



OUR RIGHTS OUR LIVES!

Report
Enter! Youth Week
Strasbourg, 7-11 July 2019

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Report compiled and edited by Florence Murlon, Rapporteur



Preface

In July 2019 over 300 young people took over the Council of Europe for the *Enter!* Youth Week. The motives were the review of the recommendation on access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights, the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe and the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

I had the privilege of taking part in some of the activities held that week and felt the creativity, the vitality and the hope that young people brought with them. They also brought a healthily critical reflection on the exceptionality of the week as a form of participation and consultation of young people in institutional processes.

A lively, large and deeply intercultural youth event is virtually impossible to document. It is more important to experience it, to live it, to feel it and to tell it. And it is important to remember it too! Remembering not for the sake of nourishing nostalgia and souvenirs. Remembering in order to recall the findings, the expectations, the conclusions and the recommendations

made by those young people and youth workers about the persistence of violations and abuse of social and human rights of young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The *Enter!* recommendation, adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2015, calls for national policies to prevent and eradicate the poverty, discrimination, violence and exclusion faced by young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The recommendation has had a significant positive impact in the lives of many young people, especially through youth work projects and programmes set up by youth organisations and local authorities. But, as the participants of the Youth Week state, the life realities of young people are still determined by multiple discrimination, disenfranchisement and marginalisation.

In 2019 the Joint Council on Youth reviewed the implementation of the recommendation and concluded that it created a shared understanding of the importance of social rights for young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, especially their access to services. However, any consistent approach or attention to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods have been missing in many projects and places. What has been done is significant, but clearly insufficient. The 2030 Youth strategy of the Council of Europe takes this into account by prioritising the strengthening of young people's access to rights.

The events of the Youth Week that are documented in this report would not be possible in 2020 due to the Covid-19 crisis. The participants warned us that *quality health care remains inaccessible due to high costs and insufficient youth-friendly provision in many neighbourhoods*. This is just one of the aspects that is aggravated by the crisis which, inevitably, will impact further on the social rights of many young people in

many disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The principles and measures of the *Enter!* recommendation remain therefore of major relevance in ensuring that young people will not pay the price of yet another crisis and that they remain at the centre of shaping a better future for our rights, our lives and our planet.

Snežana Samardžić-Marković

Director General of Democracy, Council of Europe

April 2020



Introduction

This report, which does not claim to be comprehensive, offers a record of statements and discussions in the plenary sessions, the main results of the working groups, and visits to associations and community centres in Strasbourg. It also includes excerpts from interviews with young people and youth workers describing local initiatives in various fields connected with young people's social rights that might interest or even inspire readers.

We like to express our gratitude to everybody who has helped provide material for this report: the young participants, the youth workers, the facilitators, the workshop rapporteurs, the members of the Council of Europe team and the representatives of partner institutions.



Executive summary

From 7 to 11 July 2019 the *Enter!* Youth Week brought together some 320 participants in Strasbourg – young people, youth workers and institutional representatives – from 43 Council of Europe countries as well as Canada, Kazakhstan, Morocco and Tunisia.

The meeting was part of the *Enter!* project – started in 2009 by the Council of Europe's Youth Department – and, more specifically, part of the review of the *Enter!* Recommendation. This recommendation was adopted in 2015 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe as a response to the fact that young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods were more vulnerable than other people to all kinds of problems, risks and discrimination.

The Youth Week's main objectives were to:

- ▶ Look at how member states were implementing the *Enter!* Recommendation in order to contribute to the recommendation review process;
- ▶ Collect proposals and conclusions on how to improve young people's access to social rights;
- ▶ Celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe by involving young people.

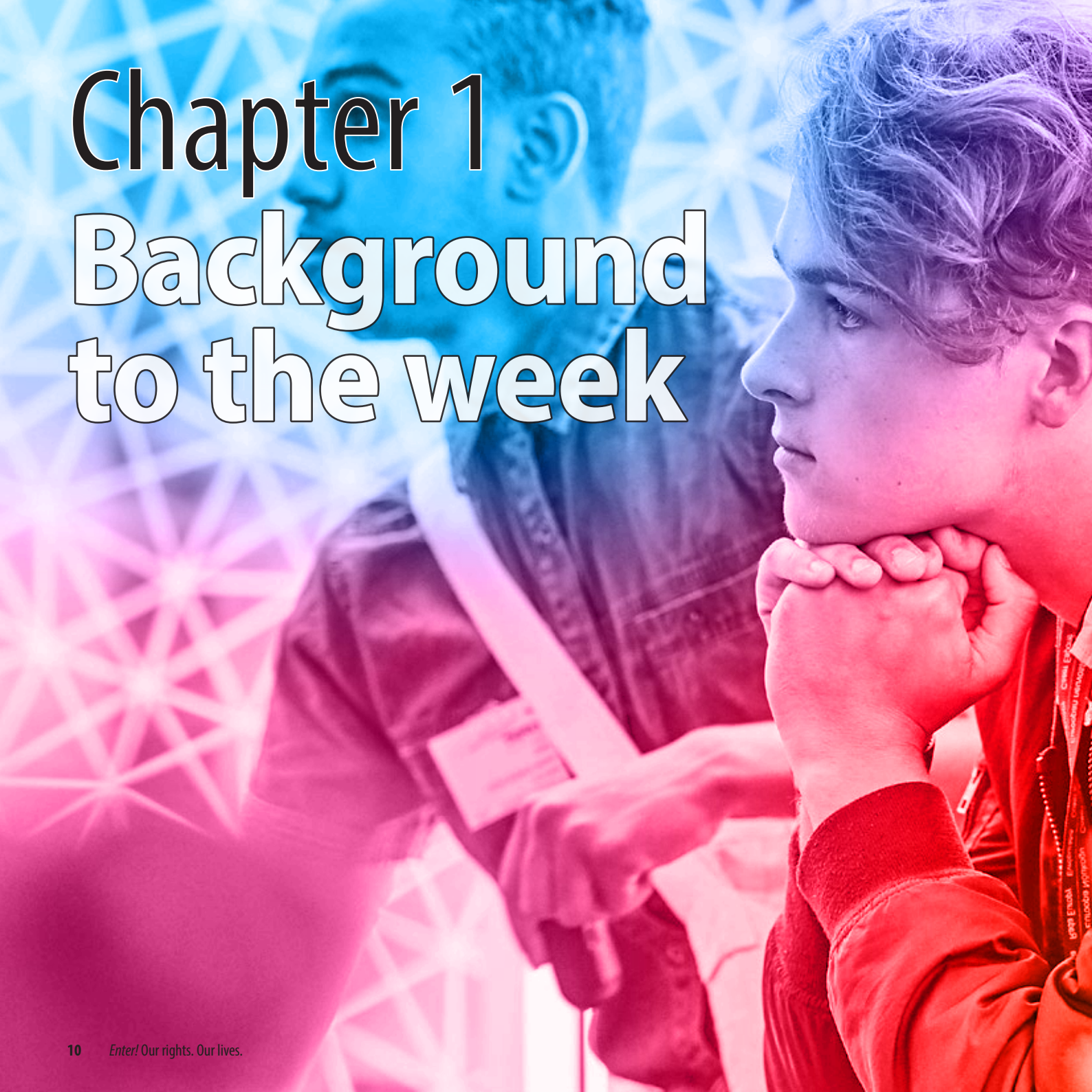
In addition to the plenary and working-group sessions, the programme included visits to associations and community centres in Strasbourg, workshops on a variety of social issues, informal discussions and evening events.

The issues addressed in the course of the meeting covered education and training, employment, health, housing, information and counselling, sport, leisure and culture, non-discrimination, the role of youth

work and non-formal education, equality between young women and young men, youth participation, combating segregation and isolation, and influencing youth policies.

The *Enter!* Youth Week ended with a message from the young people to Council of Europe member states to pave the way for mainstreaming the social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods (see page 60).





Chapter 1

Background to the week

The *Enter!* meeting that took place in Strasbourg from 7 to 11 July 2019 brought together some 320 participants – young people, youth workers and institutional representatives – to exchange views, celebrate, and review implementation of the *Enter!* Recommendation.

1. The *Enter!* Recommendation behind the meeting

The *Enter!* Recommendation¹ was adopted in 2015 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe as a response to the fact that young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods were more vulnerable to all kinds of discrimination, problems and risks.

The recommendation is directed primarily at national governments. However, since it concerns the situation of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, the emphasis is mostly on local policies. The recommendation was drawn up on the basis of proposals from young people and youth workers involved in the *Enter!* project.

The *Enter!* Recommendation puts forward policy measures in various fields of youth, education and social policy. Primarily it calls upon governments of member states to seek to prevent and eradicate the poverty, discrimination, violence and exclusion faced by many young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods by taking steps, amongst other things, to:

- ▶ Improve the living conditions of young people, for example by investing in education, training, career guidance, social housing and free health programmes;
- ▶ Make vocational training and good-quality second-chance education opportunities more

available and attractive. Young parents (especially young mothers) should be encouraged to continue or return to education or find employment;

- ▶ Improve young people's access to affordable housing by actively considering the special housing needs of the most vulnerable groups;
- ▶ Acknowledge that all young people should have equal access to public facilities such as post offices, playing fields and community centres;
- ▶ Adopt inclusive gender-sensitive and learner-centred curricula to make it easier for young people to access youth-friendly education;
- ▶ Actively support initiatives of young people and their organisations that help to promote social inclusion and address stigmatisation and prejudice;
- ▶ Encourage the competent authorities to value the role of non-formal education, of youth workers and of youth organisations. Youth work professionals and organisations that provide non-formal learning opportunities should be supported;
- ▶ Improve public access to information technology and youth-friendly information and counselling services.

¹ Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights. The full text of the recommendation is available in ten languages on the youth portal of the Council of Europe: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/adopted-texts>. The recommendation is fully explained in the handbook Taking It Seriously, which can be downloaded at www.coe.int/Enter!

The *Enter!* Recommendation emphasises the need for dialogue between the various authorities responsible at local, regional and national levels. Local authorities and youth workers are usually closer to communities and have a better understanding of the specific needs of the young people living there.

The recommendation also recognises that many young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods want to make an active contribution to improving their own situations and those of their communities.



2. *Enter!* Youth Week objectives and programme

2.1 *Enter!* Youth Week objectives

The *Enter!* meeting had the following objectives:

- ▶ To contribute to the *Enter!* Recommendation implementation review with inputs from young people and youth workers based on their actual lives and their expectations regarding access to social rights;
- ▶ To discuss and highlight the role of youth work and local youth policies in promoting young people's access to their social rights;
- ▶ To celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe, highlighting young people's commitment and contributions to human rights and democracy as this relates to the priorities of the French Presidency of the Council of Europe;
- ▶ To develop proposals for short- and long-term action by the Council of Europe and national and local authorities to advance young people's access to social rights;
- ▶ To provide an intercultural learning experience based on creativity and interaction with young people in the city of Strasbourg.

2.2 The thinking behind the programme


The *Enter!* Youth Week aimed to put young people at the heart of the event. At the same time, as the week was organised within an institutional framework, notably that of the Council of Europe and the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers,

the prominence of such institutions was also a key to its success.

The dialogue between young people and institutional representatives had to be structured to facilitate two-way communication. It was necessary to provide simultaneous French/English interpretation and bear in mind that some young people dislike public speaking and may not be perfectly at ease in either of the Council of Europe's official languages. The ceremonial and solemn setting of the Assembly chamber in the Palais de l'Europe was also a potential factor weighing on interpersonal communication, non-verbal language and the spontaneity of reactions. The team organising the event sought to work within these constraints and overcome the challenges by following guidelines drawn from years of experience of holding meetings at the European Youth Centre and particularly from the *Enter!* Youth Meetings that took place in 2011 and 2015.

Putting young people in the spotlight

The week began with the young people taking the floor before the institutional representatives. This ensured that the young participants were given centre stage and that the "grown-ups" listened before it was their turn to be listened to. It was therefore clear from the outset that the young people's participation was valued. Care was also taken to ensure that each statement during the plenary sessions was followed by an opportunity for young people to share their stories, reactions and questions for the experts or contributors. The plenary sessions were moderated by young people too – including members of the Advisory Council on Youth, and other young participants took the floor to present the proposals and findings of the working groups. Daily video clips played each morning accentuated the programme's focus on young people by turning the spotlight on those who had not spoken up during the plenary



sessions. The *Enter!* Youth Week ended in an atmosphere of “creative confusion”. When the President of the Committee of Ministers made his final statement, the young people staged a silent demonstration as they believed that the honour of closing out the week should have fallen to them.

Making the Youth Week a life experience

Although the objectives of the Youth Week were set in line with the Council of Europe’s agenda (French Presidency, 70th anniversary celebrations, *Enter!* Recommendation), it was vital to recognise that, for participants and organisers alike, the sessions held in an institutional setting were not the only highlights of the week. Special effort went into preparing other aspects of the event which included a Pétanque tournament on the opening night to welcome the new arrivals, work in small formal and informal groups and social or cultural activities held in the evenings. It was important to ensure that feedback on the Youth Week’s success was not based solely on the appreciation of the plenary sessions at the Palais de l’Europe. Youth workers and national group coordinators both made considerable efforts (often behind the scenes) to ensure that none of the participants disengaged with the programme or the group. The variety of methods and approaches were designed to allow the young people to choose how to best express themselves according to their skills and desires – be that through dance, music, poetry, writing or public speaking.

In any intercultural encounter, the greatest potential for profound and life-changing intercultural learning lies in personal experience, social experience and interpersonal experience. While young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods might feel amazed and captivated by this opportunity make their voices heard in the Palais de l’Europe, it was important to stress the importance of all civic engagement and

participation – be it during the meeting of a working group, a visit to a youth organisation or evening social activities.

Taking young people’s opinions seriously

The most important direct outcome of the Youth Week was the feedback and impressions of young people and youth workers on the degree of implementation of the *Enter!* Recommendation in the social and political context of their countries. To achieve this, it was important to give the young people time to learn about the text of the Recommendation, form an opinion and discuss it before issuing a final judgment. The first item on the programme was therefore about sharing testimonies (Our Lives) before examining these experiences in the light of the ethical and regulatory framework of the *Enter!* Recommendation (Our Rights). The exchange was also fostered by more informal activities organised at the European Youth Centre and conversations held during journeys to other venues.

In this way, young people’s feedback on the Recommendation was gathered and given prominence.

Young people’s involvement in the drafting of the conclusions and the Message from the *Enter!* Youth Week steadily grew, and the final plenary session was a unique moment as the young participants took hold of both the agenda and the floor.

In keeping with “tradition” and good practice in human rights education, it was crucial to be able to draw a parallel between the realities of young people’s lives – often marked by discrimination and barriers to their access to social rights – and member states’ commitments to human rights through the framework of the Council of Europe.


Highlighting engagement at local level

The *Enter!* Recommendation noted that young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods “[are] motivated to contribute to the improvement of their own situations and those of their communities”.

This might seem obvious in that it applies to most young people, but it above all underlines the vital role local authorities and local communities play in improving access to social rights. The *Enter!* Youth Week brought together young people from all over Europe involved in and concerned about issues regarding access to social rights. These are primarily local issues and the best solutions to ensure access to public transport, health services, leisure activities or education often come from grassroots level.

In addition to highlighting the experiences of participants, it was important to situate the Youth Week within the social fabric of the city of Strasbourg, which is also home to a number of young people involved in projects aiming to improve access to social rights. Situating the Youth Week in the local community was vital to ensure that the event did not just take place in Strasbourg’s “European district”, at the heart of the European institutions, but rather foster the participation of Strasbourg’s young people in all their social and cultural diversity. Partnerships with local youth organisations and youth centres were set up to enable young people from the city to participate in the Youth Week programme. This also provided participants with the opportunity to visit other neighbourhoods in Strasbourg to attend special workshops. The workshops were about issues addressed in the Recommendation including participation, violence prevention and health and healthy lifestyles. Young performers from Strasbourg provided evening entertainment at the farewell party that rounded off the week.





Last but not least, the participants helped spray-paint 70 stencils onto the streets leading from the European Youth Centre to the Palais de l'Europe. Under the slogan “Nos droits, Notre vie” (*Our rights, our life*), these 70 pavement markings (in reference to the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe) were designed to remind passers-by of the Council of Europe’s role in defending human rights in everyday life.

3. Participants’ expectations

Prior to *Enter!* Youth Week, the participants had voiced a number of expectations, the main ones being as follows:

Networking

The young people emphasised how important it was for them to form friendships, present their networks and enter into partnerships with other youth organisations during this Youth Week. They also wanted to exchange ideas, learn from others, gain an understanding of other situations in Europe, in particular, and compare notes as well as trying out teamwork.

New knowledge and experiences

Through this week the participants wished to develop new work skills and gain more experience, particularly in the fields of social rights and discrimination (since there were not sufficient resources to develop such skills in some countries). Some said that they wanted to expand their professional networks in the sector of youth work. Others were hoping to have ideas for specific projects by the time they left Strasbourg.

Some participants wanted to learn how to deal with red tape and be more effective.

Improving language skills was also mentioned, as well as career support and information.

Some motives were more specific: gaining knowledge about international law and acquiring legal skills, increasing co-operation between young people through formal and non-formal education, and learning how to develop research skills.

Experiential learning

Some young people expressed a desire to learn more about the subjects tackled in the programme and also about the Council of Europe and how it could promote the *Enter!* Recommendation. Certain participants wanted to organise a youth week in their own countries.

Problem-solving

Some participants noted the opportunity to see real change in their own countries and in Europe and their determination to pursue their goals, find new ideas to put into practice and produce answers in the field of social rights.

Last but not least, other expectations included discovering a new culture, learning more about one’s rights and supporting access to rights, having a say and having an impact.

4. Opening of the meeting: differing points of view from young people, youth organisations and other institutions

The opening ceremony hosted participants and speakers in the chamber of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

The week's three main objectives were introduced:

- ▶ To look at how member states were implementing the Enter! Recommendation in order to contribute to the recommendation review process;
- ▶ To celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe by involving young people;
- ▶ To collect proposals and conclusions on how to improve young people's access to social rights.

The week would close with a message from the participants to the Council of Europe. An initial draft would be proposed on the Tuesday. The participants would then be invited to suggest what they thought was important, including on a message wall and through a suggestion box. The event's preparatory group would be responsible for drafting the message incorporating the various proposals. The message would be finalised on the Thursday morning to be presented in the afternoon at the plenary session. It could then be taken back by the participants, once they had returned home, to the young people with whom they were working, to local authorities, etc.

The team from Coyote Magazine, which was celebrating its 20th anniversary, then introduced themselves: the magazine sprang from a partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Union. The team was preparing a special edition on the Youth Week and invited participants to comment in a suggestion box. The audience was reminded that all issues of the magazine were available online.

4.1 Personal testimonies from young participants in Enter! Youth Week



Alex Thomas and Amber Thomas - TR14ers Community Dance Charity, United Kingdom

TR14ers was set up in 2005 in Camborne (United Kingdom) by the local police in order to protect children and young people from violence and exclusion. The organisation offered free dance sessions for children and young people every week. Children from the age of 10 could become dance leaders and teach their own dance routines to other children. At 16 the young people were able to sit on the Board of Trustees and in this way play a part in managing the organisation.

