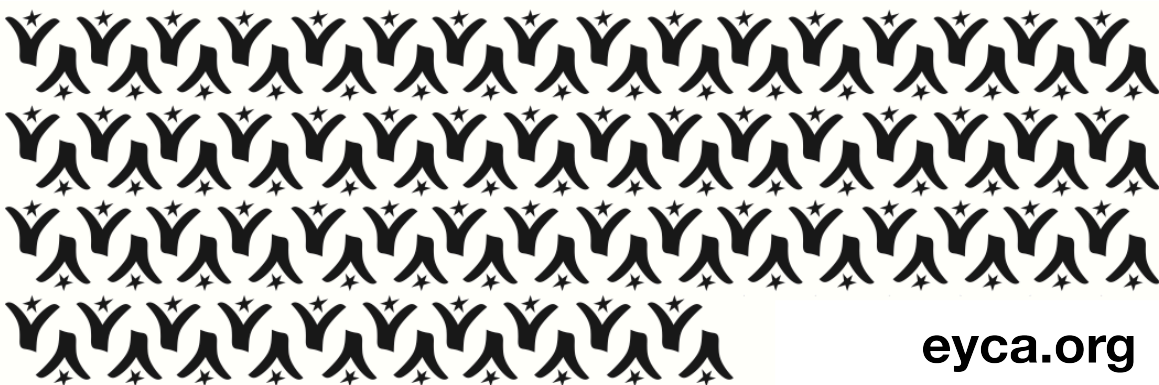


**European Youth
Card Association**

REPORT

“Countering Violent Extremism and Youth Radicalisation: Using the European Youth Card to Promote Peaceful Communities”

29-31 January 2017 | Nicosia, Cyprus



eyca.org

“Countering Violent Extremism and Youth Radicalisation: Using the European Youth Card to Promote Peaceful Communities”

29-31 January 2017

Nicosia - Cyprus

Organised by the Council of Europe Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility Through the Youth Card and the European Youth Card Association (EYCA), in the framework of the Cyprus Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

Sunday, 29th January 2017

Arrival and Welcome Dinner

Monday, 30th January 2017

Opening Session

The seminar opened with representatives from the partner organisations sharing some welcome words with the participants.

Mr Victoras Kountouris from the Youth Board of Cyprus, underlined the importance of the topic of the seminar, as it is currently one of the most important challenges that Europe is facing. He also highlighted the significant role of the youth card as a tool to build peaceful societies, as it assures equal services to all young people, regardless of their social or cultural background.

Mr. Markus Wolf, chair of the European Steering Committee on Youth (CDEJ) of the Council of Europe, expressed the interest of CDEJ and Joint Council on Youth in following up the outcomes of this seminar. Mr. Wolf also shared information about other efforts of the organisation in promoting peaceful societies, such as the *No Hate Speech Campaign*, the *Roma Youth Action Plan* and the Action Plan approved by the Committee of Ministers on the Fight Against Violent Extremism and Radicalisation Leading to Terrorism and on Building Inclusive Societies.

Mr Jarkko Lehikoinen, president of the European Youth Card Association (EYCA), highlighted the strong interest in the seminar, expressed through the high number of applications received. Mr. Lehikoinen also shared that the focus of the work related with countering violent extremism should be primarily on prevention and that EYCA also has a role on this joint effort of the youth sector, as the youth card goes beyond travel and discounts and is a tool for social inclusion and participation.

After the opening remarks, the facilitator was invited to briefly recall the main objectives of the seminar and introduce the programme.

Key Note Speakers

Mr. Sebastian Abdallah

University of Applied Science of Amsterdam and University of Amsterdam

"Building relationships and promoting peaceful communities: a factor of countering violent extremism and radicalisation?"

Sebastian Abdallah teaches social work and community development at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences. He does research on young people's development in different spheres of life as well as on youth oriented institutions in both The Netherlands and Lebanon. Educational background and work experience in Community Development, Youth Work, Arabic Studies, and Sociology. He is currently finishing his PhD dissertation in the department of Sociology at the University of Amsterdam under the working title: Struggles for success. Youth work rituals in Amsterdam and Beirut.

