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Strasbourg, 9 May 2023

Consultative Meeting

Education about digital citizenship in youth programmes

A consultative meeting about integrating and addressing digital citizenship in the Youth for Democracy programme of the Council of Europe, particularly in respect to non-formal education, youth work, human rights education and youth participation

European Youth Centre
Budapest, 21-22 June 2023

CONCEPT NOTE

Deadline for registration: 21 May 2023

1. Rationale

In a world that becomes increasingly digitalised, the exercise and fulfilment of one's own human rights become more dependent on one's own capacities to access, utilise digital resources and critically engage with digital technologies and environments. While digital environments provide people with additional opportunities of engagement and development, they also pose significant challenges to the realisation of human rights and to the development of participatory democracy. These trends were further accelerated by technological developments and deployments, particularly Artificial Intelligence related, and the restrictions imposed by the management of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Citizenship and human rights education aims to empower learners to exercise and defend their human rights to contribute to building a culture of democracy and human rights. Fundamental to achieving this goal is the capacity of people to participate in society, including to participate in decision making. This capacity to participate must extend to aspects of digital transformation and requires the recognition and assurance of the rights, the structures and spaces for participation, and the relevant support including literacy.

Young people are particularly affected, both positively and negatively, by digitalisation of virtually all aspects of our societies. Developing their competencies to both engage critically and autonomously in the digital era, and to take part in decision-making about such developments, are necessary components of supporting young people to be fully autonomous and active citizens.

The Council of Europe recommendation [CM Rec \(2019\)10 on developing and promoting digital citizenship education](#) provides a framework for development of digital citizenship competences for all forms of education (formal, non-formal and informal) with a view to secure that people can fully exercise their rights and responsibilities, as well as take part in democratic life in an increasingly digitalised world.

Defining digital citizenship as “the capacity to participate actively, continuously and responsibly in communities (local, national, global, online and offline) at all levels (political, economic, social, cultural and intercultural), the recommendation identifies 10 domains of competence, relating with being online, well-being online and rights online to be addressed through democracy and human rights education.

More recently, the Council of Europe has embarked on developing a Convention on artificial intelligence, human rights, and democracy to identify and standardise principles on which we govern the development, the deployment and use of Artificial Intelligence in our societies¹.

The Youth Department has worked significantly in the past 10 years on questions pertaining digitalisation, human rights, democracy, and young people. The [No Hate Speech Movement Youth Campaign](#) brought the question of hate speech online and its impact on young people. Numerous tools and initiatives were developed through the campaign, including Bookmarks – A Manual for Combatting Hate Speech Online through Human Right Education. The campaign also brought to the attention the question of youth participation in decision making concerning the Internet, particularly in connection with the Internet Governance Forum and other similar fora.

Artificial intelligence was also tackled through a series of seminars and training courses, with aimed to further equip young people, youth workers and trainers with the relevant

¹ To read more about the work of the Committee on Artificial Intelligence and the foreseen convention, please check here: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/artificial-intelligence/cai>

competences in respect to understanding and using artificial intelligence, and meaningfully participating in public debates about it.²

The question of digitalisation was also picked up in the campaign [Democracy Here | Democracy Now](#), including the flagship activity of the campaign in 2022, the Youth Action Week. The [Call for Action](#) that resulted from the activity invites stakeholders to secure “Accessibility and free access to Internet and technology”, as well as formal and non-formal digital citizenship opportunities.

Digital technologies have also been significantly used in the education and training work of the Youth Department, with a focus on hybrid learning that attempted to secure the principles and educational approaches underpinning human rights education and non-formal learning.

Further developing education for citizenship and human rights in the digital era involves engagement with digital technologies and stakeholders associated with it, from companies to governments and international organisations, and requires a reflection not only on the content of learning, but also the process of learning and the underpinning educational approaches and human rights standards.

Given the complexity of the issues, the Council of Europe Youth Department organises a consultative meeting bringing together experts and stakeholders of the youth sector to reflect how to integrate digital citizenship in the Youth for Democracy programme in the period 2024-2027, particularly in respect to non-formal education, youth work, human rights education and youth participation.

2. About the consultative meeting

The consultative meeting will bring together experts and practitioners in digital citizenship matters, including youth work and human rights education practitioners, with a view to:

- develop a common understanding of key concepts and definitions underpinning digital citizenship and digital citizenship education
- share and learn from practices and research on digital citizenship and digital citizenship education
- review the competences that young people need in order to fulfil their human rights and participate in democratic life in the digital environment
- make proposals to consistently integrate and address digital citizenship in the Youth for Democracy programme in the period 2024-2027, particularly in respect to non-formal education and youth work, human rights education and youth participation (including participation in decision making concerning Artificial Intelligence and Internet Governance).

3. Participants

The consultative meeting will bring together some 15 experts and practitioners, representing a wide range of stakeholders involved in digital citizenship and human rights education with the Council of Europe and its partners, including:

- youth organisations and civil society actors implementing programmes, research in the field of digital citizenship education and connected fields
- representatives of the statutory bodies of the Youth Department
- other Council of Europe sectors involved in digital citizenship education, notably formal education and children’s rights

² To read more about the work of the Youth Department on Artificial Intelligence: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/artificial-intelligence>

- trainers, youth workers and educators active with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe.

All interested candidates must apply on youthapplications.coe.int by 21 May 2023.

4. Practical and Financial Information

The meeting will be held at the European Youth Centre Budapest. Board and lodging will be provided and paid for by the Council of Europe at the European Youth Centre.

The European Youth Centres are accessible to people with disabilities and can take measures to accommodate for any specific needs of participants in this respect. Please provide all the necessary information in your registration form.

The working language of the programme will be English.

Travel expenses and visa fees will be reimbursed according to the rules of the Council of Europe.

HOW TO APPLY

Everyone intending to take part in the Consultative Meeting is kindly invited to fill in the online pre-registration/Application form available at <https://youthapplications.coe.int/>

The Council of Europe secretariat may pre-select and prioritise participants in view of complying with the available financial resources, securing diversity and representation of various stakeholders and areas of expertise as well as geographical representativity of the whole group.

The Council of Europe welcomes applications from all candidates who fulfil the specific profile of the activities, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, colour, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

Deadline for pre-registration: **21 May 2023**, 23:59 CET

Appendix 1

Draft programme

Tuesday, 20 June 2023

Arrivals of participants at the European Youth Centre Budapest

Wednesday, 21 June 2023

9:30 Opening of the meeting

Introduction to the work of the Youth Department and of the Council of Europe in the field of digital citizenship education, the scope and function of the consultative meeting

Sharing expectations for the consultative meeting

11:00 Break

11:30 Dimensions of digital citizenship

13:00 Lunch

14:30 Practices and approaches concerning digital citizenship education with and for young people

16:00 Break

16:30 Exploring dilemmas in respect to digital citizenship education

18:00 Conclusions and closure of the day

19:00 Dinner

Thursday, 22 June 2023

9:30 Identifying youth competencies in respect to digital citizenship

11:00 Break

11:30 Identifying youth competencies in respect to digital citizenship

13:00 Lunch

14:30 proposals for the work of the Council of Europe

16:00 Break

16:30 Proposals for the work of the Council of Europe

18:00 Conclusions and closure of the meeting

Self-organised dinner

Friday, 23 June 2023

Departure of participants