This project enabled young people to become fitter, build new relationships and teach dance to their peers. It also gave them the confidence to take on responsibilities, lead, influence decisions and, consequently, be in better emotional health.

To illustrate what they were saying, Alex Thomas and Amber Thomas suggested that the whole audience and all the speakers should take part in a simple inclusive dance directly from their seats.



Adil Touile and Zaid Naimi - Molenbeek Vivre Ensemble (MOVE), Belgium

The MOVE project consisted in changing the way people saw Molenbeek by organising youth activities in community centres and other public spaces – especially parks – in the municipality. The young people in MOVE therefore offered recreational and sports activities “to stop young people from being outside with nothing to do” and to prevent juvenile delinquency. They also organised multicultural meals on the town square which were open to everyone.



Carmen Daniela Chesnoiu and Adrian Ionut Florea - Asociația pentru Promovarea Egalității între Tineri (ADAPTO), Romania

ADAPTO ran five types of activity in the city of Constanța: accessibility awareness campaigns; school presentations on interaction with people with disabilities; an accessibility committee bringing together city council representatives and people with disabilities; a treasure hunt – MobiQuest – designed to draw public attention to wheelchair mobility issues; and translation of the *Enter!* Recommendation into Romanian.

4.2 Institutional statements



Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni - Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni began her statement by making the point that the European Social Charter spelt out our social rights, which were – like all human rights – universal, indivisible and interdependent. She referred to the right to decent housing, high-quality education, proper health care, social security, employment and protection against poverty, especially for children and young people. The Deputy Secretary General observed that these rights were basic necessities for leading a decent life with dignity and opportunity. She added that the European Social Charter provided for a collective complaints procedure.

« *Each young person should be able to envisage the future with confidence* »

Back in 2012, the Parliamentary Assembly considered some of the issues that were to be discussed during the *Enter!* Youth Week in its report *The Young Generation Sacrificed: Social, economic and political implications of the financial crisis*. In 2015 the Committee of Ministers adopted a clear recommendation stating that access to social rights was a prerequisite for the inclusion and active citizenship of all young people. The recommendation recognised that young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods were more vulnerable to all kinds of risks, including poor physical and mental health, substance abuse, self-harm, violence, discrimination and exclusion. This recommendation had come to be known as the *Enter!* Recommendation.

Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni said that the participants were here to consider the progress that had been made, to identify the barriers that remained and to share ideas about the right way forward, bearing in mind that the ways in which disadvantaged people lost access to their rights had changed as a result of part-time work, an unstable economy, algorithms and artificial intelligence. She also drew attention to the particular circumstances of young migrants and refugees. These were just some of the challenges that had emerged or increased in recent years and which hit the youngest people hardest. Yet many young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods were motivated to contribute to the improvement of their own situations and those of their communities.

Ms Battaini-Dragoni ended her statement by reiterating the meeting motto, “Our Lives, Our Rights”, and added that turning those words into the actual experience of disadvantaged young people was not only a challenge but also an obligation. She believed that every young person should be able to look to the future with confidence.



Nawel Rafik-Elmrini - Deputy Mayor of Strasbourg

Nawel Rafik-Elmrini observed that the Youth Week was taking place in an “intensely European” year – marked by the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe and an unprecedented youth turnout for the European elections last May – and during the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers.

Access to social rights for young people from all backgrounds was a European challenge and close to the heart of Strasbourg City Council. She specifically raised the issue of young people’s civic and citizen

engagement. Indeed, she believed that the historic youth turnout in the last European elections showed a desire to become involved, “to do rather than endure, to take action rather than allow others to decide in their place”. She added, “Enabling these young people to become involved and make themselves heard is our city’s number one priority.” This had taken the form of, amongst other things, the European Youth Event, which brought together over 10,000 young people every two years to work on Europe’s future. The Strasbourg City Council was also heavily invested in European Civic Service and European Voluntary Service. It had been engaged for a number of years in developing public-interest missions that were all springboards to employment, making it possible to gain experience and new skills.

Since the challenge of young people’s access to social rights could not be tackled without close co operation between institutions and civil society, over a dozen local partners, engaged in various fields of action, had been involved in this Youth Week.



Anja Olin Pape - Chair of the Joint Council on Youth

Anja Olin Pape began by explaining that the Joint Council on Youth brought together representatives of governments and youth associations and served to develop the Council of Europe’s youth work.

Her personal involvement had been actuated by the attack that she had witnessed in 2011 on the island of Utøya, in Norway, during a gathering of youth members of the Norwegian Labour Party. She felt that this was an attack on the foundations of a free and open society where young people had safe spaces and were able to organise, dream, work for a better society and become involved as active citizens. This event reminded us that battles were real; we had to decide how our societies ought to function and we needed to do it now. She underlined the role of young people and youth organisations in supporting a democracy. She explained that in youth organisations young people learnt the basics of effective democracy, for example through joint

« act rather than suffer, mobilise rather than let others decide for them »
« to allow youth to take part, to have their voice heard, is the number one priority of our city »

*« young people can learn to take part in the beginning of an effective democracy »
« I am convinced that the Council of Europe needs young people more than young people need the Council of Europe »*

decision-making with regard to budgets and through the election system, accountability and development of projects and activities.

Anja Olin Pape noted that the Council of Europe youth sector was unique in its co-management methods. It was, she believed, the most advanced democratic system in the world as far as an international organisation's large-scale work with young people and youth organisations was concerned. The strength of the youth sector was to be found in the way it involved young people in decision-making processes and drew on their expertise and knowledge. The challenge was to translate policy into practice. "No other sector of the Council of Europe can avail itself of thousands of citizens working to implement its recommendations and doing so with enthusiasm, engagement and commitment."

She added that the *Enter!* Recommendation review was vital and participants' voices and experience were a pointer in the right direction. "I am convinced that the Council of Europe needs young people more than young people need the Council of Europe."

She observed that the past three months had seen a stepping-up of discussions on the financial, democratic and diplomatic crisis in the Council of Europe.

Reconstruction would be a lengthy process, she believed, and mean involving Europe's citizens and particularly young people. The crisis was now over but was a reminder that rights could never be taken for granted. Lastly, she reached out to the audience in these words: "You are not the Council of Europe's future; you are the agents of change who give the organisation its legitimacy."

« you are not the future of the Council of Europe, you are the actor of change that brings legitimacy to this organisation »



Gabriel Attal - Minister of State reporting to the French Minister for Education and Youth

Gabriel Attal noted straight away that this event had a special resonance this year with the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe, whose Committee of Ministers France was chairing from 17 May to November 2019. France had set three priorities during this presidency: preserving and consolidating Council of Europe achievements in the field of human rights protection; promoting equality and a culture of living together; and ensuring that the Council of Europe adapted to the times to address the new challenges facing human rights and the rule of law. The Minister of State reiterated that the Council of Europe required member states to be rigorous in upholding democracy. He added that preserving forums for dialogue and co-operation was imperative in these isolationist times.

Young people – across borders – were taking action to draw attention to the climate issue and championing causes that had become generational.

Which was why they had their rightful place in multilateralism, and the Council of Europe was setting an example in this respect. The whole point of the *Enter!* Youth Week was, according to Gabriel Attal, to provide a platform and sounding board for jointly finding the answers for tomorrow today. This was a priority in Europe and in France. He explained that for almost two decades it had been customary in France to consult and include young people through the Youth Policy Committee and the National Council of Lycée Students when framing public policies, particularly on the climate issue.

The Minister of State was delighted that the European Union was focusing its 2019-2027 youth strategy on the principles of structured dialogue and information for young people. Young people's views were important because young people were the future. But, he noted with regret, saying that young people were the future often meant waiting before they were involved in decisions. He pointed out that young people were also, and above all, the present. They had to take on responsibilities and take part in national, European and global decision-making here and now. Young people should not have to wait before being able to take decisions.

France was implementing the principles of the *Enter!* Recommendation and undertaking to ensure social justice for all young people wherever they lived. Education and engagement were, Gabriel Attal believed, two key factors in making social justice a reality. France was providing human and material resources for education in priority neighbourhoods: splitting classes in two for the

« To say that young people are the future often implies, that we wait before bring them in on decision making »
« young people should not have to wait before being able to decide »

« *It is the fever of youth that maintains the world at normal temperature* »

early years; experimenting with integrated learning centres; providing education for citizenship; taking action to prevent early school leaving, etc. Engagement had also been recognised as fundamental to the empowerment and self-construction of young people but was still too much determined by background. The Minister of State believed in the voluntary community service and Universal National Service schemes as a way of enabling all young people to become aware of their social value.

It was also necessary to ensure that every aspect of the existing system was available to these young residents, who were often alienated from public services. Access to one's rights meant first and foremost access to information, the Minister of State pointed out, since in France one young person in five did not make use of his or her rights. Hence the importance of France's Youth Information Network and the prevention of discrimination so that all young people, wherever they lived, could enjoy the same opportunities for access to higher education, including the grandes écoles, as well as vocational training and employment. Pilot schemes, twinning and voluntary activities had been undertaken to this end since November 2018. Gabriel Attal stressed the key role of the voluntary sector in local cohesion and citizen empowerment.

Young people's views were essential for a balance in what was said and decided in the world, the Minister of State concluded, quoting Georges Bernanos: "The fever of youth is what keeps the rest of the world at a normal temperature."

4.3 Exchange with the audience

A participant from France

This participant explained that she was part of a network of 150 organisations – associations and businesses – in Guadeloupe. Surprisingly, everything mentioned in the *Enter!* Recommendation had already been put in place by these local stakeholders for over 15 years, even though local funding meant that they did not necessarily work as well as they ought to.

A student from Tunisia

This participant noted how young North Africans were strongly motivated to "be like young people in Europe" and aspired to democracy. Human rights were fundamental but, she acknowledged, very hard to put into practice. She asked the panel how the *Enter!* Recommendation might be implemented in non-European countries.

A migrant from Guinea living in France

A young man took the floor. He had left Guinea and crossed the Mediterranean to reach France. "All young people in Africa want to live like young people in Europe," he explained, namely "in democracy, liberty, equality and fraternity". He stressed the key role of the voluntary sector in receiving migrants.

A participant from France

The participant acknowledged the merit of speeches that advocated giving young people a voice and trying to involve them. Nevertheless, he said, "Young people don't want to be given a voice any longer. They want to be given power: the power to do things and express themselves freely in every area." He also

lamented a “degree of hypocrisy” when equality was talked about, particularly given the situation of people living in rural areas, where, he said, there was “a real difference in treatment”.

A participant from Poland

This participant found it regrettable that there was no youth work in Poland. He asked the panel how it would be possible to mainstream the recommendation.

A participant from Ukraine

This participant explained that many young people in Ukraine wanted to participate in decision-making about their future and that there were other young people who were unaware of their rights. He lamented the lack of access to political education. He asked the institutional representatives how more young people could be brought together and made to realise that they had certain rights and could change things for themselves. At present, in Ukraine, it was the adults who were making all the choices for young people.

4.4 Conclusions by institutional representatives

Anja Olin Pape replied that the Joint Council on Youth was trying hard to support the development of youth work. However, in the end it was up to member states to ensure that the recommendation was implemented, and it was the Joint Council’s job to hold them to account.

Nawel Rafik-Elmrini urged the audience not to neglect the local level when co-constructing public policy, particularly for the youth issue, which was cross-cutting. She encouraged the young people

to become involved in associations and existing schemes and to approach local authority representatives. She herself represented Strasbourg City Council in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, which was a Council of Europe body bringing together delegations from the cities and regions of the 47 member states. Since the delegations had been alerted to the *Enter!* Recommendation, she invited the participants to give local authorities feedback on their needs, their problems and the factors complicating implementation of the recommendation.

With regard to Tunisia, she mentioned the co-operation taking place between the municipalities of Strasbourg and Kairouan, with support from the Council of Europe. For the past five or six years, she explained, Arab Local Democracy Week, held in Kairouan in Tunisia, had been fostering dialogue between local authorities, citizens and associations on the theme of local democracy.

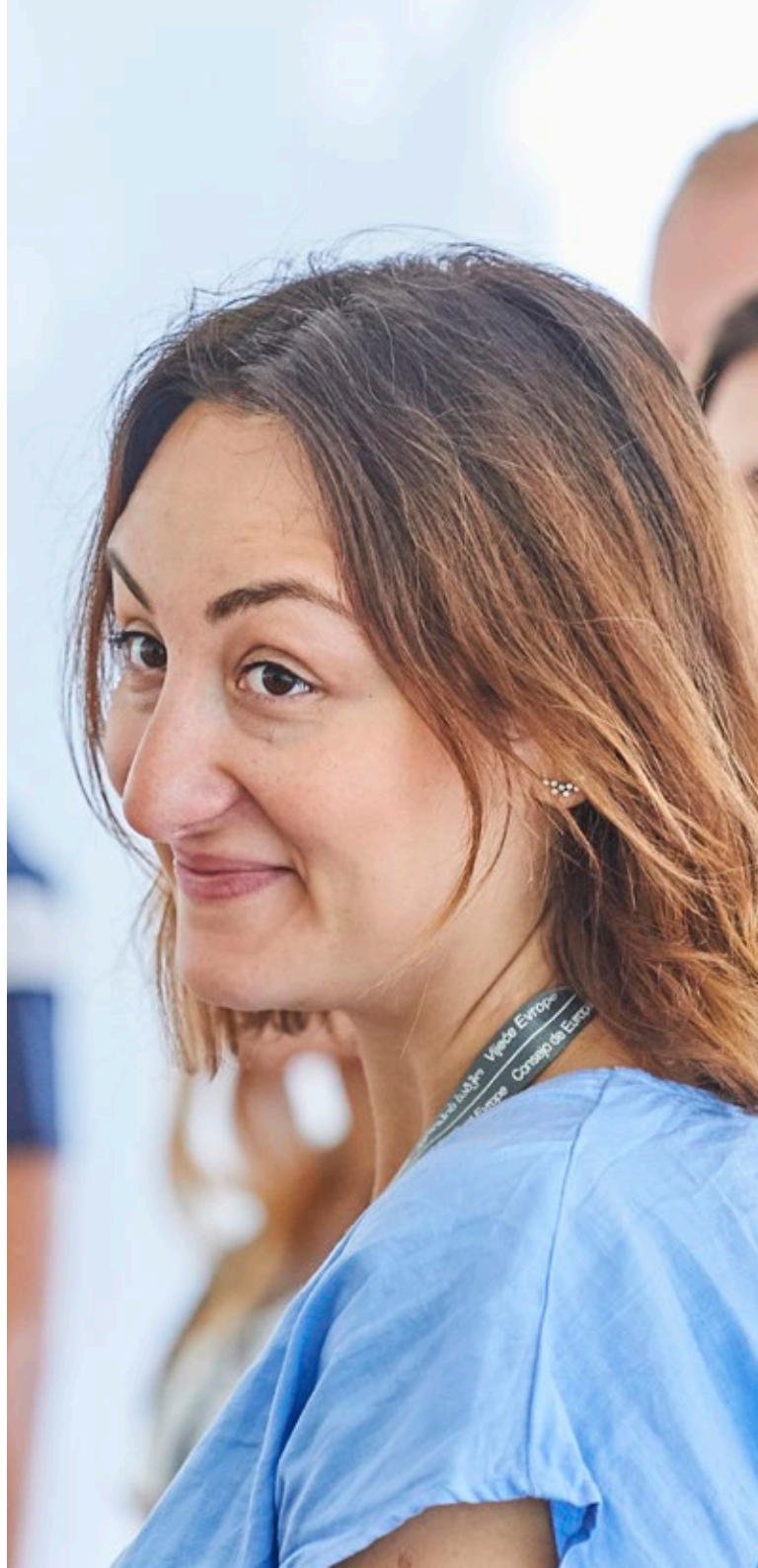
Gabriel Attal had a special message for young people from countries where the voice of civil society had less scope for expression: “Your battle is absolutely essential, not only for young people but also, quite simply, for democracy and fundamental freedoms in your countries.”

Gabriel Attal said that young people must indeed take control. He believed that they should get involved in associations and political parties, stand for election, sign up for voluntary community service, etc. He saw France’s unprecedented youth turnout for the European elections as a positive sign. His role was therefore to support their engagement by developing appropriate mechanisms.

« An extraordinary school of democracy and participation »

Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni said that the Council of Europe had opened the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg in 1972. She had arrived there in 1976 to work in the youth sector, finding it an “extraordinary school of democracy and participation”. She was glad that the co-management method had subsequently been kept. She added that a second centre had been opened in Budapest, noting that “we have two international schools for learning about participation and democratic citizenship”. They were forums for discussion, where new ideas emerged. She ended by describing her dream of seeing similar centres in every member state, where young people could meet, reflect, make suggestions and innovate.

Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni explained that the Council of Europe was co-operating with Tunisia through an action plan to promote the reforms that had been undertaken in the country in recent years and to ensure that democracy there would be “irreversible”. The Council of Europe did not work just for its member states. It was also attuned to what was going on in the Mediterranean region, she said. The Deputy Secretary General pledged to take any specific proposals that emerged and bring them to the notice of the Tunisian authorities in order to recommend that the youth dimension be taken into account in the action plan.



Chapter 2

Our rights - Our lives



1. Feedback from youth organisations and young people about their lives and access to social rights

In the course of the *Enter!* Youth Week, participants shared their views about their lives and social rights in multicultural groups. The following ideas came out of these discussions.

Their lives

On the Monday afternoon, participants shared their views on what was important in their lives. They talked about what they wanted from their surroundings in order to live satisfying and meaningful lives.

The following were some of the ideas to emerge: access to health care, a roof, food, education, gender equality, work/life balance, definition of life goals, a job that one likes, active citizenship, leisure activities, time management, socialising with new people, free communication, idea-sharing, self-esteem, empathy, humility, confidence, security, continual mental growth, and personal development. To lead such lives they recognised that they had to be dynamic and come to know their inner strengths and their environment. The role of friends and family was stressed, supporting the idea that they played a key role in young people's personal development.

Through this, they believed that they could change things, have an impact in real life and, as individuals and social workers, help make a better world.

Feedback on the *Enter!* Recommendation review process

In 2016 the Joint Council on Youth adopted a strategy to support implementation of the *Enter!*

Recommendation by member states. It also provided for an initial review of this implementation in 2019 to consider measures by member states, projects and initiatives by youth organisations, and strategies and/or projects by or with local authorities, as well as to study good practice.

The review process was based on data and input from all the partners concerned by the recommendation and collected through a survey, desk research and interviews. In this respect, the *Enter!* Youth Week was a highlight of the process. Miguel Angel García Lopez, an evaluator, presented the main findings of the survey conducted among young people and youth workers on the one hand and local authority representatives on the other.

The *Enter!* Youth Week was also an important opportunity to gather feedback from the various stakeholders through the focus groups.

After a presentation of the evaluation team's survey in the plenary session, participants shared their impressions. Some of them believed decision-makers' lack of participation in the survey reflected the lack of co-operation between the youth sector and the government sector as well as the decision-makers' lack of interest in the subject. The young people drew the conclusion that their problems were probably at the bottom of the policy agenda. The participants had the impression that the people who could bring about change and had the power to do something for young people had abdicated their responsibilities.