The focus of Mr Abdallah's presentation was on the personal process that a young person goes through in his/her path towards inclusion and integration or radicalisation. He focused on what is needed to reach success in life and underlined the importance of positive rituals to create relations between the young person and the community. Mr. Abdallah explored the power of symbols in creating these connections and the need to promote positive symbols among young people. He also talked about the different feelings and situations that can lead to radicalisation of young people.

After the presentation, the group engaged in a dialogue with the speaker that allowed: a deeper reflection, for example, on the radicalisation process of a young person and the importance of peer-to-peer approach and the creation of positive symbols to develop a sense of belonging to a community; and a better understanding of the methodology used in the research.

Mrs. Gizem Kiliç

United Network of Young Peacebuilders and Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe

"Role of youth-led civil society in preventing violent extremism among young people"

Gizem Kiliç is Leading Coordinator at the United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY Peacebuilders). Gizem is in charge of UNOY's advocacy work, and additionally works on the gender dimensions of youth, peace and security issues. She is a member of the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe. She has previously worked for the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, where she was advocating for preventive rather than reactive responses to armed conflict.

Mrs. Gizem Kiliç brought a young peacebuilders' perspective on the topic, sharing concrete examples on how youth organisations and young people are working on countering violent extremism. In addition, she also shared about existing policy frameworks on the issue, such as the action plans of the Council of Europe and the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security. Mrs Kiliç finalised her presentation with a strong message to focus on prevention and to see young people beyond the victim-perpetrator dichotomy and to engage them as peacebuilders.

There was a moment of interaction with the group of participants and the possibility to further discuss issues such as the role of media, on how to reach the young extremists and the importance of political participation of young people.

Good Practice on Integration Vs. Alienation

Mrs. Gazela Pudar Drasko

EYCA – sharing good practices of member organisations

The presentation of Mrs. Drasko included a brief introduction on EYCA: its aims and membership and the collaboration with the *Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility Through the Youth Card of the Council of Europe*. She shared different examples from member organisations that are promoting the youth card as a tool to foster peaceful communities, that included good practices from Scotland and Northern Ireland. In addition, Mr. Victoras Kountouris, also had the possibility to share on behalf of the Youth Board of Cyprus, the work that is being developed in the country.

After the presentation, the group engaged in a dialogue with Mrs. Drasko. There was a significant interest among participants to get to know more about EYCA, the youth card and the services related.

Mr. Jacques Spelkens

Engie - CSR Europe - sharing a good practice from business sector

Mr. Jacques Spelkens, speaking on behalf of Engie, member of CSR Europe, talked about his experience in promoting social inclusion and integration of young refugees in Belgium. He explained how their employees are engaged in corporate volunteer projects promoted by the company, that include language teaching, learning through sports and other capacity-building and integration programmes.

There was a moment for interaction with the group, which expressed its curiosity and interest to understand how to connect with the initiatives of the business sector and join efforts in the fight against violent extremism and radicalisation.

Mr. Josep Moline

Agència Catalana de la Joventud – sharing a good practice on the social role of the youth card

Mr. Josep Moline from the Catalan Agency on Youth, shared their approach of seeing and promoting the youth card as a social tool for inclusion and integration. He highlighted the outreach capacity of the youth card in Catalunya and the upcoming initiatives that will include, for example, making the card available to young refugees.

After the presentation, there were some questions addressed to the speaker to clarify some details about the upcoming initiatives.

Integration Vs. Radicalisation: Youth Card Preventing Violent Extremism Among Young People

In this session, participants were invited to engage in one of the following working groups:

1. *Identifying the potential contribution of youth cards in supporting youth policy on countering violent extremism and youth radicalisation* – facilitated by Mrs Gazela Pudar Drasko (EYCA)
2. *How to build strong, diverse communities of young cardholders and link activities with countering violent extremism* – facilitated by Mrs Gizem Kiliñç (UNOY)

3. *Skills, competences & attitudes developed through youth mobility and the relation to countering violent extremism & youth radicalisation* – facilitated by Alen Maletic (Life-Long Learning Platform)

Each group discussed the main challenges and needs around their thematic focus and the way, how the European Youth Card could contribute to promote peaceful communities. One of the overall conclusions was the need to strengthen cooperation between different actors. Therefore the aim was to identify practical proposals for future consideration and work of EYCA, its member organisations and the Council of Europe but also for other stakeholders in the youth field, such as the organisations attending the seminar.

