

STRENGTHENING YOUTH CAPACITIES FOR PEACE AND SECURITY

A CAPACITY-BUILDING COURSE ON DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION
FOR YOUTH ORGANISATIONS WORKING ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEACEBUILDING
IN THE EURO MEDITERRANEAN REGION

15-22 September 2019, Molina (Spain)

Within the framework of the 20th edition of the University for Youth and Development (UYD)

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Deadline for applications: 18 August 2019

The North-South Centre of the Council of Europe and the “Youth, Peace and Security” agenda

[The European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity](#), or “North-South Centre of the Council of Europe” (NSC), was created in 1989 with the purpose of spreading the universal values upheld by the Council of Europe – human rights, democracy and the rule of law – in Europe and beyond. Since its inception, the North-South Centre has been advocating a dialogue between the North and the South, fostering solidarity, creating partnerships, and raising awareness about global interdependence.

The specific mission of the Centre is to empower civil society, in particular youth and women, through intercultural dialogue and global citizenship education.

The [Youth Cooperation Programme](#) of the North-South Centre provides capacity building, networking and confidence building opportunities to increase youth participation and foster interregional cooperation on youth policies for sustainable development.

“Youth, Peace and Security”(YPS) is one of the current focuses of the Youth Cooperation Programme and it represents an essential element of the North-South Centre’s work towards the to achieving of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals and of the [Council of Europe’s youth priority “peaceful and inclusive societies”](#).

The [Lisbon Forum 2018](#) launched the North-South Centre’s YPS agenda, raising awareness and recognition among all the major stakeholders of the Council of Europe on youth engagement in peace and democratic processes.

A following [quadrilogue seminar](#) organised in the framework of the [7th University on youth and global citizenship](#) allowed a structured dialogues between decision makers and youth representatives, exploring the current policy and programmatic orientations and assessing the needs of young people to better interact in peace-related decision-making processes in the Euro-med region.

The outcomes and the recommendations of both events pointed out the same challenges: **the need to strengthen youth capacities in terms of knowledge and competences to better interact with institutional counterparts, to build alliances and to better use human-right tools and mechanisms.**

The training course “STRENGTHENING YOUTH CAPACITIES FOR PEACE AND SECURITY” intends to meet those recommendations by providing an **opportunity to develop youth-based and human rights-based competences**, while providing a **space to build new networks and explore new approaches on peace, security and human rights challenges.**

This training is part of the project “Euro-Mediterranean Youth Cooperation” that aims at **enhancing the quadrilogue approach in the youth sector in the Euro-Mediterranean region through multilateral cooperation, peer learning and the empowerment of youth actors.**

Context and rationale

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 recognises the valuable contributions of youth to peacebuilding and conflict resolution, while simultaneously pointing out their vulnerability in armed conflict.

Likewise, despite both the “Youth, Peace and Security” (YPS) and the “Prevention of Violent Extremism” (PVE) agendas recognize and highlight the importance of young people in the peace field and for the prevention of violence, each of them promotes a different narrative on youth:

- On the one hand, the YPS agenda promotes a positive narrative: “youth as peacebuilders”.
- On the other hand, the PVE portrays young people “at risk” of joining extremist armed groups. Following this rationale, actors in the security sector and counter-terrorism agencies often perceive “youth as a potential threat” that needs to be contained - even though data and researches show the limits of this perception.

This negative stereotype is being used as justification to limit dissenting youth voices, disregarding human rights and discharge demands for social and political changes coming from youth-led structures.

As result, despite being a resourceful actor for peace, young people are being disproportionately affected by both armed conflict and counter extremism measures.

However, some youth-led peacebuilding organizations are making meaningful contributions for regional stability by using PVE agenda as a tool for the protection of human rights in their interaction with government bodies or to reclaim the civic space for political participation.

Youth peacebuilders and young human rights activists are also positively addressing injustices and inequalities, complementing the work of established organisations by recurring to different perspectives and practices grounded on the human-right based approach.

These different perspectives on the role of young people make clear the need for a **shift in public perception and in the policies for political inclusion for youth organisations** in the YPS-related decision-making processes.

Such shift needs a different approach when dealing with injustice and human rights but it also a represent a major challenge for youth advocacy work.

The [Progress Study on YPS “The missing peace”](#)¹ provides the right terrain to develop actions on this direction, also encouraging synergies between young people working in the peacebuilding and in the human rights fields². In fact, both youth-led peacebuilding entities and young human rights activists share the objective of addressing structural barriers preventing inclusive societies; both are affected by the shrinking space in which civil society operates, a phenomenon which tends to greatly shake youth organisations, as they are being perceived as actors with limited legitimacy. It is evident that there is room for collaboration between peacebuilders and human rights activist, yet in practice, the space to explore synergies and learn from each other fields is limited.

Thus, empowering young people with basic **human rights tools and political participation’s competences** and **exploring the complementary relationship between democratic participation, human rights and peacebuilding** are crucial steps for increasing youth participation for Peace and Security.