Some participants pointed out that the recommendation had been written in 2014 and young people had changed a lot in five years while the recommendation had not changed at all. The idea was floated of making the recommendation even more practical

« All rights are linked »

by including best practice for more effective use in youth work.

Some participants explained that they had failed to complete the survey because of a lack of information about the *Enter!* Recommendation or owing to problems understanding the technical language and because the questions were not appropriate to rural areas. They also emphasised their lack of knowledge of issues or specific situations in their own countries, since they had often completed the survey on the basis of their “own perceptions” rather than “official information”.

What they found most surprising was that 40% of respondents did not know what to answer and that the NGOs not working with governments shared the *Enter!* values more than those that were working with them. Some participants came to the conclusion that what was being done with the recommendations was not what young people expected. It was therefore their job to give effect to the recommendation in all their actions.

Their rights

Following on from this presentation and the discussion in the plenary session, the young people turned their attention to a number of specific social rights. As one participant pointed out, “all rights are connected”. It was this very interrelatedness of rights that could complicate access. For example, low wages could mean overcrowded and unsafe housing, which could result in poor health and inadequate education, leading eventually to low-paid insecure employment, and so on. One participant acknowledged that “most participants had no basic information about the *Enter!* Recommendation and its implementation, but it was impressive how they had made an effort to get more information in a very short space of time and were determined to find ways round this lack of information and produce recommendations to improve the process”.

A French participant remarked on the benefit of the process: “We meet young people from all over the place, we share our skills and see what we’re doing and how we’re living and realise that we’re not the only ones to live like that in fact. There are other people with the same problems as us, in other countries, and, to be honest, it’s nice.”

« Most of the participants had no basic information on the Enter! Recommendation . . . but it was impressive to see their will to obtain more information, in a very short time and to find solutions »

« Youth work is a synonym for unpaid or voluntary work and that is not very appealing »

1.1 The role of youth work and non-formal education

Participants discussed what youth work meant for them. Among the ideas to emerge were “changing the world one person at a time”, “helping young people develop interpersonal skills” and “adults and young people working together, learning and problem-solving”. Unlike formal education, youth work was based on non-formal learning, which meant “more freedom and independence”, “not having to follow a curriculum laid down by the state” and “a space of one’s own”. For example, the participants explained, “a youth worker is someone who is easy to talk to, even on taboo subjects, without worrying about whether it might affect your marks or social status”. Formal education taught “the basics of history, geography, etc.” while youth work helped to “discover the world and oneself”. Youth work was sometimes more useful for gaining practical skills once basic knowledge had been acquired. It put the emphasis on “empathy and emotional intelligence”.

Young people were facing challenges in this field. In a number of countries, youth work was not recognised by governments and/or in youth policies, and its results were therefore limited. Furthermore, the young people lamented a lack of material resources, especially youth centres, and a lack of funding. They were sorry that there was so little co-operation between the teaching profession, youth workers and local authorities.

Last but not least, youth work meant “unpaid or voluntary work and that’s not appealing”.

Recommendations

The participants made the following recommendations:

- Push states to invest in youth work in the long term, both financially and through active involvement;
- Foster a cross-sectoral approach to youth work involving all stakeholders in the fields of youth and education (authorities, civil society, schools and universities);
- Publicise youth work in schools;
- Encourage accreditation of skills gained through non-formal education (in Hamburg young people engaged in out-of-school activities receive credits towards university);
- Explore the possibilities of digital and “mobile” youth work as well as street work;
- Promote youth work as a university subject in order to guarantee standards and expertise;
- Support compensation for voluntary work.

A local initiative for youth empowerment through youth work and non-formal education :

4motion (Mehdi Mribah), Luxembourg

Mehdi Mribah had been a youth worker for four years in Luxembourg. Since he was unable to find training to become a youth worker, he had gained the necessary skills by participating in various events. This was how he had come to take part in the launch of the third Enter! long-term training course in Budapest in 2017 and then the following year in Strasbourg.

Unlike his colleagues, who had to start a project from scratch, Mehdi already had a project that had been running for a year and was about to enter its second year. "All these young people have been trained by my organisation to reach out to other young people and train them or run activities with them to promote diversity. And they are all newcomers to Luxembourg. They work with non-formal education activities. They go into classrooms and to schools, youth centres and big youth events in Luxembourg. They are young people who we recruited in classrooms. It was my colleagues and I who led the workshops to begin with, but once we had enough young people and had trained them we were just there to manage the workshops, but it was these young people who were leading them. There's someone from Syria, Afghanistan, the Congo, Cape Verde, Portugal and France. So it's a really mixed group, and there are 50 of them now."

Of the 50, 4motion was allowed to bring only seven to the Enter! meeting. The seven who were chosen were the seven who had run the most activities over the year. "It was also a way for us to reward their commitment and show them that what they were doing in Luxembourg was perhaps being done by other people elsewhere. It was to emphasise their commitment."

The project in question was an integration project funded by the European Union through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). "I also wanted this event to be a sort of official conclusion for us. The AMIF project has come to an end, because that was what was originally planned: 2016-2019."

It was also a matter of empowering young people, through the project, to set up their own projects. "Giving workshops is a very happy, very enjoyable thing. We know our workshops off by heart. Those young people could give workshops in their sleep. But that wasn't enough for some of them. There were five or six who had fairly clear-cut, well-thought-out ideas for projects. They just needed a bit of help with planning: how to think about a project, how to write it up. Three of these six sent off applications, and all six submitted projects for local funding, which three of them got. And those three are here. They are the ones who have been most involved."

"The first project, presented by Anicia, is organising community parties. All sorts of people turn up; there's food and drink. We 'lure' people in and do activities with them. The first time she did it, it worked really well. Now she's going to organise three more events. There's Shahem, who's Syrian, a refugee. He's going to make videos showing how young people here and young people from abroad have the same dreams, enthusiasms and frustrations, even if they're totally different. With these videos we could go and do classroom workshops. And Diogo, who was 15 when he submitted his project and who's 16 now, has a project called World Meetup; it's an event that's going to happen in a large old people's home. He's going to bring lots of young people from lots of countries who will have their own stands."

"And we've got other projects that are getting a bit more urgent, especially now. We're concentrating on



unemployment a lot. Helping young people find a way forward.” Mehdi gave every young person some words of encouragement: “You can be more than just an employee all your life. You too can make plans and become your own boss.” He added, “They can also consider careers in social work or becoming self-employed. Now that we’ve done integration, we’re going to concentrate on work.”

1.2 Equality between young women and young men

On the question of gender equality, the participants first pointed out the pay gap between men and women. Particular attention was paid to the experience of Iceland. An Icelandic participant said that in her country equal pay and parity in politics were recognised and sex education was included in the school curriculum. The importance of sex education was in fact highlighted by the participants.

They also talked about the cultural characteristics that might be barriers to gender equality. They observed that in some countries people thought that gender equality had already been achieved whilst in others gender inequality was still not considered a problem. They suggested that gender inequality was even more serious when it occurred away from urban centres.

The young people mentioned NGO and local community programmes to combat violence and harassment and underlined their importance. But, one participant lamented the fact that, “It’s often the case that women are taught to defend themselves but men are not taught not to attack.”

Recommendations

The participants came up with the following recommendations

- Take inspiration from successful experiments in certain countries (such as Iceland) for gender equality;
- Encourage and fund sex education syllabuses in schools;
- Organise media campaigns to reduce gender stereotyping – at work, for example.



1.3 Sports, leisure and culture

The young attendees shared a strong interest in youth associations, cultural and youth centres, libraries and their school clubs. But since the participants came from various backgrounds – from small villages to large cities – they talked about differences in the youth facilities available and therefore about the activities offered in their immediate environment. For example, in large cities there were often several places where young people could meet and discuss their projects with each other, but in the countryside there was a lack of facilities and above all a lack of information and access to activities. And even when facilities existed, there were not always enough counsellors or activity leaders. Some participants also expressed their regret that certain activities were sometimes organised for young people for primarily political purposes.

The young people themselves recognised that in this field the attractions of the online world, and especially social media, were a considerable challenge. “It’s just too much,” said someone. “People prefer social media to real life!” Some Austrian participants pointed out, “We have a lot of options, but young people find video games more entertaining.”

They noted gender inequality in the field of sport: it was often boys who took part in sport. However, some young people recognised the role of associations in combating discrimination through sport. Furthermore, in less economically developed countries people often played team sports, since individual sports were too expensive. In some cases there were not enough playing fields or open-access sports facilities in public areas, and they were often a long way away from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Sport might sometimes be regarded as only a hobby rather than a means of promoting active youth

participation. The young people found it a matter of regret that in some neighbourhoods alcohol was consequently the only opportunity for socialising.

Access to leisure – such as concerts and theatre – was limited in some neighbourhoods, and it was not always good quality. Big-name concerts were sometimes a long way away from where young people lived and usually expensive (since there was often the cost of transport on top of the tickets). In addition, some young people highlighted a dearth of information between organisers and young people. Some Croatian participants explained that while their country did provide leisure opportunities and social events, young people sometimes had no idea they existed because the wrong information channels had been used.

The participants maintained that few people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods seemed interested in culture. However, the delegation from Canada cited the work done by youth campaigners to decriminalise street art. This demonstrated the power of civil society, and young people in particular, to reclaim art and public spaces for community development purposes and to further their demands.

Youth centres offered opportunities for leisure and socialisation. Yet, as some Estonian participants pointed out, there were availability problems, since the centres were often already closed at the times young people could go there. The young people identified further barriers: some centres had registration fees and hidden charges (need to buy expensive kit to take part in free group sports, for example). Another obstacle was the stigmatisation that might affect some groups of young people, particularly by other young people who were sufficiently privileged not to have to interact with them.

Recommendations

The participants came to the following conclusions for making our society more democratic through sport, leisure and culture:

- Adopt a multi-stakeholder approach. Changes and improvements can emerge only through co-operation between public authorities, the private sector, NGOs and the welfare sector;
- Involve young people more, for example through social media. Youth campaigners also have an important part to play by encouraging their less active friends to talk about the situations they encounter in their daily lives;
- Facilitate access to meeting places (such as sports facilities), especially, but not only, in rural areas;
- Improve provision of information, particularly through social media, to ensure that young people know about the events organised;
- Develop courses in art, theatre, music and so on, in schools.

A local initiative to improve young people's mental and physical health and empower them through dance:

TR14ers (David Aynsley), United Kingdom

In 2005, when he was a police officer in Camborne (United Kingdom), David Aynsley had to deal with anti-social behaviour and delinquency among young people. Yet, "the more arrests we made, the more we were punishing their families and the worse things became. So we knew that we had to do things differently." The aim was to protect children from the violence and discrimination that they were suffering.



"We didn't use those words then, but that's what it was." The town's youth facilities, both public and private, had all closed down.

The police officers decided to take action through what was called a "neighbourhood police team". Since this concept had been dropped in 1988, there were no serving officers able to train younger ones. Consequently a health service group had trained the team through the Connecting Communities programme. The police team began to offer street games – football, hockey, etc. – on behalf of the National Health Service (NHS) local primary care trust and in co-operation with the school.

One day, David met a world breakdance star, and they came up with the idea of putting on free breakdance workshops for children to see what would happen. And on the first day, over a hundred children and young people showed up. The idea won over the local council, which provided funding for the project. The discotheque owner let them use his premises free of charge and produced leaflets that were given out in every classroom in town. "That was in 2005, and we're still going!"

But after a few years the local authorities asked the police officers to stop this work with the children and to patrol the streets. "They thought it was just a flash in the pan, but it kept on growing." David then continued in his own time as a volunteer. The project became both a charity and a registered company, which brought funding but also conflict and a financial interest.

At that point the young people took over the project and there was a new rule: at least half the Board of Trustees had to be aged between 16 and 25. From the age of 16, "young people can influence the organisation's entire strategy". Young people

currently made up three quarters of the Board. It should also be said that, from the age of 10, children could become dance leaders and teach others.

Between 40 and 60 young people took part in each session. "There would be more if we could afford larger premises. That's our main problem." There was no obligation: the young people did not need to sign agreements saying that they would come and were not forced to attend by parents who had already paid for the sessions. At the end of the school day they swapped their school uniforms for their dance gear – whatever that might be – and went to their dance workshop. The dance sessions were not competitive. "They may try to do better than the girl or boy next to them, but there aren't any judges." Nobody is judged. They may be told, "actually, there's a better way of doing that movement," but they aren't judged if they don't get it right. "So they can't fail."

The project's health impact was studied for six months by the University of Exeter Medical School. The findings showed that the young people were fitter than they would have been in a comparable disadvantaged neighbourhood, and their emotional health was similarly better, which was a key factor. The university was hoping to obtain three-year funding to monitor the young people for several years and record the differences that the project was making to their lives. David thought that there were two key things going on here: fitness, which was a good thing, and emotional health – having an influence and being taken seriously by everyone. He believed that if you gave people access to their social rights – even if the terms "social rights" and "right to health" were not used very much – you made people feel better.

David explained that Camborne was a former mining town: it used to be one of the wealthiest places in the world, and today it was one of the poorest places

in the country. Young people from Camborne were often stigmatised on account of their town and they were ashamed of it. That was why they had chosen a more discreet name for their dance organisation: TR14ers, since TR14 was the Camborne postcode.

1.4 Employment

According to the participants in the discussion on this field, “it’s probably the hardest field of the recommendation to deal with. In our world, the right to work means the right to live. Without work, people cannot provide for themselves and their children, support their parents financially and so on. Having a job is really the basis of life in this world.” One Polish participant put it this way: “What I find most satisfying in life is having a goal, and having a job which is worthwhile enough to be a goal.”

The problems encountered by young people in the field of employment were cross-cutting: hard working conditions; the impact of education; well-being and mental health, etc. Some of the recommendation’s points could be addressed on a small scale at local or regional level, the participants found; even an NGO could create a significant change. But in the field of employment, power was mostly in the hands of governments. Their regulations formed the basis of what happened in the job market. The participants were dismayed by the problems of finding a job because of discrimination or lack of a work permit or because work permits limited access to some rights. Some young people also lamented the fact that tax policies were not conducive to recruitment of young people. Moreover, the “youth guarantee” programme was not operative in a number of countries, since it was not being implemented. Micro-financing programmes were non-existent or not much in evidence in some states.

One point to which the discussion kept returning was the lack of plans for the future among young people, the lack of job opportunities and the disconnect between training opportunities and employers’ expectations. “Employers everywhere are asking for experience, but when they’ve completed their studies, young people haven’t had time to gain experience, and that’s why many of them go to neighbouring countries or further afield to find work and build their lives somewhere else,” the participants found. Language was then a barrier to seeking work abroad.

Vocational training programmes had not been developed in a number of countries. And even though some states were beginning to overhaul their systems to tailor them to employers’ needs – by promoting co-operation between business and academia, for example – the process was still in progress. Apprenticeships were often limited, especially for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Traineeships were no guarantee of future employment and most were unpaid. In some countries, the traineeship system did not even exist. NGOs were indeed trying to help young people enter the job market, but they were limited in what they could do.

The participants also mentioned the non-recognition of professional qualifications and experience that they had gained. In particular, non-formal education was seldom recognised by employers, even though it was essential to the lives of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. They also expressed regret at the lack of freedom and creativity in the world of work.

On the positive side, the young people highlighted some new approaches to job-hunting information and guidance for young people, since some stakeholders had invested in public access to information



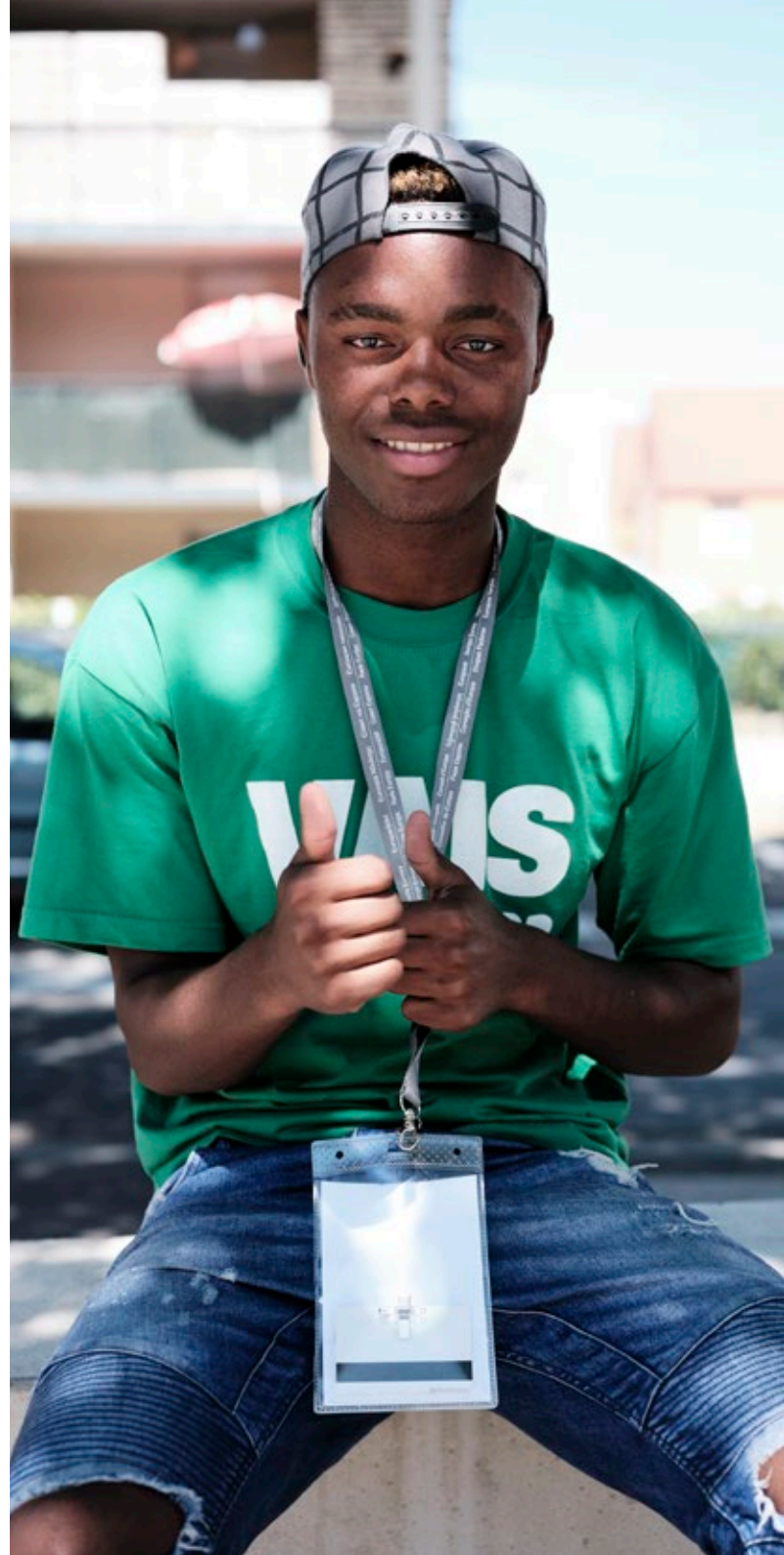
technology in this field. In some countries there were free services, which were essential for disadvantaged young people, but in others they had to be paid for. In Hungary a system of community work had been introduced to give every upper secondary school pupil compulsory work experience (40 hours). In Estonia the government was co-ordinating a summer jobs programme for young people.