At the end of the working groups, the facilitators came together with the organising team, shared the main outcomes and worked together on a presentation for the day after. Volunteers were identified within each group to share the key messages in plenary.

Tuesday, 31st January 2017

Presentation of the Key Messages of the Working Groups and Plenary Discussion

The session started with an overall sum-up of needs and challenges discussed in the working groups, shared by the facilitator. The main issues mentioned were:

- The need for a common understanding and definition of the problem, of concepts (such as disadvantaged, vulnerability) and of priority target groups;
- The limitations faced by an existing “short-termism” approach (the turnover of decision-makers and staff in some contexts limit sustainable interventions);
- The “dehumanisation” of young people, labelling them without taking into consideration a complex and wide spectrum of backgrounds and related needs;
- The challenge of simplification, of understanding violent extremism and radicalisation as only reported in the media, without considering the importance of working also on right-wing extremism. To develop an understanding that radicalisation can happen in our closer circles and contexts as well;
- The need to foster cross-cooperation between different actors in the youth field and focus on prevention;
- The challenge of “hard-to-reach” young people and the need to see it also from the perspective of “hard-to-reach” services.

1. Identifying the potential contribution of youth cards in supporting youth policy on countering violent extremism and youth radicalisation

Key Messages presented by Mr William Carter (The Student View + Stand Now UK)

- 1.1 The Youth Card should strengthen its role as a tool to raise young people’s **awareness** of inclusive **values**, (history-based) **knowledge** and **information** on the services offered.

- 1.2 The Youth Card should invoke a **sense of belonging** to young people to their own immediate **community** but also to **Europe** as a community with all its diversities.
- 1.3 The Youth Card should be a tool for the **social recognition of young people**, an incentive for and a symbol of their contribution to their communities. The card should reward positive actions such as volunteering, thus recognising the young person's work and rewarding them on a symbolic level (a special volunteer's card they can take pride in) but also through free or discounted services
- 1.4 The Youth Card should be a **tool for dialogue** among young people themselves, but also between young people and other stakeholders. Young people should be engaged through the card to take part in discussions and youth policy developments.
- 1.5 EYCA should develop a service of **Youth Card advisor**, where competent youth workers would be available to young cardholders to offer information and guidance related to their needs - as a first and trusted contact/resource person.

2. How to build strong, diverse communities of young cardholders and link activities with countering violent extremism

Key Messages presented by Nassim Djaba (MOBIN)

2.1 Partnerships

EYCA and its members have established partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, local governments and institutions like the Council of Europe and the EU. There is a need to exchange experience, coordinate efforts and to work together. We propose to establish an **EYCA Prize**. It will offer a platform to promote cultural initiatives across Europe that contribute to peaceful societies. The jury will be composed of business, NGOs and local government entities. The first edition will have 3 categories: **gender & equality, active citizenship and critical thinking**

2.2 Cultural bonding / double-date

EYCA will release a call for participants to a **cultural event** to e.g. a museum, festival, concert, etc. **Participants** will come **from diverse backgrounds** (geographical, cultural, occupational, religious) and will have never met before. They will take part in a fun cultural activity and will get to meet new people they might otherwise not have met.

2.3 European Youth Card as an identity card

The European Youth Card is a de facto **identity tool**, regardless of your citizenship status. It proves identity and creates a sense of belonging. Yet it still gives you access to services and opportunities.

3. Skills, competences & attitudes developed through youth mobility and the relation to countering violent extremism & youth radicalisation

Key Messages presented by Beata Simurdova (Ministry of Education, Research and Sport – Slovakia)

- 3.1** The Youth Card should continue to focus on developing **tailor-made services**, going **beyond discounts** in order to **boost its social role** and contribution.
- 3.2** Expand on current practices in EYCA and provide the youth card to all young refugees upon arrival in **reception centres**.
- 3.3** Continue to promote youth volunteering through the youth card and increase the card's role in recognising and rewarding **volunteer work**.
- 3.4** Encouraging EYCA members to identify partners on the local and national level to give cardholders access to **living libraries** in order to promote multiperspectivity and experiential learning as a way to gain a better understanding of their communities and the world.
- 3.5** Focus on providing cardholders access to new educational events, such as TED Talks and other **conferences and events** that can empower and inspire young people.
- 3.6** EYCA should **exchange practices** and initiatives with similar organisations in **other parts of the world**.