Aim and specific objectives

The training course “STRENGTHENING YOUTH CAPACITIES FOR PEACE AND SECURITY” aims at **building up the capacity of experienced youth peacebuilders and young human rights activists in the field of advocacy, political participation, conflict transformation and PVE, enabling them also to use human rights mechanisms and reporting tools to address injustice and transform conflicts**³.

The training will be also an opportunity to reflect on what type of collaborative work between youth right activists and youth-led peacebuilding organizations can protect young people from violence and contribute to the realization of their rights.

The specific objectives of the training course are to:

- Increase participants’ knowledge on bodies and procedures of political participation in the peace and security field;
- build up the skills of young people to engage with stakeholders across the social and political spectrum by finding, analysing, and shaping policies on peace and security;
- empower young participants with tools and competences (such as negotiation and dialogue facilitation) to gain a greater space and safer role during decision making processes in conflict affected communities;
- explore how human rights mechanisms and reporting tools can be used by young peacebuilders young to address injustice and transform conflicts;
- understand the complementary relationship between human rights and peacebuilding fields and discover how synergies between these two sectors can be used to create spaces for political participation;
- provide a platform for peer-to-peer learning between young peacebuilders and youth rights activists; facilitating the creation of bottom-up networks and alliances that have a shared vision of achieving change through positive actions.

The framework of the training course: the the 20h University for Youth and Development

The training course “STRENGTHENING YOUTH CAPACITIES FOR PEACE AND SECURITY” takes place in the framework of the 20th University for Peace and Development (UYD).

¹ See sections 1.3 “Debunking assumptions” and 3.1 “Meaningful political inclusion” of the Progress Study on YPS “The missing peace”,

² See section 3.5 “Dealing with injustice and human rights” and the specific recommendations at page 122.

³ [See more about this concern already addressed by OHCHR](#)

The UYD is a one-week residential event where different organisations operating at national and international level run their own activities (training courses, seminars, meetings..) within a common framework that encourage multilateral cooperation, networking, peer education and sharing of knowledge.

The UYD besides being a platform for running youth related activities, through the “joint programme” and other parallel meeting and initiatives, the UYD explores the concept of global education and global citizenship, creates opportunities to advocate for youth participation and empower young people towards their rights and duties.

By applying a multilateral approach based on partnership-building, the UYD provides an exceptional space for young people, youth organisations and youth decision makers to meet, debate and cooperate on youth policies.

More information about the Universities promoted by the North-South Centre and its partners are [available here](#).

Participants' profile and selection process

The training course will bring together **20 experienced representatives, multipliers and young leaders from organisations working in peacebuilding or human rights in the Euro-med region.**

Candidates will be considered for the selection phase on the basis of the following eligibility criteria to be fulfilled by the deadline for applications:

- ✓ **be citizens of one of the 47 Council of Europe member States⁴ or of the Southern Mediterranean Countries⁵;**
- ✓ be an active member of an youth-led or youth-related organisation engaged in peacebuilding or human rights activities at a local, regional, national or international level;
- ✓ be aged 18-35 years;
- ✓ be able to fluently communicate in English;
- ✓ be able to attend the course for its entire duration.

Candidates selected on the basis of the above eligibility criteria will then be evaluated according to the following selection criteria, which must be clearly specified in the candidate's application form:

- ✓ Experience in advocacy work, youth participation and democratic processes;
- ✓ be active in the field of Euro-Mediterranean youth cooperation;
- ✓ be able to apply the gained competences and to implements follow-up activities within a structured organization which has youth as main target group and peace and security among the objectives.

Only candidates who fulfilled eligibility criteria, and whose application is submitted by the closing date of the call will be considered for the selection.

→ The selection will be carried out by the North-South Centre seeking also gender and geographical balance.

→ Please, note that due to the large number of applications only the shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

→ Individual requests and follow-up questions will not be addressed, unless considered as assistance to the application process.

The selection results will be announced by the 22 August 2019.

→ After the communication of the selection results, the selected participants have to be able to promptly react to North-South Centre communication and **provide further information for travel and visa arrangements in a short period of time.**

→ The selected participants which will miss to reply by the deadlines as set in the North-South Centre' communications will be replaced by shortlisted candidates.

In order to apply, candidates must [fill the online application form](#) by the 18 August 2019 (23:59 UTC - Lisbon time).

⁴ To check the Member States of Council of Europe please visit [this link](#)

⁵ Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon Libya, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Palestine* (*this designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual position of Council of Europe member states on this issue).

Travel, board and lodging

- **Arrivals of participants are expected on 15 September and departures on 22 May September.**
- The North-South Centre will issue pre-paid round-trip flight tickets from the country of residence of the selected participants to Malaga Airport (Spain).
- The North-South Centre will also ensure transfers from and to the airport/train station to the training venue.
- It is expected that participants/supporting organisations assume expenses related to local transport in the home country, as well as visa costs.
- The board and lodging for the full duration of the training course is covered.
- Participants will be accommodated in shared rooms (double or triple).
- Please carefully look for information regarding the visa needs you might have to attend the activity.

For more information:

**North-South Centre of the Council of Europe
Youth Cooperation Programme:**

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