Some states had also taken steps to balance work and family life. Most countries had maternity leave, but nurseries were often in short supply.

Recommendations

In the light of this situation, the participants made the following recommendations:

- ▶ Expand vocational guidance from secondary school onwards to help young people find their way;
- ▶ Create and develop vocational training programmes;
- ▶ Increase apprenticeships, paid traineeships and work experience during education for a closer link with the business world; develop co-operation between places of learning and businesses, through mentoring, for example;
- ▶ Provide more nurseries and more leave for young parents;
- ▶ Provide specific tax measures for young people;
- ▶ Allow employees to enhance their CVs with skills developed through non-formal education;
- ▶ Oblige employers to take on persons from minorities, and combat discrimination in the field of employment;
- ▶ Develop training in IT tools for young jobseekers.



A local initiative to support young people with vocational guidance: The Institute of Human Rights and Non-Formal Education (Suhida Dermeni), Albania

Suhida Dermeni had taken part in an Enter! long-term training course and “that was where it all started”. A psychology graduate specialising in vocational guidance, Suhida had the idea of working with marginalised groups in the vicinity of Tirana, since many families from Northern Albania were settling on the outskirts of the capital. In these families most of the girls left the education system aged 12 or 13. As for the boys, some of them began working with their parents at the age of 11 or 12, and of those who continued to upper secondary level, few had the means to study further.

Suhida had met a group of young women students who called themselves “Ata” which meant “They” to symbolise the fact that they were stigmatised by everybody. The idea of this informal group was to inspire other young people. And it was this group that had inspired Suhida: they met and talked about what they would like to do after school – participate in educational activities, as it turned out.

With two colleagues from her master’s course, Suhida set up a training project called “Empower your Employability”. The project consisted in a series of workshops: job-hunting assistance; improving communication skills; preparing for a job interview; introduction to job market opportunities. These workshops were also intended to discuss subjects broached at school, make young people appreciate their own skills, and show them how they could get involved in their city. For example, they used the techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed. One young woman in the Ata group, who was in charge of a group of young people, was helping to set up workshops by ensuring communication between

the women organisers and the young people and assisting them with practical preparation.

These workshops lasted roughly five months and attracted some twenty young people, whose attendance varied depending on their free time and support from their families. The organisers invited families to come and meet them, but some young people left the programme because their families were against it.

At the outset, Suhida and her colleagues were hoping that half the participants would find work after the project. In the end, she lamented, “we only helped them find traineeships”. Nevertheless, with this experiment they had managed to “build a bridge with young people”. The latter were able to share views and try out co-operation, particularly in the Theatre of the Oppressed workshops, where they were able to understand other people’s feelings. They acquired a different opinion of employers and realised that openings in the job market did exist (networking and connections were not the only ways of finding work).

There were still some difficult subjects, such as decision-making, when this was not allowed in families. The facilitators also came up against “closed doors”, particularly on the part of the local authorities. Suhida and her colleagues were already thinking about the next step and what they could improve for a future project: creating further modules, inviting stakeholders from the employment sector, etc.

Suhida had come to the Enter! Youth Week with two young people for whom it was the first time that they had left Tirana. One of them had taken part in a focus group and “found it strange to be listened to”. These two young people in turn wanted to set up workshops for their peers in the autumn.



1.5 Health and housing

Inequalities in health and housing were interdependent. There were thousands of vacant dwellings and thousands of homeless people. Housing was considered by most participants to be too expensive, preventing many young people from becoming independent. In some countries, construction projects in which housing stock was bought up in quantity by landlords who kept rents artificially high were preventing young people from finding accommodation, as some participants noted. They felt that it was a breach of human rights that must be challenged.

In the health field, the participants lamented the lack of facilities in a number of countries or else their remoteness from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Opening hours and waiting lists could sometimes make them hard to access. Furthermore, access to high-quality health care could require money. In addition, health was often considered in terms of treatment rather than prevention.

In the area of mental health, the young people noted that waiting lists for access to a specialist were often extremely long. It was also a taboo subject for a number of young people, especially men: society expected everyone to be in good mental health.

Recommendations

On health issues, participants' recommendations were the following:

- Support better access to health practitioners, especially in mental health, for young people;
- Promote preventive health solutions.

1.6 Influencing youth policies

The young people here highlighted the work done by youth councils and greater youth participation in decision-making processes. However, they pointed to a number of challenges, since there was not much involvement by young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The participants noted the need to change the image of young people so that they were not identified solely with "alcohol, drugs and violence" and to show that they were also able to create their own organisations for the benefit of the community and propose positive and creative activities and that they were a force no less capable or mature than adults.

The role of policies and politicians was heavily criticised in relation to corruption, with some governments being held responsible for a lack of transparency. The gap between government action, in the shape of policies enacted, and its actual impact on people was strongly condemned, with an emphasis on the disconnection of national authorities from local and regional realities.

The participants expressed doubt as to local authorities' confidence in their abilities. Young people needed motivation and encouragement from decision makers. In the current situation many young people did not believe that any change was possible.

Recommendations

The young people's recommendations in this field were as follows:

- Develop political and economic literacy in schools;
- Promote local movements and debating clubs;

- Ask young people what was not working and, based on the replies, propose solutions that are workable at their level and which associations can promote in their federations and forums in order to influence policy;
- Concentrate efforts on the causes of problems: poverty, exclusion, etc.;
- Set up youth councils and committees to give young people an opportunity to express their ideas in a safe environment and to build trust between young people and the authorities;
- Encourage co-operation between NGOs and the authorities;
- Develop training courses delivered by NGOs, particularly those empowering young people – especially migrants – and encourage the authorities to fund these programmes;
- Encourage meetings between young people and political representatives and ambassadors abroad;
- Promote policy transparency;
- Think outside the box;
- Change young people's image: organise activities for the residents of their neighbourhoods, such as a neighbourhood soup prepared by young people or an "open mike" event for anyone who wants to share his or her talents and "show the true face of young people and their neighbourhoods rather than the image conveyed by the media".

A local initiative to influence youth policy:

Youth Empowerment and Participation– YEP (Rebekka Dober), Austria

Rebekka Dober was the founder of YEP, both an NGO and a social enterprise, which was setting up participatory processes. She explained that, faced with the current challenges, many people were saying, "We need a strong society." But, she believed, "the point is that a strong society is not going to develop by itself". Yet young people spent nine to twelve years at school, where "you're sitting there, in silence, and the teachers are telling you what to do, and suddenly when you're eighteen, you're supposed to be independent, strong and an active citizen. It doesn't work like that!"

"Democracy can only be learnt by trying it out." Genuine participation was what YEP was endeavouring to foster. The organisation therefore encouraged young people to set up opportunities for participation. It also identified young agents of change and helped them carry through social changes. Its slogan was, "If it's about them, don't do it without them!"

Last autumn, new legislation on education had been enacted in Austria. But "the pupils weren't taken into consideration". YEP had set up a participatory process, including online, thereby bringing together young people from different socio-economic backgrounds to read and discuss this legislation – pros and cons, shortcomings, etc. – and make suggestions. They had then designed questions for an online survey sent to student and pupils' associations throughout Austria. Within five days some 500 young people had replied to this survey "not only with 'yes', 'no' or 'perhaps' but by really writing a lot: good-quality comments, opinions and above all their own experience".

Rebekka drew the following conclusion: "This is what we ought to be seeing. Pupils and students are the authorities on their own situation. Nobody else can say the same. [...] If you work for ten years you become senior, don't you? Young people are at school for 9 to 12 years!" YEP had also set up a participation platform. Participants had drafted a recommendation and elected a person to represent them. "For the first time in over ten years, an upper secondary school student was allowed to speak before members of Parliament." Rebekka laid emphasis on the non-partisan aspect of this approach, which provided a voice unconnected to political parties. This initiative had attracted a lot of attention, including from the media.

She also explained that more and more foundations were wanting to fund youth projects and enlist young people on their boards but did not know how to reach them, how to ensure that they were independent and how to talk to them. YEP provided a bridge between these foundations and young people. YEP had also developed a Changemaker Camp for young people wanting, for example, to put their projects into practice but not knowing how to access funds or plan their projects.

A local initiative to change young people's image in the media:

Réseau Média Jeune (Amandine Grange and Florence Pheron), France

Amandine Grange was the co-ordinator and media officer of a network comprising some 150 organisations in Guadeloupe. The Outremer Connexion Internationale (OCI) association had two main functions. The first was to run the network. "We set up what we call weekly rendezvous, where we all co-design programmes, action plans and joint events. Individual associations, entrepreneurs and

artists carry out their own activities and come together for the weekly rendezvous." The second function was to improve young people's image, through live TV programmes with local television stations, on Trace and France O, and always livestreaming, with subjects such as prevention, parenthood, engagement, success and discrimination.

OCI's role was to maintain the bond with French overseas citizens who had left Guadeloupe. The "homecoming exchanges" campaign made it possible, while they were back on the island on holiday or by video link, for expatriates to offer their experience and expertise, as older brothers and sisters, to young people who were wanting to leave.

The network, which had been in existence for fifteen years, was called Média Jeune. At the weekly rendezvous – of which there were three or four a week – Amandine hosted the young people and ran the office. She designed the broadcasts jointly with the young people and located partners for live broadcasts, since there was an institutional segment and a youth showcasing segment. The sets would last between 45 minutes and an hour. The programme was prepared in seminars attended by some 50 young people.

Amandine herself had left the islands when she was 17, without a baccalaureate, to live first in Paris and then in Lyon. She recounted how one day she had been saddened by the image of young people in Guadeloupe purveyed by the media: "In 2014, France 2 and France 4 were broadcasting news about the violence in Guadeloupe. I thought, 'That's odd; I come from what is called a disadvantaged, priority neighbourhood and I've never experienced that.' So I returned with the intention of working specifically to show that there were young people who were not involved in violence and living on handouts, and



I discovered this network.” In 2014 she had been a civic service volunteer for six months. Eighteen months to two years later she had set up the media centre and the organisation.

Florence Pheron was part of the management side of Réseau Média Jeune, which organised training and seminars to share skills. “I found the network because I was on the Saint-Claude campus. [...] When I arrived on the campus, there wasn’t really any student life. We set up an association, and one day somebody rang me to take part in a broadcast. Two days later I was already signed up. I signed a civic service contract and carried on. I shall soon have been there for five years!” She was moved by the desire to support young people. “When I meet young people I always ask them what they’re interested in. I really try to support them and make them realise that what they are doing is right and help them improve their image, because in Guadeloupe, since there was a lot of violence in 2014, we were unfortunately the most unsafe department in France. And that wasn’t a reputation that any young person liked. Because in fact it really isn’t typical of who we are. There are lots of young people who are doing a lot of things, and so we are really trying to highlight this and showcase everything we’re doing through the network.”

These two network representatives were delighted because “in this network of 150 organisations we’re doing exactly what is recommended [in the Enter! Recommendation].” Amandine explained that she had become aware that they were really fighting discrimination against young people in priority neighbourhoods and their isolation: “For example, we can get young people from priority neighbourhoods to work together on set. I don’t remove them from their lives. But for two or three hours they are with students, artists and entrepreneurs and they



are doing something together. We have several cases of people who left the street because they became aware of their creative side and what they were able to do and who totally changed their lives [...] We provide a pulse, meaning that the young people come together weekly to prepare something together, and so, inevitably, the time spent together, even if it's only two hours or one hour a week or across three rendezvous, it creates bonds!"

The benefit of this project for young people "is that they realise they are really joining something and they are the organisers. We also let them make contacts and we make all the red tape more intelligible. To be honest, the paperwork puts a lot of young people off. The network has contacts with all the partners in the islands and in fact we put the young people in contact with them; we just redirect them because they don't necessarily have the information. Young people are not necessarily aware of how things are done, the existing arrangements and so on. We have a method we call 'the non-substitution method', which means that for all the organisations that we list and bring together we are never going to take the place of any one of them because we believe that each is doing its job and has its own activities."

Lastly, "all this is not just an excuse for connecting people and creating social cohesion. The network has also received an award. People say that it's a public policy tool, but we're non-partisan."

1.7 Non-discrimination

Discrimination covers many fields, including age, sex, origin, association (real or conjectured) with a nation or ethnic group, state of health, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, place of residence, political opinions, etc., and for young

people it "has influenced their lives, reducing their opportunities to engage and have the right and the power to change their community".

The young people highlighted the situations experienced by young immigrants who encountered discrimination on a daily basis. They criticised political and media rhetoric stigmatising migrants and condemned expulsion of asylum seekers before the final court ruling.

In some countries, discrimination was connected with language proficiency, particularly in states where several languages were commonly spoken but one predominated.

Some young people explained that, in their countries, "we must forget our differences by shutting our eyes to the problems". Consequently, they found that they "must stop expecting anything from the government"; they had to "get to work and start with citizenship by taking care of [their] environment and setting a good example of citizenship to younger people". In fact, it was often associations that ran projects, sometimes self-funded, to meet the needs of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Lastly, the participants welcomed new laws opening the way to greater recognition of LGBTQI people.

Recommendations

The young people's recommendations in this field were the following:

Promote better access for people with disabilities, awareness of their specific needs, their citizenship and their rights, and greater recognition of disability in politics: people with disabilities "are not mascots";

- Make young people aware of each individual's uniqueness (whatever his or her origin, gender, religion, neighbourhood, etc.), beginning in school;
- Foster education for citizenship and information on citizens' rights and responsibilities to encourage greater acceptance of difference;
- Support sex education that takes account of all types of sexuality;
- Promote creation of neighbourhood committees and youth councils to empower young citizens;
- Facilitate collaboration between governments and grassroots organisations to find practical answers to the discrimination encountered by young people.

A local initiative: RFSL Ungdom (Haris Eloy), Sweden

Haris Eloy began by saying that he was originally from North Macedonia, that his parents were Bosnian and that he was currently living in Sweden, where he had become involved in RFSL, the Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Rights.

His work focused on young LGBTQ migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. Haris explained the special position of these young people in comparison with other refugees. Although "in general, when refugees arrive in a safe country, they feel they have reached their final destination, for LGBTQ refugees it's different: when you arrive, you're still in danger. You're put in a camp with other people from your country, from different backgrounds, and you have to go on hiding – which is not the goal; you don't feel any safer."

These young people faced a number of challenges relating to their social rights. If asylum seekers were

aged under 18, they had access to the school system and accommodation, but this was not the case for those over 18. "You are seen as an adult and you have to be able to take care of yourself." If these young people could not prove their identity, they would probably not find work and would have to spend a long time waiting for a court decision without having the right to work. As far as health was concerned, some young people were exposed to a medical test to prove their age. Furthermore, transgender people without a personal identity number – meaning that they were not registered as Swedish citizens – would have difficulty continuing their transition, since the hormone treatment needed was reimbursed only for Swedish citizens and individuals with certain types of visa. This forced many transgender people to obtain hormones on the unofficial market, without seeking medical advice, with the medical risks that this entailed.

As part of the Newcomers Youth project, which had been in existence for three years and had recently been renewed for another three, the association was engaged in advocacy and was offering support, particularly through legal advice. It also facilitated safe spaces once a week for discussion of a variety of subjects. This made it possible to receive these young migrants into Swedish society and culture, give them courses in Swedish, offer them creative activities and performances, raise their profile, give them support and encourage them to make their voices heard and become ambassadors. As Haris put it: "For many members we are like a family or a second home, since a lot of them are unaccompanied minors. [...] We put them in contact with people who can take responsibility for them and look after them in the meantime."

Haris had been a youth worker for four years. In his words: "I'm very proud of being an ambassador, an example, to help empower them and tell them that

things will get better, that there really is someone to take care of them and they are not alone, to give them the support they need. And sometimes, even if I can't do any more, I can at least listen to them, which is very important."

This is what had brought him to the Council of Europe last year. "I believe that this is a vital subject at international level, and it's lacking in a lot of countries. For the advocacy side of my work, I thought: 'I can do more. I'm going to learn how Europe works, hoping that, when I come here, I'll be able to get a lot more knowledge.' [...] I've come with a member who is also a former asylum seeker. We are fighters, survivors and personify change as well as models who can inspire others to help us, as we need more people to work together with us."

He added: "I have a lot of goals because now, having the opportunity to work more closely with the Council of Europe, I think I can speak out and bring about change. Yesterday during a talk or workshop it was said that young people need authority or a platform in order to be heard. And in a way I believe I have been given this platform."

1.8 Combating segregation and isolation

With regard to challenges, the participants mostly discussed migration issues. They identified major problems regarding integration of new immigrants and recognition of their rights. One participant said, "Regularisation is just a word; you still don't have your rights." The young people were dismayed that migrants' full participation in society was hampered by discriminatory policies and protocols. The participants here pointed out that it was hard for young people from a background of immigration and cultural diversity to become actively involved in their



communities and exercise their citizenship because of existing barriers. Because they lacked an adequate livelihood, access to appropriate information and resources and free choice in access to education, these young people had trouble integrating in their host society and living in dignity: "Creating two-tier citizenship prevents living together in harmony and proper personal and collective development."

The young people also brought up the situation of small towns or communities where everybody knew each other and were therefore able to receive assistance. Conversely, they deplored peri-urban areas, where people resided but worked and formed relationships elsewhere. In this connection an Irish participant said: "I don't have a sense of community because I haven't lived long enough anywhere to develop one ... I have more in common with immigrants and refugees."

Recommendations

The participants made the following recommendations:

- (Re)create bonds between generations or between residents of the same neighbourhood or the same municipal entity as well as between young people themselves. As one participant asserted, "discovering others is definitely the first step but also the most important";
- Take more account of rural communities;
- Expand public transport in under-served areas;
- Promote more inclusive schooling fostering debate;
- Foster links between stakeholders;
- Encourage a change in attitude;

Ensure that recognition of young people's social rights applies to all the residents of a given area: "Young migrants' rights must be respected in the same way as others', and barriers to their free choice in employment and education must be overcome."

A local initiative to promote inclusion of young migrants:

The Voices of Young Refugees in Europe (VYRE) network (Amy Stapleton, Youssouf Sylla, Munier Abdelazim and Anssoumane Doumbia), France

Amy Stapleton, from the VYRE network, had come to Strasbourg accompanied by young asylum seekers whom she had met through associations in Lille that were promoting integration through activities such as art, drawing and drama. Munier explained: "We've set up a theatre group called 'The Other is Me'. The idea is to try to change stereotypes and ideas about a lot of things, especially immigrants, because we think that it's a lack of dialogue that's causing a lot of the problems." The project was being run with an upper secondary school and would be extended to another such school next year. "Because we think it's very important to encourage refugees to participate too," said Amy, "to have a voice in the community, because there are no refugees in most associations involved with immigration."

The network held skills, advocacy and counselling workshops to make refugees aware of their rights and also to integrate them in the community. For example, there were training courses and study sessions at least once a year, attended by 30 to 40 young people. The idea is also to help educators, social workers, people in associations and volunteers to improve things."