The floor was open for clarifications and remarks after the presentation of the key messages. In general, the feedback was very positive and participants felt identified with the proposals. There were some comments that underlined the importance of cooperation between different actors, as the proposals tackled also different fields of intervention.

There were a couple of remarks expressing concern towards the proposal of the youth card as an identity card. To move forward with this proposal, there would be the need to have a common understanding of what we mean by "identity card" and to explore the legal implications in the different countries.

Mr Manel Sánchez, director of EYCA, took the opportunity to share what was already done related with some of the proposals and clarified the feasibility to implement the ideas proposed. In addition, he also mentioned that the upcoming general assembly of EYCA (February 2017), is an important moment to discuss these proposals with the member organisations.

The quality of the proposals was acknowledged, especially taking into consideration the length of the seminar and of the working groups.

To close the session the facilitator invited participants to share any possible follow-up from the participants' side that they would like to share, including upcoming events in the 2017 agenda. Below you find what has been shared:

- Call for participants from UNOY "Training for Advocates" – April 2017
<http://unoy.org/call-for-participants/>
- Child and Youth Welfare festival: 23 – 27 March 2017, Dusseldorf (Germany)

Closing Session

Mr Victoras Kountouris from the Youth Board of Cyprus, Mr. Markus Wolf from CDEJ – Council of Europe and Mr Jarkko Lehtikoinen, president of the European Youth Card Association (EYCA), took the floor to briefly share some closing remarks.

The work developed by EYCA in the preparation of the seminar, the warm hosting of the Youth Board of Cyprus and the active participation of the group were acknowledged. There was a commitment expressed by the representatives of EYCA and the Council of Europe to follow-up on the outcomes of the seminar.

The seminar was closed by Mr Manel Sanchez that expressed his satisfaction regarding the outcomes of the seminar and thanked the hosting organisation, partners and participants for their contribution to a successful seminar.

Media coverage

With eleven articles published about the seminar in Greek media, the seminar received a large press coverage.

List of participants

Name	Organisation/Institution
Jarkko Lehtikoinen	European Youth Card Association
Manel Sanchez	European Youth Card Association
Gazela Pudar	European Youth Card Association
Josep Moline	Agencia Catalana de la Juventud
Duarte Bravo	MOVIJOVEM
Beata Simurdova	Ministry of Education, Research, Sport - Slovakia
Sona Grigoryan	Ministry of Sport and Youth – Armenia
Remo Massari	Ministry of Education - San Marino
Nassim Djaba	MOBIN - Slovenia
Pedro Folgado	IPDJ - Portugal
Victoria Lovelock	CCIVS - France
Nelli Gishyan	Follow Up Group No Hate Speech Campaign
Liliya Elenkova	NYCA - Bulgaria
Nagla Abed	Anna Lindth Foundation
Peter Debeljak	Youth Office of the Republic of Slovenia
Petra Klein	Open doors youth initiative - Germany
Jakub Niewisnki	Center for Civic Education in Warsaw
Alen Maletic	Lifelong Learning Platform - Belgium
William Carter	The Student view + Stand now UK
Emiliano Aliu	Roma Versitas Albania
Maurice Devlin	Centre for Youth Research and Development - Ireland

Eka Baramidze	Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia
Francesc Poch Ros	Agencia Catalana de la Juventud
Maria Angeles Riveiro	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport - Spain
Panos Christoforou	Cyprus Youth Diplomacy
Athanasia Konstantinou	Cyprus Youth Diplomacy
Zinonas Sokratous	Cyprus Youth Diplomacy
Elena Kalli	EURODESK Cyprus
Florian Cescon	Council of Europe
Markus Wolf	Chairman of CDEJ
Christoph Heise	Assistant
Jorge Orlando Queiros	Member of CDEJ
Gizem Kilinc	Member of Advisory Council on Youth / UNOY Peacebuilders
Jacques Spelkens	CSR Europe
Sébastien Abdullah	University of Amsterdam
Andreia Henriques	Facilitator