

The June issue looks at:

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### **(1) The big picture**

Albania took over the chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers on 23 May 2012, putting youth firmly on its chairmanship [agenda](#) (“*Albania particularly...believes that young people can become messengers for peace*”). It intends to host a Youth Camp for Peace, to “*send out a new message of reconciliation, friendship, co-operation and optimism for the European integration of the Balkans region.*” A second Chairmanship youth project is the regional youth conference in October on “the recognition of youth work and non-formal learning” (organised jointly by the EU-CoE youth partnership). The 2012 “Exchange on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue” of the Council of Europe, with a strong youth component, will be held on 3-4 September 2012 in Albania.

At a meeting on 27 May 2012, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Jordanian government identified youth as one priority of future co-operation, to be included in the joint action plan that will now be developed.

The Parliamentary Assembly has given the green light for an open meeting and debate with youth personalities, celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council of Europe youth sector during the PACE June part-session in Strasbourg. The title is “A vision for the future”.

The PACE Committee of Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development will submit its report on “The young generation sacrificed: political, social, economic and other consequences of the

financial crisis” (rapporteur: Mr Luca Volonté, Italy) on 26 June 2012. The Advisory Council on Youth was particularly involved in the preparation of this report.

## **(2) Preparation of the 9<sup>th</sup> Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth**

A meeting of Senior Officials was held on 22 May in Strasbourg 2012 to prepare the 9<sup>th</sup> ministerial conference (St. Petersburg, 23-25 September 2012). The meeting reached consensus on most parts of the “Final Declaration”; some formulations are still under discussion, but the final draft is expected to be communicated to the Committee of Ministers within days. All CDEJ and CCJ members will receive the draft shortly.

Senior Officials also agreed on numerous programme and protocol details, among them the chairing of the three conference panels (youth ministers of the Flemish Community of Belgium, Latvia and Portugal).

Online pre-registration for participants, observers, guests and staff started last week. Details are available in the first secretariat communication on the conference organisation, already communicated to member states. All other participants will receive the same information together with their invitation.

The conference will be preceded by a youth event on 22-23 September 2012. The selection of participants is expected to conclude in June.

## **(3) Youth Department update**

The Bureaus of the European Steering Committee for Youth ([CDEJ](#)) and the Advisory Council on Youth ([CCJ](#)) met in Strasbourg on 23-24 May 2012. They prepared the meetings of the CMJ, CDEJ and CCJ in November, particularly the CMJ debate on priorities and expected results for 2014-2015. Work on the draft CM Recommendation on the access of young people to social rights was almost finalised (one further round of consultation).

The training course for young bloggers and online activists, a first major activity of the project *Young People Combating Hate Speech On-line*, was held in the EYCB on 20-27 May 2012. The follow-up group set up by the CMJ will meet in Strasbourg on 21-22 June.

Looking ahead: the Programming Committee will meet on 11-13 June 2012, to decide on youth events and EYF grants. Other youth events in June include:

- Training course on human rights education with young people through non-formal learning in Cyprus and Greece, organised on 7-11 June in Cyprus by the NGO Support Centre from Cyprus;
- Symposium on the well-being of young people in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, organised in the framework of the EU-CoE youth partnership (Georgia, 11-12 June 2012);
- The 2012 Youth Peace Camp (EYCS, 22-30 June);
- Seminar for young parliamentarians from the Russian Federation and Turkey (EYCS, 24-30 June 2012);
- “Youth Sport speaks out on TabooPhobia; developing a youth led campaign to challenge homophobia in and through sport” with [ENGSO](#) Youth (EYCB, 24 June – 1 July).

Looking further ahead:

- The 2012 Euro-Arab Youth Forum in Bethlehem (Palestinian Authority) on 2-7 July, organised together with the League of Arab States, the Higher Council for Youth and Sport of the Palestinian Authority and the European Youth Forum;
- The 4th International Youth Camp "Dialogue" in the Kaluga Region of the Russian Federation (11-15 July 2012), a follow-up to the “Kazan Action Plan”.

#### **(4) Other Council of Europe news**

The [North-South Centre](#) organised an institutional meeting on “Africa Europe Youth Cooperation” in Braga, Portugal on 26 May 2012. The next (3<sup>rd</sup>) meeting of the Executive Committee will be held in Strasbourg on 29 June 2012.

The Council of Europe is currently preparing for the first time its high-level “World Forum on Democracy”, scheduled for 5-11 October

2012 in Strasbourg. In this context, the PACE decided to contribute to the Forum with a “Youth Assembly 2012”, organised in co-operation with the Youth Department on 5-7 October 2012. This youth event, financially supported by the EYF, will look at “Youth and Democracy: the young generation sacrificed?”

## **(5) Other news**

The EU “Employment Package” was unveiled by the European Commission on 18 April 2012. On 23 April, the EP Employment and Social Affairs Committee on 23 April proposed a “European Investment Plan” to create new jobs, the creation of a legally enforceable “European Youth Guarantee” and “European Quality Charter Traineeships”. The Employment Package was also discussed by the Ministers for Employment, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO) on 25 April in Denmark.

The Council of the EU adopted a general approach on the new integrated [Erasmus for All programme](#) proposed by the European Commission ([17188/11](#)). The Presidency [compromise text](#) constitutes a political mandate for future Presidencies to engage in informal negotiations with the European Parliament during the second half of 2012 with a view to reaching overall agreement on the proposal early in 2013.

The EU Council, at its meeting on 10-11 May 2012, also adopted [conclusions](#) on fostering the creative and innovative potential of young people.

The ILO organised a “Youth Employment Forum” on 23-25 May 2012. A study on “[Global Employment Trends for Youth 2012](#)” was also published by in May, which provides updated statistics on global and regional youth unemployment rates and presents ILO policy recommendations. The 101<sup>st</sup> International Labour Conference of the ILO, currently held in Geneva (30 May – 15 June 2012), will also focus on “The youth employment crisis: Time for action”.

The [Conference of Youth for Rio+20](#) to be held on 7 – 12 June in Rio de Janeiro should bring together thousands of young leaders from

around the world to prepare for the UN [Conference on Sustainable Development](#) (Rio+20).

The programme of the [EuroDIG](#) Conference on Internet Governance (Stockholm, 14-15 June) includes information on the CoE project *Young People Combating Hate Speech On-line*.

The British Council is organising (as part of the activities of the outgoing UK Chairmanship) a youth democracy conference “Listen up! Young People and Democracy” on 27-28 June in London (information and on-line application [[link](#)]).

## **(5) Publications**

The Advisory Council on Youth has set up a new Facebook page: [Advisory Council on Youth](#). Other current CoE Facebook pages are [Council of Europe - Youth](#) and [European Youth Centre, Budapest](#)

New publications available on [www.coe.int/youth](http://www.coe.int/youth):

- "Young People Combating Hate Speech On-line", a study carried out by the British Institute of Human Rights which explores the realities of cyberhate and presents counter-initiatives
- Report of a seminar on “Quality criteria for e-learning in intercultural non-formal education activities”, published together with a preliminary study.

Best regards

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Abbreviations:

CCJ: Advisory Council on Youth

CDEJ: European Steering Committee on Youth

CM: Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

CMJ: Joint Council on Youth

CoE: Council of Europe

Congress: The Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

DDCP: Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation of the Council of Europe

DG: Directorate General

ENGSO: European non-governmental sports organisation

EuroDIG: European Dialogue on Internet Governance

EYCB: European Youth Centre Budapest

EYCS: European Youth Centre Strasbourg

EYF: European Youth Foundation

ILO: International Labour Organisation

PACE: Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

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