Youssouf talked about his experience of Enter! Youth Week: "It's given me lots of ideas and experience too because I've learnt loads of things about Europe. I've

even discovered some countries I'd never heard of. I'm not in Africa any more; I'm in Europe, so I have to know about European activities too and what's going on in Europe, the different bodies and how Europe is organised administratively and for young people. For employment, they want to change the education system so that the young people in it have a bit of experience at least – traineeships or training courses – to have some experience before looking for a job. They really want to focus on education and improve it so that young people get experience before they start job-hunting."

Anssoumane added, "I'm glad to be here as a young person because I arrived here young." He was attending to "find out how young people are getting on here and how young people's situation is changing across states [...]. And it's also given me a lot of hope about integrating here."

For his part, Munier said: "I love the intercultural atmosphere. Also, as a young immigrant to Europe, I want to talk to other people to describe our situation and the problems and challenges that we have in Europe too, and to be involved with the recommendations, to change the situation today and feel better still. I'm still interested in human rights because I also worked in Sudan before coming here, with associations."

Amy shared her impressions of the Enter! Youth Week: "Even though we have a lot of expectations, we learn a lot of things that we couldn't ever have imagined. And I think that's a challenge for us too. [...] For example, we talked about discrimination today, and it's always something when you think, 'Ah yes! But how can I improve that? What can I do in everyday life to change things? And how do we go on struggling and fighting?'" She believed that Enter! was important "because afterwards we can show it to

everyone". The next step was how to set up something else in Lille with the group that was here.

Amy is a student and runs a participatory action research project. For her, research was also a way of involving all young people "in something bigger". The idea was for young people themselves to set up projects and do the research. "Associations are quite good at this: links between academia, civil society and sometimes institutions – here with the Council of Europe, for example – I think are very useful and something to be tended. What's more, our group shows how important it is to have networks and different working partnerships."

1.9 Youth participation

As one young person put it, "Participating is acting for the common good." On the issue of youth participation and inclusion, participants were divided. Some noted the existence of facilities for youth activities in their cities but lamented that youth participation was not guaranteed and that young people had no say in decisions concerning them. Others explained that youth participation was partly ensured through youth councils but that volunteering by young people played very little part in the day-to-day life of their cities. For this group, volunteering was an important goal.

While some participants welcomed a higher youth turnout in the most recent European elections, it was not, however, typical of all young people. Young people's lack of interest in politics was a recurring issue in many countries. One participant lamented, "Politicians are living in a different world from us." Nevertheless, politics sparked greater interest in some cities, depending on the level of volunteering and active citizenship. Some participants also cited the example of Malta, where in 2018 the voting age

had been lowered to 16, which had had a positive impact on young people's political involvement and led to more funds for youth activities and centres.

The young people voiced their need for a genuine role in institutional decision-making, especially for the policies affecting them, in order to avoid tokenism (using young people solely for formal or symbolic effect). They lamented the glaring lack of young people and the failure to represent youth diversity in decision-making bodies. It was a matter of giving young people not just a voice but also access to information and resources. "We lack the funding to follow projects through," said another participant. They believed that they were not being taken seriously by decision-makers.

Associations and youth services felt that they were receiving very little support for their attempts to raise awareness of youth participation in decision-making processes, especially for groups suffering from exclusion (young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, with disabilities, etc.). Furthermore, some young people complained that they were not free to participate in certain programmes or have access to information about their social rights without belonging to an NGO. NGOs were also criticised for tokenism.

Furthermore, even if some young people were interested in becoming involved and participating, they were hampered by their current situation and the need to support themselves. But, as one participant pointed out, to participate in an association, "you have to have peace of mind".

The role of schools in teaching participation was highlighted. As one young person put it, "You may say that participation starts first and foremost at home, but participation starts first and foremost at

school!" Participation should also be attractive. One participant asked, "If I talk about "participatory budgeting", is that appealing enough to get involved?"

Climate change was a shared priority for the young people, who criticised a lack of accountability in European policies. The participants were concerned about their future, noting governments' failure to listen. Young people's committed participation in the climate marches was seen as an opportunity to come together and jointly propose practical solutions for radical change in keeping with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Recommendations

On the issue of participation, the young people made the following recommendations:

Listen to young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods and provide them with consistent and appropriate support, acknowledging that active citizenship is not expressed just at elections or through party politics; encourage direct forms of participation;

Recognise that, in terms of process, it is preferable to involve young people by focusing on one issue at a time and starting with small local actions in order to gain experience and be able to make the most of these actions with regard to local authorities, for example, before planning larger actions or events. This would have a multiplier effect. An Irish participant noted: "We have involved young people with minorities and migrants. It was just a small campaign, but it showed potential in other respects."

Encourage the setting-up of legally recognised neighbourhood committees, youth councils and youth forums, as well as voluntary networks, in order to empower citizens;



- ▶ Set up meetings with elected representatives and ambassadors;
- ▶ Approach prominent local figures to provide encouragement and examples, to show young people how to achieve greater success and confidence;
- ▶ Promote political citizenship education to encourage young people to take an active part in politics;
- ▶ Improve prevention activities for young people, for example by organising daylong events based on personal stories;
- ▶ Set up debating clubs, community cafés and training courses to empower young people;
- ▶ Fund association projects aimed at encouraging young people to participate in politics;
- ▶ Provide more participatory budgeting;
- ▶ Promote young people's actions more effectively.

A local initiative for youth participation in a city's growth: Varaždin for European Youth Capital 2022 (Etelka Kozar), Croatia

Varaždin was one of the five candidate cities shortlisted for the title of European Youth Capital 2022. This candidacy was the result of a youth initiative, which Etelka Kozar had joined a little over a year ago.

It began with a young man in the city who thought that Varaždin was "a suitable city to be a candidate" and who had gathered feedback from several former European youth capitals and brought together a team of enthusiastic young people with support from the city council. The process had started in 2018, with a first candidacy for 2021, which was unsuccessful, and a second for 2022.



In December 2018 a training course on the Enter! Recommendation was held in Varaždin attended by participants from all over Croatia. This course enabled the Varaždin team to better identify the most vulnerable groups. To refine its assessment, the team began a large-scale survey of the city's young people in spring of this year, with support from schools, universities, local authorities and the local youth council, and through social media. Some 800 young people replied and made their needs known, providing food for thought regarding the programme to be proposed.

Etelka was a psychologist and worked in a human resources company in two fields: recruitment and career guidance for marginalised groups, particularly the long-term unemployed. Employment was therefore part of Varaždin's candidacy programme so as to help young people enter the labour market.

Etelka noted the importance attached to inclusion of marginalised groups, with a youth worker specifically for members of these groups. She explained that two representatives of the local LGBTQI community had helped them better understand the needs of its members. Attention had been paid to young people in rural areas with the idea of providing them with online advice, since these young people often had trouble accessing existing organisations. The team hoped to open an advice centre, with support from the Croatian Government, and was currently looking into funding options. The programme was also aimed at young people with disabilities and those suffering mental health problems. The Roma community had been taken into account as well. Migrants were similarly included as far as possible. Etelka explained that last year the Varaždin team had held a fundraising drive, during which young refugees had expressed a wish to become involved in the process. However, this involvement had been hampered by administrative problems relating to their status.

Through its programme, the Varaždin team was hoping not only to offer online and face-to-face psychological counselling and job-hunting support but also to set up a human library (one of the team's members had received training for this) and organise entertainment, creative workshops, intercultural dinners, etc.

Etelka added that Varaždin was already a city that had invested in young people prior to its candidacy, in particular through grants, but there was room for improvement. This candidacy was a way of helping "young people to become involved in the whole process, make decisions about their lives" and, eventually, "to be more mobile" and be able to "share practices with each other".

A local initiative to promote youth participation in the municipal decision-making process:

Conseil Jeunesse de Montréal-Nord, CjMN (Meryeme Roudane), Canada

Meryeme Roudane had first been a socially committed high school student. "During my five years [at secondary school] I did a number of out-of-school activities, I did some student radio, I tried pretty much everything, I did the kitchen brigades, I did the student council, I did some robotics, I volunteered for the library and events; so I did quite of lot of things anyway."

Then through a friend she learnt that a youth council was being set up in the North Montreal district, at the mayor's instigation. Her profile matched the profile that the mayor was looking for. "They were looking for committed young people who knew the environment," since, in fact, "the aim of the youth council is to fit in with young people, listen to their needs and find out what they want or don't want in order to send a message to the mayor, so that she can understand young people's needs. I had contacts among young



people, and that's what was needed."

She then decided to get involved "because I wanted to change things, because I was seeing young people around me who hadn't been as lucky as me. I was bold enough to take the plunge and get what I wanted. There are young people who won't venture to try because they don't feel comfortable or they haven't the resources to find activities they like. I wanted to change things."

Having begun her period of office last January, and given that it was the very first term of office, the work consisted firstly in building up the foundations, establishing a code of governance and therefore the rules of the council, so that it could continue over a number of years. At the same time the young people began what the council had been set up to do, that is, sound out their peers in order to be able to pass on their needs to the city council.

She gave a practical example: "There's a park behind where we had our meetings. The city council is going to build a lodge in this park, and our goal was to find out from young people what they wanted to have in this lodge, what activities, what facilities they needed. And we took down what they told us, what they wanted or didn't want, and we wrote a report and sent it to the mayor, and she is going to try to make sure that these wishes are respected as far as possible."

Meryeme noted the initial benefits of this district youth council: "When young people find out that there is a youth council they're glad because it's easier to talk to another young person than to an adult. When we're among young people, it's easier for us to say what we like or don't like. And what these young people are saying is generally that they want more guidance – more young people working with them, rather than adults, because what really

emerges, I think, is that young people are not always comfortable asking for help or going to see an adult. Young people have the same way of thinking, the same language. When young people have a problem, such as addiction or violence, they won't go to see an adult to say, 'Ah, but I have this problem.' It's in this kind of situation that they want to have more young people who can help them."

The Enter! meeting had made Meryeme aware of certain advantages enjoyed by young people in her district in comparison with young people in other municipalities: "They don't have many sports facilities whereas in North Montreal in almost every park you have a football ground, a basketball court or a tennis court. There are skating rinks, swimming pools and paddling pools – there are really lots of things. School gyms are open at weekends to provide activities. So when I was there, I didn't realise it was amazing; for me, it was something normal, something basic. But when I listen to other people from other countries, I think, "We really do have some resources!" Obviously we don't have everything either, there are things missing and things we'd like to change, but we didn't realise that we had so many positive things."



1.10 Education and training

The participants listed a number of challenges that most education systems were facing. Admittedly, basic education was free in their countries, but the young people lamented a “McDonald’s-type”, “indocinating” or “parrot-fashion” education that placed greater emphasis on memorising and learning by heart rather than on reflection and creativity, an education based on tests and selection, which left little freedom in terms of timetabling and choice of subjects.

As for content, school systems often lacked health and sex education syllabuses, which were nevertheless helpful, according to one participant, in “combating the detrimental effects that pornography may have on young people’s understanding of relationships”. The lack of political and citizenship education and an introduction to democracy in schools might explain young people’s lack of engagement. As one participant summed up, “The school system trains workers rather than citizens.”

From the financial point of view, the young people expressed their regret that teachers were often badly paid, school transport costs were a burden on pupils, and higher education fees were often prohibitive.

Regarding equipment, the young people lamented the lack of modern school facilities. In addition, private education was often selective on financial grounds.

The participants also highlighted the discrimination problems encountered by young people with disabilities and the problems that had to be overcome by pupils with low-income parents, by young people in rural areas where infrastructure was lacking, and by migrant children. Bullying in schools was also decried. As for listening to and supporting young people, schools did not always offer elections for pupil representatives or partnerships with social workers. Teachers did not seem to communicate personally with their pupils very much.

Lastly, the young people lamented the lack of practical experience in the school or university curriculum – “education disconnected from reality” – and the lack of information and guidance about careers and training. There were disparities between states as to their capacity to support or even reintegrate drop-outs. Some participants also deplored the disappearance of traditional craft schools in their countries.

As some participants said, “Education is not a preparation for life; it is life itself and our passport to the future.”

Recommendations

In this field, the participants produced the following recommendations:

Ensure nationwide training on the special needs of pupils from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, for example by introducing specific modules in initial and in-service teacher training; encourage training for skills development or on social issues, involving various stakeholders: governments, NGOs, teaching staff and trainers;



- Provide better pay for teachers;
- Reform the curricula in every country, offer more choice in terms of courses and timetabling and encourage a creative education system;
- Promote workshops on citizen and rights education, in particular through easy-to-understand content, general knowledge courses, visits to institutions, information on existing systems and links with cities, which also means training qualified contributors;
- Expand health and sex education;
- Encourage the setting up of digital education workshops in schools and universities as well as in community organisations (youth information centres and digital public spaces, for example);
- Develop out-of-school cultural, arts and sports activities;
- Promote a greater degree of co-education in schools; make sure that the standard of education does not depend on the type of system (public versus private);
- Foster greater inclusion of all groups, particularly young people with disabilities and young migrants;
- Promote the establishment of second-chance schools for school drop-outs;
- Introduce programmes to combat (cyber)bullying and increase the presence of supervisors;
- Listen to young people, especially by fostering links between pupils and youth workers and school psychologists;
- Expand university provision, make university entrance affordable and expand student grants;
- Move ahead with free transport;

- Develop exchange programmes and opportunities for volunteering and voluntary service;
- Modernise school facilities;
- Encourage the election of pupil/student representatives, in association with ministries.

A local initiative to combat bullying at school:

Participation for All (Natalja Gudakovska), Latvia

The Participation for All organisation was a “point of contact” for young people and was involved in project support and school workshops.

In schools it worked on issues relating to hate speech and discrimination. It ran anti-bullying workshops and long-term programmes for pupils aged 13 and over. The Participation for All team was active in prevention rather than crisis management. It offered its services to schools if it had funding. Some teachers who had been trained by the organisation through its work with the Latvian Centre for Human Rights also enlisted its help directly.

In general, information was distributed to the various classes of a school and pupil volunteers were then excused from lessons to be able to take part in workshops. This created a mixed group of some twenty young people, who then constituted an engaged community responsible for developing an action plan to foster a friendly atmosphere in the school. The size of the group allowed for one-on-one work. The frequency of meetings depended on the group's dynamic and the content of workshops.

The team used social-theatre and forum-theatre techniques in its work. As Natalja explained, “Drama appeals to young people.” The issue of bullying was important for these young people in itself, but if the

workshops were presented simply as workshops on bullying, young people would not come because “the subject was too difficult to handle”. However, the drama aspect provided an incentive. Pupils were encouraged to think about bullying situations: How could they be recognised? What were the consequences? How could they do something about it? What would happen if they did not do something about it?

Between workshops, the young people might have two or three weeks to carry out practical activities on their own. This might consist in recording conflict situations around them: at school, at home, in the street, etc.

Natalja said that the initiative was much appreciated by young people and in 2020 the Participation for All team was going to run a long-term project for pupils aged 11-12. That would be a first.

1.11 Information and counselling

A lot of young people wanted to take part in decision-making that would affect their future. To this end, they needed access to a range of information sources and good-quality information. For one attendee, “information enables participation”.

The participants mentioned the example of a municipality that had made arrangements for youth participation. But the people in charge of the programme thought that the young people were too lazy or apathetic to get involved. In actual fact, none of the young people in the municipality had been told about these opportunities!

The young people noted organisations’ widespread use of social media – especially Instagram and Facebook – to promote events organised by young people. “It’s really effective; young people all over the country can see our events,” said one young person. And a participant from Montenegro added,

“Even the government uses them to encourage young people to vote!”

Some young people from the countryside explained that they had trouble accessing the same opportunities that were available in cities as well as information from the authorities, and vice versa. As one participant said: “Everything starts with the authorities. If an authority fails [financially] there is no progress in society, and if there is no progress in society, young people cannot engage.”

Participants from various countries lamented the lack of youth centres. Here, some young people raised the issue of accountability, which was linked to that of information. As one attendee put it: “Accountability is lacking. Is it up to us young people to go out and say that we don’t have a youth centre and there ought to be a youth centre here? Is the information available? Do I know that I ought to have a youth centre here?” And even if there were local organisations, they did not necessarily have the right information – about the *Enter!* Recommendation, for example – and therefore could not encourage young people to learn about it.

Lastly, participants from North Macedonia said they were translating Wikipedia articles from other countries in order to disseminate information and raise awareness of certain issues.

Recommendations

On this subject the participants made the following recommendations:

- Develop good-quality information for young people;
- Encourage the establishment of youth centres;
- For young people: develop their own organisations, such as school councils;



Provide information – from upper secondary school onwards – on the various youth mobility and assistance schemes;

Use social media to reach more young people;

Support organisations in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and rural areas.

A local initiative to provide information for young people through local channels: Partnership for Every Child (Igor Nosach), Ukraine

Igor Nosach worked in the Partnership for Every Child NGO based in the Kyiv area. The organisation had built its own premises in a village, including a training centre for professionals. Young people from the village took part in various activities, including a children's parliament supported by the local authorities. The aim was to promote youth participation.

The organisation also worked with partners from various regions of Ukraine – bodies that were in direct contact with young people. The NGO offered training courses for youth workers, who then visited youth-related institutions such as schools, technical colleges and child protection institutions.

These youth workers carried out the projects proposed by Partnership for Every Child and encouraged young people to take part in them by supporting them and awarding them grants. For example, some young people had set up mixed cookery classes, led by a catering professional, and advertised them in schools; another group had organised training in life skills: job-hunting, communication, mobility, etc. Lastly, because, Igor explained, usually in the countryside “when something is organised for young people it isn't very appealing”, some other young people had established a youth festival in their



village, situated in the “grey zone”.

Although many young people had free time, wanted to connect with their peers but did not know where to go to do it, it was not so easy to attract them to a meeting, then to involve them and make sure they returned. Youth workers often took advantage of unplanned meetings with young people in the street to explain projects to them. It was through this one-to-one contact that one young person had joined “and become one of the most active participants in these projects”.

Partnership for Every Child supported the professionals assisting the young people. “We have meetings and discuss things on social media,” explained Igor, who added that support was provided when “they are short of equipment, become discouraged or encounter problems with their workshops”.

2. Meetings with local organisations in Strasbourg: benefits of exchanging experience

On the Wednesday, participants had the opportunity to visit one of the following, depending on their focal theme:

- Youth participation, **Centre socio-culturel Neuhof**, <http://cscneuhof.eu/>
- Gender equality, **Les Petits Débrouillards**, <http://www.lespetitsdebrouillards.org/>
- Social inclusion and recognition of cultural diversity, **Maison des Potes**, <https://www.mdpstrasbourg.fr/blank-con8>
- Human rights education and inclusion of young refugees, **Thémis**, <http://www.themis.asso.fr/>

- Local youth work, **Centre socio-culturel L’Escale**, <http://escale.centres-sociaux.fr/>
- Intercultural learning and environment, **Apollonia**, <http://www.apollonia-art-exchanges.com/en/>
- Youth participation: democracy and citizenship, **Les Jeunes Européens (the Young Europeans)**, <https://www.jeunes-europeens.org/Les-Jeunes-Europeens-Strasbourg>
- Conflict resolution and violence prevention, **Centre socio-culturel La Montagne Verte**, <http://cscmontagneverte.centres-sociaux.fr/>
- Youth employability, **Youth Express Network**, <http://www.youthexpressnetwork.org>
- Combating hate speech, **LICRA**, <https://www.licra.org/>
- International youth mobility and its local impact, **VISA-AD**, <http://www.visa-ad.org/>
- Youth volunteering, **AMSED**, <http://www.amsed.fr/>
- Promotion of healthy lifestyles (young people’s mental and physical health), **Maison des adolescents**, <http://www.maisondesados-strasbourg.eu/>

The benefits for the participants, in addition to a mixing of groups (another opportunity for participants to meet in multicultural teams), were the following: introduction to organisations working locally on youth issues and on access to and respect for rights; sharing of concerns about young people’s social rights in various contexts; and introduction to methods and tools of non-formal and experiential education.



2.1 Introduction to organisations working locally on youth issues and on access to and respect for rights

During the visit to the **Centre socio-culturel L'Escale** (L'Escale Community Centre) in the Cité de l'III, in the Robertsau neighbourhood, the Centre's director and the head of the youth integration service described how community centres worked in France and how youth work was tackled at local level. They explained how the community centre provided a foundation to facilitate young people's access to information and to connect people through social and cultural activities. The youth integration service in particular was intended for people suffering job insecurity to assist them with administrative formalities, application tools and information technology. The participants were also able to visit the neighbourhood: the fact that it was market day gave them a glimpse of its diversity and allowed them to interact with the residents. They also met an association called **Passerelle**, which had been firmly established in the neighbourhood for several decades and used the community centre's premises to assist people in poverty through workshops on matters such as taking care of their bodies, grooming and personal hygiene needs. At the debriefing session, the participants spoke about how much they had learnt from the day, since it had provided a very practical insight into local conditions and followed on from the discussions of the previous day, which for some were on the topic of discrimination. "It made sense because we started to talk about it and then we saw something real."

The visit to the **Thémis** association enabled the group to learn about an organisation that provided assistance and offered legal aid to child victims of violence, unaccompanied minors and children in need. Thémis was also involved in human rights

education in schools in Alsace, using a multidisciplinary approach. Thanks to this meeting, the participants were able to learn how a local association helped children and young refugees to gain access to their rights and about the legal standards used to protect unaccompanied minors in France. The participants also learned about real situations, about the challenges encountered by Thémis – particularly regarding evidence and the length of legal processes – and also about support from the local authority for developing services to improve inclusion of these children and young people.

In their meeting with the team from the **Maison des Potes** the participants learnt about the activities offered by the organisation, particularly French language courses, administrative assistance for migrants, workshops on discrimination, and distribution of food. Eight girls from the organisation – the Cadettes – introduced themselves and described their work: helping the Maison des Adolescents in the same neighbourhood, assisting the elderly, distribution of food, etc.

At the meeting with the **Jeunes Européens** the participants were introduced to the work of the Young European Federalists and their local and national projects and learnt that in France their name was simply "Jeunes Européens" ("Young Europeans") because of the negative connotations of the word "federalist".

Lastly, the group met the team from **VISA-AD, Visa Année Diaconale**, an umbrella organisation for a range of international volunteering projects. The organisation offered opportunities for young people, in Strasbourg (for young foreigners) and abroad (for young French citizens), to become involved in the fields of human rights, social rights, youth work and European and international affairs. A workshop enabled participants to learn about a wide range of options for getting involved in projects on social rights, for example, and how to



develop their skills through international voluntary work. It is highly likely that some participants will stay in contact with this organisation.

2.2 Sharing of concerns about young people's social rights in various contexts

At the meeting at the **Centre socio-culturel L'Escale**, the team there talked about the situation of young people who were on the streets but not interested in any practical suggestions. How could they be attracted when their view of the "system" in general, in terms of education and employment, was often negative?

At the **Centre socio-culturel Montagne Verte** the team exchanged views with participants on the role of youth work in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in combating radicalisation of young people. In France, community centres were working together with other organisations to prevent radicalisation. This type of work was important in order to make sure that young people had alternative narratives to those of extremist groups. As one member of the team said, "Some young people see that France is not the same for everyone, and so they can easily become different from other young people." This person explained, "I am a bridge between young people and the system," adding that the work also consisted of telling young people that "going to Syria is not an adventure – it's war".

Discussions with the **Apollonia** association brought up the subject of the disparities that young people had experienced across Europe when it came to rallying their representatives on the issue of climate change. While for some this had turned out to be incredibly easy, others had found that their representatives turned a deaf ear to their appeals. One young person recounted that, back home, young

people had been punished by the authorities by having their health insurance withdrawn. Young people had therefore learnt that appeals did not necessarily work and it was sometimes better to rely on frequent action; they had to set an example to address disparities relating to climate change.

Through a statements-based activity, the participants in the **Young Europeans** workshop were encouraged to see access to social rights in Europe from the legal angle and found it useful to consider different positions between personal opinions and the legal aspect.

2.3 Introduction to methods and tools of non-formal and experiential education

A number of organisations had prepared activities based on Council of Europe tools. For example, at the **Centre socio-culturel L'Escale**, participants tried out an activity concerning perceptions and discrimination from the Council of Europe education pack *All Different – All Equal: Ideas, resources, methods and activities for non-formal intercultural education with young people and adults*. This activity raised the question of whether discrimination experienced here and discrimination experienced elsewhere was different, and this was



used as a way of talking about the young people's local circumstances. Similarly, during the meeting with the **Thémis** association, the "language barrier" tool from *Compass, A Manual for Human Rights*

Education with Young People was adapted and used to introduce the situation of young refugees and unaccompanied minors in France.

Other organisations relied on their own educational tools. In the **Apollonia** association, for example, participants were invited to take part in gardening activities, which gradually gave way to informal discussion of issues relating to climate change and then to a more formal discussion.

In the **Maison des Adolescents**, participants learnt about two educational card games. The first, on the subject of sex education, was used with teenagers aged 13 and over, from the third year of secondary school.

First the young people looked at each card in turn and described what they saw. Next they divided into two groups to invent a story based on these cards, which illustrated different approaches, stages and situations in a romantic encounter between a girl and a boy. The second card game, used with teenagers aged 12 and over, from the second year of secondary school, concerned the potential dangers of addiction.

As with the previous card game, participants were invited to look at each card and say what they saw. Then, divided into two groups, the young people had to decide for each card whether the situation was good, bad or undecided.

The **Young Europeans** for their part offered a quiz on the European Union and an activity about the Council of Europe based on a large map, which gave rise to discussion of the positions of countries and capitals, as well as a four corners activity based on statements concerning European law.

In the **Maison des Potes** participants were able to try out a co-operative game based on Werewolf. The young people were invited to write down a dream on a piece of paper and deposit it in a treasure chest. The idea was to carry this chest from one place to another, through a number of obstacles suggested by the game leader. It called for co-operation, imagination and creativity in the use of given items, and problem-solving. At the end, all the dreams were read out and the participants were able to choose one, even if not their own. Some dreams proved to be very personal, while others were more general (a world without discrimination, without war, etc.) The Maison des Potes then invited the young people to take part in an escape game on the theme of major events connected with social rights, in which the participants engaged enthusiastically despite language barriers. The four teams – United States, France, Iceland and South Africa – had to find small treasure boxes each containing puzzles (sudokus, riddles). This quest led the participants to discuss the facts revealed by the puzzles. For example, for the United States team, the discussion was about Martin Luther King's speech, for Iceland, about the women's march, etc. The idea was to show the young people that some actions, such as civil disobedience, produced change and that it was up to them to change the world.



Chapter 3

Conclusions of the week

1. Message from the participants to the Council of Europe

1.1 Preparation of the message

A draft message was prepared by a working group – consisting of Larissa Nenning from the Advisory Council on Youth, Michael Piccinino from the European Youth Forum, and Virginia Mangematin from the European Steering Committee for Youth – and presented in the plenary session on the Tuesday morning. Participants were invited to provide input for this initial version.

A second version presented on the Thursday morning in the plenary session was discussed directly with the audience. On this occasion a number of participants expressed their disapproval of the tone employed. “It’s a language of need, which could be turned into a language of action,” said one. “This text is what politicians want to hear; it ought to emphasise the gap between theory and practice,” added another. One young person was disappointed that the language was “a bit too diplomatic” and stressed young people’s desire to be involved in change and to co-operate with decision-makers. Another would have liked a text that was “bolder, more direct and more ground-breaking”.

Comments also concerned the content of the message. One participant welcomed a “down-to-earth, constructive” text focusing on major issues. On the subject of discrimination, a number of participants remarked that there was no mention of considerations such as disability, religion, sexual identity or sexual orientation. Another participant warned: “We must concentrate even more on the climate crisis, populist systems and what makes us do this. Perhaps it’s capitalism.” One participant came back to the last part of the message, which referred to “increasing pressure on member states”. In his opinion, “it would be better to

clarify the term ‘pressure’ a bit further”. He suggested making rather more use of the media and pondered the most effective types of pressure. A participant from a partner country of the Council of Europe pointed out that young people from the partner countries would like to be included in this message, since, he said, “we’re not guests here – we’ve taken an active part”. Lastly, one participant wanted some reference to existing frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Agenda, as well as good practice.

A number of participants also voiced concern about follow-up. One young person was disappointed that the proposal did not include any solutions and wondered whether the ideas and solutions put forward in the working groups would be taken into consideration. Another young person asked, “Will we young people have feedback from the Committee of Ministers? If so, how? If not, why not?” Rui Gomes, Head of the Youth Department’s Education and Training Division, assured the participants that they would be kept informed by e-mail of the outcome of the discussions of the Committee of Ministers. Another participant added that she was “quite satisfied on the whole” to find that the text reflected what had been said in the groups, but she would “really like this to be not just words on paper and for something actually to be done”.

Larissa Nenning from the Advisory Council on Youth concluded by ensuring participants that their proposals and concerns had been noted and that member states would be challenged to act so that the requested changes became a reality. She said she was satisfied with the high level of participation and commitment of the young people in developing the Message. She invites them to share it within their organisations, and to use it in their efforts with local and national authorities.

1.2 Content of the message

Our Rights, our Lives

Message from the *Enter!* Youth Week

We, young people and youth workers from all Council of Europe member states and beyond, have come together at the *Enter!* Youth Week from 7 to 12 July in Strasbourg to discuss **Our Rights and Our Lives**. In the light of the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe, we have reflected on our own experiences and drafted this message to highlight our priorities and call upon member states to guarantee the protection of our rights.

Our Rights

We are a generation committed to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. We have a right to an active role in shaping our Europe and our planet, both now and in the future. All young people must have equal access to their rights recognised in the European Convention of Human Rights and the European Social Charter, irrespective of their background or where they live. We are concerned that this is not a reality for all of us: many young people face barriers in accessing social rights, especially those coming from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Our Lives

The protection of our rights must be safeguarded and extended. Human rights, in particular social rights, are being challenged by economic, social, political and environmental crises. These include the rise of populism and authoritarian regimes, proliferation of hate speech, radicalisation and distrust of democratic institutions, lack of action on climate change and increasing discrimination against refugees and migrants and persistent exclusion of Roma and Travellers.

We live in very diverse countries and environments but face many similar challenges in accessing our rights. The realities of young people are often determined by multiple types of discrimination, disenfranchisement, and marginalisation on the basis of age, gender and sexual orientation, identity, disability, citizenship, ethnicity, religion and belief, languages or places where they live.

Challenges of accessing our rights include, but are not limited to, the following:

Meaningful youth participation in the planning and management of our environments remains an exception for most of us. We are worried that often we are not taken seriously by authorities in our countries at local, regional and national levels. Our voices and ideas are disregarded and decisions about us are taken without us. Too many restrictions exist on our right to organise, demonstrate and defend a point of view.

It is often difficult for us to access decent jobs. Many young people are in unpaid internships, low-paid and precarious work. Economic uncertainty restricts young people's access to other social rights and impacts their physical and mental well-being.

In many countries, education systems have outdated curricula and teaching methods. Human rights education is often lacking. Due to insufficient financial support and the hidden costs of education, many of us cannot focus fully on our studies. The quality of career guidance is often poor and prejudiced, and for the most disadvantaged among us, options for further education and training are severely limited.

For many of us, quality health care remains inaccessible due to cost and insufficient youth-friendly provision in many neighbourhoods. The lack of mental, reproductive and sexual health services is

Message from the participants to the Council of Europe



particularly concerning to young people.

Young people suffer from the lack of decent and affordable housing. Private rents are often too expensive and there is a shortage of social housing and student hostels. As a result, too many of us become homeless.

There are not enough inclusive public spaces for arts, sports and leisure activities and youth work and non-formal education, especially in rural communities. We have found in many places that young people often experience a lack of information and counselling services for their access to social rights.

Accessible, affordable and regular transport services are not available to many young people. The right to freedom of movement is furthermore not guaranteed for all of us.

Access to our rights is being threatened by the destructive effects of climate change on the livelihoods of many young people and their families across the world. We are very worried that our protests and the interconnections between human rights and environmental problems are not being taken seriously by authorities.

Our Europe, our Planet

Even though we come from different countries and different backgrounds, we share a common vision for a life in dignity in an inclusive Europe and on a sustainable planet. None of the problems that we face in our day-to-day lives is inevitable.

We demand that member states and all national, regional and local authorities take action:

- To fully implement the Enter! Recommendation¹



Message from the participants to the Council of Europe

and other Council of Europe recommendations on young people's access to rights;

- ▶ To call upon local authorities to have local review processes for the Enter! Recommendation with the active involvement of young people and youth organisations;
- ▶ To inform young people about their rights and how to access them;
- ▶ To provide public services and infrastructure accessible to all without discrimination;
- ▶ To support youth organisations and youth workers in their efforts to advance our rights;
- ▶ To ensure the participation of young people in democratic decision-making and all spheres of life.

We also **urge** the Council of Europe:

- ▶ To increase pressure on member states to promote and implement the Enter! Recommendation and other instruments on young people's access to their rights;
- ▶ To mainstream the Enter! Recommendation across all Council of Europe bodies;
- ▶ To monitor the implementation and follow-up of the Enter! Recommendation and the conclusions of the Enter! Youth Week and to highlight good implementation practices;
- ▶ To support and strengthen the Youth Sector of the Council of Europe and to organise more regular activities such as Enter! Youth Week;
- ▶ To continue supporting youth leaders, youth organisations and youth workers in their work for the advancement of democracy, human rights and the rule of law;

- ▶ To advocate for national, regional and local authorities to involve young people in all political decision-making, for example by establishing co-management bodies;
- ▶ To support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We demand that all young people be taken seriously and recognised as active participants in democratic decision-making about all aspects of our lives. We young people are players in not just the Europe of the future but also the Europe of the present. We call upon the Committee of Ministers to recognise and act upon this message as well as the conclusions and good practices of the *Enter!* Youth Week. Young people and youth organisations must be central to shaping a better future for our rights, our lives and our planet!

¹ Recommendation CM CM/Rec(2015)3 on access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights



« ... they are numerous – these young people who are mobilising more than ever for a fairer society and more dignified life »

2. Participants' proposals concerning their role and that of the Council of Europe in promoting the social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods

To continue on from the *Enter!* Youth Week, the participants made various proposals for promoting the social rights of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

They wanted an *Enter!* event to be held regularly, even annually, and more long-term training courses.

With regard to publicity, ideas varied: offering a newsletter, visuals, videos or a digital newspaper or organising Internet/Skype meetings to exchange information, advertising on social media, improving the social rights page on the Council of Europe website and finding influencers, public figures and sponsors to promote and spread awareness of social rights among young people.

They also suggested collecting on a specific platform what had been said during the meeting.

With regard to networking, the young people suggested promoting regional co-operation and expanding the network of youth organisations.

The young people were also interested in organising a meeting with local authority representatives and having their voices heard in their home countries. Some participants said they considered themselves

to be ambassadors and, as such, now wanted to become personally involved and raise awareness among their elected representatives, employers' networks, etc., particularly through the press. They also suggested holding events such as seminars to foster awareness at local level.

They were expecting answers on the part of decision-makers and funding for associations and nationwide projects, as well as for partner countries. They wanted assistance for stakeholders in the youth sector, particularly for setting up more youth councils.

One group of participants also asked those present to consider a proposal for a network of youth parliaments throughout Europe that would be open to both nationals and non-nationals, without election, with voluntary participation and no minimum age limit but a maximum age limit of 30. In order to reduce barriers to participation, the members of these parliaments would have their expenses paid in advance. The assembly would be continually renewed, and a delegation would be elected to vote in European institutions.

The participants expected the Council of Europe – and the European Youth Centres in particular – to organise seminars, training courses and/or briefing meetings in isolated areas (outermost regions, rural areas, etc.), especially in centres catering for young people and families. They asked for all the outermost regions to be shown on the map of Council of Europe member states.

They asked for the *Enter!* Recommendation to be sent to all local elected representatives and wanted a deterrent mechanism to ensure that it was fully implemented.

« almost one in three young people in Europe are exposed to the risk of poverty and social exclusion »

« young people have different experiences and identities »



3. Conclusions by institutional representatives



Laurence Hermand, European Steering Committee for Youth

Laurence Hermand began by thanking the participants for their “enthusiasm, dreams, formidable energy and determination to push the boundaries”. If “Let’s get things moving!” was the motto of the government institution that she headed, she believed it was above all a reflection of “the determination of many young people, who are mobilising more than ever for a fairer society and a more dignified life”.

She pointed out that in the course of 150 years we had almost exhausted our planet’s resources because of our overconsumption. It was also, she added, this output of goods and the accumulation of wealth by a minority that had led to climate change that was likely to have immediate consequences for people. But, she clarified, “This is above all the time to mobilise, to be agents of change, to press for governance closer to citizens and to invent new patterns of living that are more solidarity-based and sustainable.” She was convinced of this: “You young people must go and find the paths to transition, invent new lifestyles.”

She urged participants to take ownership of the *Enter!* Recommendation. “It’s yours and it must act as an enabler for expressing your rights with regard to public authorities, above all nationally but also regionally and locally.” She assured them that as the representative of the European Steering Committee for Youth, that is, of governments, she would communicate the Week’s messages to her colleagues in other countries. She added that she would make them aware of the importance of this recommendation so that all young people could have access to social rights and “especially young people living in neighbourhoods that are still called ‘disadvantaged’, a term that ought to be banished for ever and replaced by ‘priority’”.

She stressed the key role played by associations, youth workers, the Council of Europe and the European Youth Forum. She also particularly commended the young participants who had come from partner countries. “Their presence will have [...] emphasised the universal nature of human rights and young people’s aspirations to dignity wherever they are.” Laurence Hermand ended by reciting lines by the rappers **Bigflo and Oli** from their composition **Je suis**.

• Je suis
• Enfermé, à l’étroit dans ma cellule
• Tous les jours le même café mais c’est le temps qui est soluble
• Ces bonnes actions que l’on regrette
• Ces erreurs que l’on refait
• Au parloir je parle autant à mon fils qu’à mon reflet
• Je suis
• Gelé, j’enchaîne les verres et les hivers
• Pour se rassurer les passants doivent tous penser que l’on hiberne
• bercé par le son des pas et le bruit des pièces dans les poches
• Entre ce type et mon chien, je me demande de qui j’suis le plus proche
• Je suis
• Riche, ils veulent me faire croire que c’est une honte
• Comme si j’étais responsable de toute la misère du monde
• Moi j’dois rien à personne, même si l’argent vient à manquer

Ils veulent tous goûter au fruit de l'arbre que j'ai planté
 Je suis
 Malade, mais j' préfère dire « futur soigné »
 Mes pupilles fixent l'aiguille de la montre qui brille sur mon poignet
 A l'étroit dans mon corps, j'regarde le monde par le trou d'la serrure
 Les gens diront que je n'ai fait qu'agrandir celui de la Sécu
 Je suis
 Croyant, on me reproche souvent de l'être
 On me reproche ma barbe pourtant j'ai la même que Jean Jaurès
 On me compare à des barbares auxquels je n'ai jamais cru
 Les mosquées sont trop petites alors parfois je prie dans la rue
 Je suis
 Un peu perdu, mes p'tits poumons se remplissent d'air
 Nouveau venu sur Terre
 Mes premières larmes déclenchent celles de mon père
 Une chance, auprès de ma famille je m'sens à ma place
 Mais je n'oublie pas que j'aurais pu naître dans la chambre d'en face
 Je suis
 Seul, au fond d'un couloir, on demande pas mon avis
 J'ai pris de l'âge donc voilà j'ai bien plus de rides que d'amis
 J'aimerais partager mes erreurs, vous faire part de mes doutes
 Parfois j'me parle à moi-même pour être sûr que quelqu'un m'écoute
 Je suis
 Épuisé, mais plus pour longtemps j'en suis sûr
 Les sonneries de téléphone, la pression ont élargi mes blessures
 J'me souviens pas d'la date de mon dernier fou rire
 Je suis un homme bientôt je serai un souvenir
 Je suis
 Enfin là, cette terre n'est plus un mirage
 Je suis, arrivé par bateau mais surtout par miracle
 Une nouvelle vie m'attend ici, bien plus calme et plus stable
 Ce matin j'ai écrit « tout va bien » au dos de la carte postale
 Je suis
 Fier, mais comment vous décrire tout ce que j'ressens
 Quand je marche en ville, de moins en moins de gens me ressemblent
 Dans l'ascenseur, je parle même plus la langue de ma voisine
 A force de planter des arbres, y'aura plus d'places pour nos racines
 Je suis
 Fatigué, mal au dos et mal aux reins

Les rides sur mon visage me rappellent les montagnes de là où j'viens
 On m'a menti, et c'est trop tard que je l'ai compris
 On dit qu'ce pays n'est pas le mien alors qu'c'est moi qui l'ai construit
 Je suis
 Assis, et le destin a fait que j'me relèverai jamais
 Dans cet océan j'ai l'impression d'avoir toujours ramé
 Un casse-tête pour monter dans le bus
 Aller au taff, passer leurs portes
 Souvent les gens me regardent et me répondent que c'est pas de leur faute
 Je suis
 Heureux, jeune diplômé
 Esprit bétonné, j'ai étonné
 Ceux qui rêvaient de me voir abandonner
 Ma famille est loin d'ici, j'espère que là-bas ils sont fiers
 Je viens de gagner le combat qu'avait commencé ma mère
 Je suis
 Confiante, j'regarde ma classe un peu trop pleine pour moi
 Et j'leur tiendrais la main jusqu'à ce que la réussite leur ouvre les bras
 J'ai compris que parfois, les adultes sont paumés
 Parce que les plus grandes leçons c'est eux qui me les ont données
 Je suis
 Énervé, dans mon quartier on s'ennuie loin de la ville
 On écrit, on prie, on crie et j'ai des amis qui dealent
 Mon grand frère est au chômage, mon pote se fait 5000 par mois
 Au collège c'est le bordel, bientôt j'devrai faire un choix
 Je suis
 Loin, ce qu'il se passe chez moi n'intéresse pas grand monde
 Pour les autres on vit un rêve mais pourtant souvent on tourne en rond
 Tout est cher, avec le continent y'a comme une latence
 La plage, les palmiers, mais moi j'suis pas en vacances
 Je suis
 Discrète, mon père m'a dit de ne pas faire de vague
 Ma religion, un phare guidant mes pas depuis qu'j'ai mis les voiles
 C'est drôle qu'il me surveille mais qu'il fasse tout pour
 Me donner une leçon en m'empêchant d'aller en cours
 Je suis
 Inquiet, envers ma foi beaucoup de regards hautains
 J'reçois des leçons par des types qui ne font rien pour leur prochain
 L'humanité n'a pas plus d'coeur, j'vois le monde qui tourne et qui change

Et je suis triste de voir qu'il y a de moins en moins de gens le dimanche
 Je suis
 Amoureux, et je vois pas qui ça regarde
 A part moi et celui avec qui j'partage mon lit le soir
 Je l'aime, on slalome entre les insultes et les blagues
 Dire qu'il y a peu de temps je n'avais pas le droit de lui offrir une bague
 Je suis
 Oublié, mes fins de mois se font sur le fil
 C'est devenu rare d'aller au restau ou d'aller voir un film
 Je suis qu'un chiffre, qu'un vote, qu'une statistique, un point de plus
 dans la foule
 Moi j'suis juste né ici et j'ai l'impression que tout le monde s'en fout
 Je suis
 Un rendez-vous, un hasard, un match de foot, un mariage
 Une manif', un anniv', une accolade, une bagarre
 Une scène de crime, un jugement, un gosse qui rit, une erreur
 Une montagne enneigée, je suis la pointe de la plume d'un auteur
 Je suis les pleurs d'un départ, je suis la chaleur des bars
 Je suis une saveur cinq étoiles ou bien le gras d'un kebab
 Les flemmards, les couche-tard, les lève-tôt
 Les râleurs, les regards dans l'métro
 Un oncle raciste, un concert vide, la crise, la déprime qui ressert l'étou
 Je suis l'excellence, l'élégance ou l'espérance d'une naissance
 Ces campagnes dans l'silence, ces grandes villes immenses et denses
 Je suis, un peu de moi et beaucoup des autres quand j'y pense
 Je suis, la France



Carina Autengruber, President, European Youth Forum

Carina Autengruber welcomed this moment of celebration but added that it was also a critical pause for reflection and appraisal of what had already been done. She said that the Council of Europe had encountered major obstacles in fulfilling its mandate, particularly the recent threat to abolish its youth sector. She referred to a number of historical moments. It was Willy Brandt, she said, who, in response to the 1968 student demonstrations on the streets, the following year suggested establishing the European Youth Foundation to support youth movements and promote co-operation and closer links between them. And it was the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl who had wanted to see a second European Youth Centre set up in Budapest, in 1994, to cater for the growing number of youth activists in Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

She commended the mobilisation that had made it possible to keep the Youth Department, which was going to continue its work for young Europeans. The

*« It is a wider Europe that worked here this week,
 and the co-operation between these young people transcended borders and oceans »*

outcome of this week and the work on the *Enter!* Recommendation had shown her, firstly, that the fight to keep the youth sector had been worthwhile and, secondly, that “we couldn’t allow ourselves to stop, for the simple reason that we hadn’t done what we wanted to do”.

Carina Autengruber expressed regret that misleading ideas and perceptions about young people were widespread in our societies and could prevent them from having access to and exercising their rights. Firstly, she noted, because “we are often described as a generation having everything it could possibly need”. She rejected this lack of vision, which disregarded the obstacles encountered by young people. According to Eurostat statistics, almost one young person in three was exposed to the risk of poverty and social exclusion in Europe. Secondly, because young people were often taken to be a homogeneous group. Yet young people had very different experiences and identities.

She cited the examples of education and employment, where young people from disadvantaged groups were particularly affected. The situation in these fields, and other obstacles, were “further exacerbated by the fact that young people are usually underrepresented in politics and decision-making processes”. The situation was even gloomier, she added, when it came to access to decision-making and influence for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

It was the responsibility of member states that had signed the Recommendation to take practical action, and Carina Autengruber made the following recommendations: enact and adapt laws and policies to protect young people and ensure that they can have access to and exercise their rights in all areas of life; pursue a rights-based approach; and prioritise

youth participation and involvement in the framing of policies and the drafting of laws on issues affecting young people.

She mentioned another important aspect of work on social inclusion, which was youth work, which could offer vital support for young people in their lives. We needed a commitment from the public authorities to really invest in youth work and those involved in it, in order to achieve social inclusion.

The *Enter!* Recommendation review could and should be an opportunity to involve young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods meaningfully in the evaluation and follow-up process. Carina Autengruber said that it was “an opportunity to prove [to member states] that [young people’s] socio-economic prospects are foremost among political and economic priorities”.



Reminder of the climate emergency

At the start of Jean-Baptiste Mattei’s statement, some participants staged a happening – standing together in front of the platform, they all fell down simultaneously – to draw the institutional representatives’ attention to the issue of climate change.



Jean-Baptiste Mattei, Permanent Representative of France to the Council of Europe, Chair of the Committee of Ministers

Jean-Baptiste Mattei said that this Youth Week had been symbolic of the objectives pursued by the Council of Europe and France. He commended the non-formal approach pursued by the youth sector and the many educational methods, which, for years, had shown their added value in facilitating dialogue, mutual understanding and acceptance of others with all their differences.

He also paid tribute to a unique corpus of educational materials that member states on their own would have been unable to produce, prepared over the years by the youth sector teams: these guides and publications had provided associations and youth groups, which were sometimes isolated, with material to work for human rights and the values pursued by the Council of Europe.

He was delighted by the wide range of states

represented at the Youth Week: "It has been a greatly expanded Europe that has been at work this week, and co-operation between young people has transcended not only borders but also seas and oceans."

He commended the principle of youth participation and co-management that prevailed at the Council of Europe. The *Enter!* Youth Week, in which the young people had been involved at all stages of its planning, was an illustration of this. He assured the young people that their work would be carried on in the networks of France's Ministry for Youth and also in the Council of Europe and that France would ensure that it was taken into account in the preparation of the Youth Sector Strategy 2030.

In conclusion, he expressed his appreciation of the Week's hard-working atmosphere and thought that it had allowed constructive discussion and networking between young people and youth organisations that would perhaps lead to international meetings in the future supported by the European Youth Foundation.

« We, young people are exposed to diverse manifestations of the same problems »

« the Recommendation is not put into practice in the way that we would like »
« So many things are in our hands. We are the ones who suffer the difficulties directly »



Snežana Samardžić-Marković, Director General of Democracy, Council of Europe

Snežana Samardžić-Marković commended the participants' engagement which she had witnessed this week. She took note of the fact that the young people deplored tokenism and pointed out that in the Council of Europe there was co-management, that is, genuine youth participation in decision-making on policies and on the available funding for them, in association with government representatives.

She appreciated the awareness that she had seen among participants regarding the Sustainable Development Goals, which had also been taken on board by the Council of Europe, together with the climate emergency. She explained that Georgia, which would take over the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers from France, was going to organise a special conference on human rights and climate change. She added that there had been a request to include a strong youth dimension and the Council of

Europe would endeavour to involve young people in the staging of the conference.

She mentioned artificial intelligence and said that it should not create a divide for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. She wanted the youth dimension to be incorporated in work on artificial intelligence.

Concerning the *Enter!* Recommendation review, Snežana Samardžić-Marković said, "The problem that we are facing is persistent discrimination." She recognised that it was important to emphasise this point in the Council of Europe's youth sector strategy for 2020-2030 and in its implementation. She added that she would ensure that the Committee of Ministers and other institutions received the Message.

She alluded to the Council of Europe Development Bank and explained that member states had taken out loans in order to build social housing. She suggested encouraging member states and the Bank to take this further.

4. Participants' own words

A number of young people took the floor, one after the other and sometimes as a group, to close this *Enter!* Youth Week.



The first participant, **Alizé**, performed a text of her own composition called **What Does the World See?**

What did the world see yesterday?

It saw children having to pay

Tumbling and falling by the way

Demanding a liveable future

It saw pain and distress

Tears, screams, calls for aid

Doubt and fearfulness

These were what it displayed

What does the world see this close of day?

It sees a congregation

A group on a hopeful way

Young people from every nation

All week we shall explore

The life of urban youth

A whole life of being ignored

And neglected as uncouth

What does the world see at present?

It sees a close-knit team

With a plan that's intent

On aiding and helping to dream

Managing to offer the time

Giving its powers

To saving bold minds

And giving a meaning to the life that is ours

What will the world see anon?

It will see a new movement

The path is a long one

Towards an improvement

Young people, it's over to you

Whatever it takes, we must do

To give the warmest of welcomes

And meet the challenges head on.



Guyllain and Guy Fourn together with **Jawad El Khatmi**, young people from Urban Vibrations Bordeaux, described a few of the activities that they had been organising in their local community, such as trips and breakfasts, which were self-funding, and were glad to have been able to express their views, "us, the youngest".



Anicia Brito, a member of the 4motion association, said that she came from a town in Luxembourg that suffered from a bad image. She had decided, through the Open Yourself project, to organise community events to encourage the residents to interact. She explained that the first event had taken place the previous February and that this *Enter!* week had given her ideas for future partnerships and projects.



Edik Harutyunyan, from the National Pool of Trainers in Armenia, concluded, "We young people have to contend with different manifestations of the same problem." He acknowledged that, in the course of the week, "I have learnt from your experience and discussions". He expressed regret that "the recommendation

has not been implemented in the way that we would like it to be". But "a lot of things are up to us. We are the ones who have to put up with the difficulties directly." And, referring to the recommendation: "So let's take it to a higher level! Let's publicise it as much as possible so that more young people in our countries are aware of it and take action as a result."

The session ended with various expressions of thanks, in particular to **Yves Ouattara**, the artist who had worked with the Council of Europe to make the "70 steps" pavement stencils on the way from the Youth Centre to the Palais de l'Europe which symbolised the actions taken by the Council of Europe over the past 70 years.



Appendices

ENTER YOUT
WEE Nos droits
Notre vie

List of participants

ALBANIA – ALBANIE

Institute of Human Rights and Non-Formal Education

- ▶ Suhida Dermeni
- ▶ Ervis Biba
- ▶ Emiliano Sylia

Institute of Romani Culture in Albania

- ▶ Daniela Bace

Roma Active Albania

- ▶ Ervin Sinani

Y-PEER Albania

- ▶ Marjo Rabić

Youth Voice Network of Organisations

- ▶ Renato Pylli

ANDORRA – ANDORRE

Creu Roja Andorra

- ▶ Irene Martinez Rodriguez
- ▶ Julia Garcia Badia

ARMENIA – ARMENIE

FYM Management

- ▶ Armen Frangulyan
- ▶ Arman Hakobyan

National Pool of Trainers

- ▶ Edik Harutyunyan

AUSTRIA – AUTRICHE

JuZ Perg

- ▶ Clinton Ofori Nyansu
- ▶ Denis Climenko
- ▶ Otniel Ghinda
- ▶ Ezer Pelin

YEP Youth Empowerment & Participation

- ▶ Rebekka Dober
- ▶ Namy Nasahe
- ▶ Mirjam Welber

AZERBAIJAN – AZERBAIDJAN

The Ministry of Youth and Sport

- ▶ Heydar Aghayev

“Education” Public support of youth organisations

- ▶ Aygun Bayramova

Khazar Youth Centre

- ▶ Elvin Guluzade

Mingachevir Youth House

Bridge to the Future

- ▶ Madina Mammadova
- ▶ Pervane Mehdizade

National Assembly of youth organisations of the Republic of Azerbaijan

- ▶ Asif Gurbanov

BELARUS

Association of Youth Workers

- ▶ Dzianis Glushanin
- ▶ Tatsiana Aleksa

Belarusian Republican Youth Union

- ▶ Pavel Hrashavik
- ▶ Krystsina Kechka

Human Constanta

- ▶ Vladimir Chumakov
- ▶ Aryna Branitskaya
- ▶ Katerina Prokhorenko

BELGIUM - BELGIQUE

ASBL Molenbeek Vivre Ensemble (MOVE)

- ▶ Abdelaziz Essaghir
- ▶ Sofiane Aziz
- ▶ Whalid Benyahya
- ▶ Sofiane El Ouariachi
- ▶ Zaid Naimi
- ▶ Mohamed Tahiri
- ▶ Adil Touile

Le Miroir Vagabond ASBL

- ▶ Alisone Nicolay
- ▶ Gwendoline Materne
- ▶ Mustafa Qurban

Terra Moveo ASBL

- ▶ Bernard Moreau

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA - BOSNIE ET HERZEGOVINE

PRONI Center for youth development

- ▶ Sara Kukic
- ▶ Amela Frljuckic
- ▶ Anja Pejic

BULGARIA - BULGARIE

CVS Bulgaria

- ▶ Yoanna Duchevea
- ▶ Stoyana Goranova

CANADA (Québec)

Conseil Jeunesse de Montréal-Nord (CJMN)

- ▶ Valerie Savaria
- ▶ Samuel Pierre
- ▶ Meryeme Roudane

Les Fourchettes de l'Espoir

- ▶ Maissa Saint-Joy
- ▶ Dorothy Armand-Lima
- ▶ Perrye-Delphine Seraphin

CROATIA - CROATIE

Varazdin for European Youth Capital 2022

- ▶ Etelka Kozar
- ▶ Tino Hencic
- ▶ Viktor Ozeg
- ▶ Tea Podbojec

CYPRUS - CHYPRE

Famagusta Cultural Association

- ▶ Ahmet Turkdogan

CZECH REPUBLIC - REPUBLIQUE TCHEQUE

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

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- ▶ Pavel Martinec
- ▶ Amanda Staskova

ESTONIA - ESTONIE

Viita Tiim

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- ▶ Vivian Rankel
- ▶ Ljuba Terukova

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- ▶ Mariella Lampela
- ▶ Veera Vikman

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Derval Humanisme

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AMSED Strasbourg

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- ▶ Abdrahman Fanchaouy
- ▶ Oussama Saif El Hak
- ▶ Odil Sein
- ▶ Martina Visintin

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- Goran Coussin
- Yohan Fonsat

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- Ani Balasania
- Tamara Stawinska

Conseil Régional Centre, Val de Loire, Tours

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CSC Neuhof, Strasbourg

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- Rabia Akalin
- Zeynep Akalin
- Maissa Benhammou

Centre Socio-culturel Escale, Strasbourg

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- Thanuja Vimalaswaran
- Mariam Camara

D'Antilles et D'Ailleurs Martinique

- Julia Feist
- Eddy Marc Hermine

La Maison des Adolescents

- Marie Tocco

One Free Future, Strasbourg

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- Lucas Bleyer
- Saba Bolotashvili

Parlement Libre des Jeunes, Tours

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- Milena De Chastonay
- Julie Doussoux

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- Myriam Zouaoui
- Tifenn Gongora

- Farah Laveille-Baaziz
- Perceval Monfort

Parolla di a Ghjuventu, Corse

- Olivier Huber
- Francesca Chiocca
- Raphael Motbal
- Pierre-Jean Noyer

Petits Débrouillards

- Clementine Isembart
- Wallid Boukerche
- Axel Martelleur

Réseau Media Jeune, Guadeloupe

- Amandine Grange
- Willem Jean
- Youri Hereson
- Florence Pheron
- Val Endrickson

Urban Vibrations, Bordeaux

- Ryan D'Almeida
- Jawad El Khatmi
- Guy Fourn
- Guyllain Fourn

Voices of Young Refugees in Europe (VYRE), Lille

- Amy Stapleton
- Munier Abdelazim
- Mustafa Elhassan
- Anssoumane Doumbia
- Nazif Bassirou Hamani
- Cedric Christian Kamgaing
- Boubacar Kebe
- Amadou Oury Diallo
- Youssouf Sylla

Ville de Strasbourg

- Zain Bouch

Youth Express Network - Réseau Express Jeunes, Strasbourg

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- Aymeric Bernard
- Gloria Colacresi
- Laura Garofalo
- Alicia Mela Lopez

GEORGIA – GEORGIE

LEPL Tbilisi-N42 Public School of Maths and Physics

- ▶ Maka Bibileishvili
- ▶ Nutsa Dolidze
- ▶ Tamar Partsakhashvili
- ▶ Khatia Vardishvili

GERMANY – ALLEMAGNE

JoG (Youth without Borders)

- ▶ Mohammad Faisal Aleefi

Einstein-Gymnasium, Kehl

- ▶ Gabriella Balassa
- ▶ Safia Benkema
- ▶ Elias Bier
- ▶ Betul Can
- ▶ Irene Duhamel
- ▶ Rym El Hettak
- ▶ Hanelotxomphou Khounkham
- ▶ Renko Muller
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- ▶ Phalita Wittkau

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- ▶ Anxhela Caushi
- ▶ Vivian Lada

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- ▶ Evridiki Solinara

HUNGARY – HONGRIE

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- ▶ Aniko Bernath
- ▶ Fanni Kiss
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ICELAND – ISLANDE

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- ▶ Ikram Houimli
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- ▶ Hibatallah Loukil

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- ▶ Inna Novoshytska

Giving Joy

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Human Library NGO

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- ▶ Liudmyla Nikitina

Partnership for Every Child

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- ▶ Nazar Bezuhlyi
- ▶ Marta Dudnyk

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- ▶ Miguel Angel García López, Evaluator/évaluateur

Coyote team - Equipe Coyote

- ▶ Mark Taylor
- ▶ Marinela Sumanjski

Film crew - Equipe vidéo

- ▶ Gwénaél Bertholet
- ▶ Jean-Patrick Schwing
- ▶ Sébastien Bertholet
- ▶ William Lubelli

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- ▶ Michael Piccinino, Board member

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- ▶ Clement Dolisi, European Affairs Officer
- ▶ Wajdi Alkak
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Bureau International Jeunesse (Belgium)

- ▶ Thierry Dufour, Chargé de projet/Project manager

French Education and Youth Ministry - Ministère de l'éducation nationale et de la jeunesse (France)

- ▶ Gabriel Attal, State Secretary/Secrétaire d'État
- ▶ Virginia Mangematin, Bureau of international relations/Bureau des relations internationales
- ▶ Marie-Agnès Pierrot, Regional Directorate of Youth and Sport for the Grand Est Région/Direction régionale Jeunesse et Sport Grand Est

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Congress of Local and Regional Authorities - Congrès des pouvoirs locaux et régionaux

- ▶ Niels De Fruyier (France), Youth Delegate/Délégué jeunesse
- ▶ Jelizaveta Klimanova, (Latvia – Lettonie), Youth Delegate/Délégué jeunesse
- ▶ Huw Sherrard, (United Kingdom – Royaume Uni), Youth Delegate/Délégué jeunesse

Joint Council on Youth - Conseil mixte sur la Jeunesse

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- ▶ Laurence Hermand, European Steering Committee for Youth/Comité directeur européen pour la jeunesse
- ▶ Larissa Nanning, Advisory Council on Youth/Conseil consultatif pour la jeunesse
- ▶ Nato Antia, Advisory Council on Youth/Conseil consultatif pour la jeunesse

Secretariat - Secrétariat

- ▶ Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General/Secrétaire Générale adjointe

Directorate of Communication - Direction de la communication

- ▶ Isabelle Kerdudo
- ▶ Ellen Wuibaux
- ▶ Candice Imbert
- ▶ Sandro Weltin
- ▶ Nigel Smith

Directorate General of Democracy - Directrice Générale de la démocratie

- ▶ Snežana Samardžić-Marković, Director General/Directrice Générale

Youth Department - Service de la jeunesse

- ▶ Antje Rothemund
- ▶ Rui Gomes
- ▶ Tina Mulcahy
- ▶ Florian Cescon
- ▶ Joanne Hunting
- ▶ Marta Medlinska
- ▶ Viktoria Karpatszki
- ▶ Sylvia Ivanova
- ▶ Céline Guth
- ▶ Sue Cross
- ▶ Marilyn Horst
- ▶ Marina Filaretova
- ▶ Marius Jitea
- ▶ Natalia Chardymova
- ▶ Laszlo Milutinovits
- ▶ Stefan Manevski
- ▶ Jackie Lubelli
- ▶ Estelle Glessinger
- ▶ Nina Kapoor
- ▶ Carol Valcher
- ▶ Théophile Bahl
- ▶ Robert Loux
- ▶ Jimmy Soppo-Din
- ▶ Jeanne Chiarizia Gendron
- ▶ Joanna Wyart Jesser
- ▶ Aurélie Roy
- ▶ Patrick Norlain
- ▶ Julien Bodot
- ▶ Roger Schaller
- ▶ Mehdi Patry
- ▶ Hamza Aarab
- ▶ Muriel Julien
- ▶ Sarah Walter
- ▶ Pascal Walter
- ▶ Nasera Kessour

Trainees - stagiaires

- ▶ Ariana Botti
- ▶ Bianca Deaconu
- ▶ Arthur Huy
- ▶ Margo Peter
- ▶ Kaan Sen
- ▶ Lara Stark
- ▶ Alexandra Streltsova
- ▶ Elodie Zegmout

The programme

Sunday 7 July

Arrival of participants

18:00 Welcome activities at the Robertsau Contades
Petanque Club

19:00 Dinner
Informal get together activities

Monday 8 July • OUR LIVES

09:15 Gathering
Registration formalities
Welcome activities

10:30 *Dialogue walk* from the European Youth Centre
to the headquarters of the Council of Europe
- 70 steps for 70 years of the Council of Europe

11:30 Opening of the week at the headquarters of the
Council of Europe (Palais)

- ▶ TESTIMONIES from Enter! participants
 - ALEX THOMAS and AMBER THOMAS, TR14ers
Community Dance Charity, United Kingdom
 - TOUILE ADIL and NAIMI ZAID, MOVE -
Molenbeek Vivre Ensemble, Belgium
 - CARMEN DANIELA CHESNIOU and ADRIAN
IONUT FLOREA, ADAPTO-Asociatia pentru
Promovarea Egalitatii intre Tineri, Romania
- ▶ GABRIELLA BATTAINI-DRAGONI, Deputy
Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- ▶ GABRIEL ATTAL, State Secretary, Ministry of
National Education and Youth of France
- ▶ NAWEL RAFIK-ELMRINI, Deputy Mayor of the
City of Strasbourg
- ▶ ANJA OLIN PAPE, Chair of the Joint Council
on Youth

Exchange between the speakers and participants
about access of young people to social rights
today

12:45 Practical information about the Week
Lunch

14:30 Our Lives – Social rights in the lives of the young
people taking part in the week in working groups

17:15 Feedback from the working groups

19:00 Dinner

20:30 Evening activities implemented by the participants

Tuesday 9 July • OUR LIVES - OUR RIGHTS

09:15 Opening of the day at the Palais

09:30 Initial ideas about the Message of the Week

10:15 Introduction to the preliminary results of the
review of the Enter! recommendation with MIGUEL
ANGEL GARCÍA LÓPEZ, consultant

10:45 Young people's access to social rights today: the
point of view of young people and youth workers
Focus groups and working groups about the
measures proposed in the recommendation.

1. Education and training
2. Employment
3. Health
4. Housing
5. Information and counselling
6. Sports, leisure and culture
7. Non-discrimination
8. The role of youth work and non-formal
education
9. Equality between young women and young men
10. Youth participation
11. Combating segregation and isolation
12. Influencing youth policies

- 12:45** Lunch
- 14:30** Continuation of the group work
- 17:30** End of the work on the review of the Recommendation
- 19:30** Dinner
Informal evening activities

Wednesday, 10 July • OUR RIGHTS

- 09:15** Opening of the day
- 09:45** Departure to youth centres and youth organisations in neighbourhoods of Strasbourg.
Workshops on social rights and youth work, with local young people.
- A. Youth participation at the local level - at *Centre Socio-Culturel Neuhof*, Neuhof
 - B. Youth Participation and Democracy, *Les Jeunes Européens*, Lieu d'Europe
 - C. Gender equality - at *Les Petits Débrouillards*, Petite France
 - D. Social inclusion and respecting cultural diversity - at *Maison des Potes*, Meinau
 - E. Human Rights Education and inclusion of young refugees - at *Thémis*, Association for the access to rights of children and young people, City centre
 - F. Local youth work (recognition and support) - at *Centre Socio-Culturel L'Escale*, Robertsau
 - G. Conflict resolution and violence prevention - at *Centre Socio-Culturel La Montagne Verte*, Montagne Verte
 - H. Employability - at *Youth Express Network*, *Maison des Associations*, Krutenau
 - I. Combating hate speech - at *Association LICRA*, *Maison des Associations*, Krutenau



- J. International youth mobility and its local impact - *VISA-AD*, Quartier de La Gare
 - K. Youth volunteering - at *AMSED Association Migration, Solidarité et Échanges pour le Développement*, Esplanade
 - L. Health and healthy life styles, *La maison des adolescents* (The house of teenagers) with Association *KAPTA*, Meinau
 - M. Intercultural learning and environment - at *Association Apollonia*, Robertsau
- 16:30** Free time in Strasbourg
Dinner in town

Thursday 11 July • OUR EUROPE

- 09:30** Opening at the Palais
- 09:45** Brief presentation of the draft conclusions of the *Enter!* review and of the Message to the Council of Europe
- 10:15** Preparation of the Message to the Council of Europe and ideas for follow-up by the participants
- 12:45** Lunch
- 15:00** Closing session at the Palais
- Impressions about the week
 - Conclusions on the review of the *Enter!* Recommendation and of the week by FLORENCE MOURLON, general rapporteur
 - Presentation of the Message for the Council of Europe and member states by participants
- 16:15** Break and musical performance by YOUTH STRING ORCHESTRA AND BAND (Northern Ireland)
- 17:00** Statements and conclusions by institutional representatives
- LAURENCE HERMAND, European Steering Committee for Youth

- CARINA AUTENGRUBER, President of the European Youth Forum
- JEAN-BAPTISTE MATTEI, Permanent Representative of France to the Council of Europe, Chair of the Committee of Ministers
- SNEŽANA SAMARDŽIĆ-MARKOVIĆ, Director General of Democracy, Council of Europe

17:45 Closing statements by the participants

Group photo

18:00 Reception on the occasion of the French Presidency of the Council of Europe

20:30 Garden party and farewell evening at Lieu d'Europe

The *Enter!* recommendation in brief

What is the Council of Europe?

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. It was founded in 1949. It is now celebrating its 70th anniversary!



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.

The Council of Europe advocates freedom of expression and of the media, freedom of assembly, equality, and the protection of minorities. It has launched campaigns on issues such as child protection, online hate speech, and the rights of the Roma, Europe's largest minority.

The Council of Europe promotes human rights through international conventions, such as the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and the Convention on Cybercrime. Council of Europe member states no longer apply the death penalty.

The Council of Europe is distinct from the European Union (28 countries) although it is sometimes confused with it. They share the same fundamental values – human rights, democracy and the rule of law – but are separate entities with very different roles. The European Parliament is a body of the European Union and is also based in Strasbourg! The Union has adopted the European flag which was created by the Council of Europe in 1955!

What are social rights?

Human rights are the rights that one has simply because one is human; they enable a person to live with dignity. They are translated into protections and entitlements which are included in legal provisions and policies and which must be respected by state authorities.

Social rights are part and parcel of human rights. Social rights are all about the basic necessities for a dignified life and about living and working together. Social rights are based on ideas of equality and seek to guarantee that people have **access to social and economic goods, services and opportunities**. These should be adequate, affordable, accessible and adaptable to the people's needs. States are obliged to make efforts to fulfil social rights, and not to weaken a social right previously achieved.

« social rights are Human rights »

« all social rights apply also to young people »

The social and economic rights guaranteed by the European Social Charter concern:

- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Health
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Social Protection
- ▶ Integration and Participation
- ▶ Non-Discrimination

These rights exist without discrimination on grounds of “race”, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin.

The European Social Charter guarantees the rights of children and young people to ‘... appropriate social, legal and economic protection’ in relation to education, health, social welfare, housing, employment, minority status and the quality of public service.

Who are... “Young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods”?

Human rights apply to everyone. But some people face particular difficulties in accessing them, notably vulnerable groups and individuals. Young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, especially those living in poverty, are often such a vulnerable group. It may be that facilities, meeting spaces and services such as a school, sports club or hospital, are far

away, expensive or of low quality. School classes may be over-crowded, youth centres damaged, or policing services under-staffed. This results in discrimination in accessing human/social rights: not because of who young people are but of where they are. Disadvantaged neighbourhoods are areas or communities where people experience poverty, violence, exclusion or lack of opportunities to a higher degree than the majority of the population. Young people living in these areas not only become isolated; they also face a higher risk to be confronted with violence, sexual abuse, poor living conditions and homelessness.

Picture a young person who is unable to study and follow the profession of his or her choice. Who is unable to benefit from the internet on a daily basis because it is more expensive. Who cannot invite friends over for dinner or whose family suffers from stress due to long-term unemployment and economic hardship. These disadvantages are harmful to young people’s physical and mental health, and might prevent them from securing a place in education or employment.

What is a Recommendation?

A Recommendation is a document of the Council of Europe addressed to the governments of member states, on matters that concern human rights, democracy or the rule of law. Recommendations are not legally binding but provide a policy framework, advice and proposals for the governments to implement at the national level.

What is the *Enter!* Recommendation?

The *Enter!* Recommendation was adopted in 2015 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe as a response to the fact that young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods are more vulnerable to all kinds of risks, including poor physical and mental health, substance abuse, self-harm, violence and exclusion.

The recommendation is directed primarily to national governments. However, as it is about the situation of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, the policies of local authorities are often the most relevant. The recommendation was elaborated with proposals coming from young people and youth workers involved in the *Enter!* project¹.

What does it recommend?

The *Enter!* Recommendation proposes policy measures in various fields of youth, education and social policy. Primarily, it calls on the governments of member States to implement public policies to prevent and eradicate the poverty, discrimination, violence and exclusion that young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods face, through :

- Improving the living conditions of young people. It is recommended, for example, to invest in education and training, career counselling, secure housing and free health programmes;
- Making vocational training and quality “second chance education” opportunities available and more attractive. Young parents (especially young

mothers) should be encouraged to continue or return to education or to pursue employment;

- Improving the access of young people to affordable housing, and actively considering the special housing needs of the most vulnerable groups;
- Acknowledging that all young people should have equal access to public facilities, such as post offices, playgrounds and community centres;
- Adopting gender-sensitive, inclusive and learner-centred curricula to make them more accessible and relevant to the needs of young people;
- Actively supporting initiatives of young people and their organisations that promote social inclusion and address stigma and prejudice;
- Encouraging responsible authorities to value the role of non-formal education and youth workers/ organisations. Youth work practitioners and organisations that provide non-formal learning opportunities should be supported;
- Improving public access to information technologies and youth-friendly information and counselling services.

¹ Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights. The full version of the recommendation is available in 10 languages on the youth portal of the Council of Europe: www.coe.int/en/web/youth/adopted-texts

« disadvantaged neighbourhoods: areas or communities where the inhabitants are subject to violence, exclusion and the absence of opportunities »

The *Enter!* recommendation emphasises the need for dialogue between the various responsible authorities at the local, regional and national level. Local authorities and providers of youth work are closer to the communities and usually better understand the specific needs of young people living therein.

The recommendation also recognises the motivation of many young people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods to actively contribute to improving their individual and communities' situations.

What is the review process?

Five years after it was adopted, the Council of Europe wants to know how the recommendation is being applied by governments, local authorities or youth organisations. Information is collected through:

- ▶ A study of documents and policy measures
- ▶ An online survey involving youth policy professionals, youth workers and young people
- ▶ The participants of the Enter! Youth Week.

The results of this review will be used to set future priorities and actions by the Council of Europe and by member states. Your opinions and experiences are therefore very important! The results of the review will be submitted to the Joint Council on Youth and to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Two other resources have been created to support the Recommendation



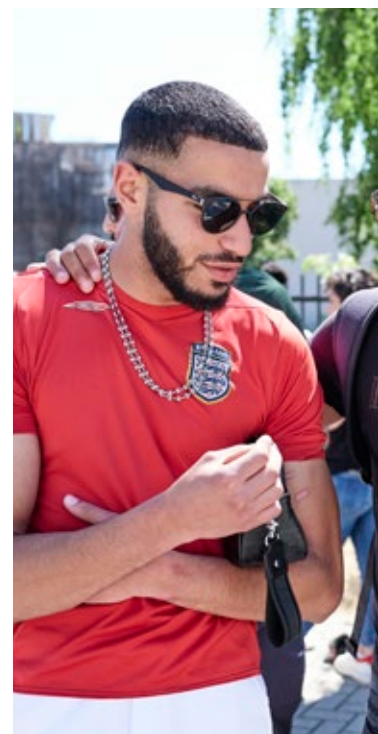
Taking it seriously:
www.coe.int/en/web/enter/taking-it-seriously



Enter Dignityland:
www.coe.int/fr/web/enter/enter-dignityland-1

The *Enter!* Youth Week in pictures































www.coe.int/enter

Every human being automatically has rights entitling them to live with dignity: human rights, which are translated into safeguards and guarantees incorporated into legal provisions and policies, to be complied with by state authorities. Social rights are part and parcel of human rights. Social rights are all about the basic necessities for leading a dignified life and about living and working together. Social rights are based on the notion of equality and seek to guarantee that people have access to goods, services and opportunities from a social and economic viewpoint. These should be adequate, affordable, accessible and adapted to people's needs. States have an obligation to make efforts to fulfil social rights and ensure that they do not undermine rights already gained.

Back in 2015, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a Recommendation on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights – CM/Rec(2015)3, also known as the Enter! Recommendation. It called upon governments of member States to take steps to prevent and eradicate the poverty, discrimination, violence and exclusion faced by many young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

From 7 to 11 July 2019 the Enter! Youth Week brought together more than 300 participants in Strasbourg – young people, youth workers and institutional representatives – from 43 Council of Europe countries as well as Canada, Kazakhstan, Morocco and Tunisia. Five years after the adoption of the Enter! Recommendation, the event aimed to involve young people in the process of reviewing its implementation. During the week, the young participants shared experiences from their lives and the impact social rights had on them. They also shared their aspirations and demands for the future of social rights and the role of the Council of Europe in the current context compounded by the environmental and climate crisis.

This report looks back at the week's highlights and the conclusions its young participants reached in a Message to the Council of Europe which reflects a "common vision for a life in dignity in an inclusive Europe and on a sustainable planet."

The week-long event was part of the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe and featured on the programme of the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers.

ENG

www.coe.int

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