



Youth Research Seminar on Equal Opportunities for All

**A seminar organised in the framework of the Partnership in the Youth Field
between the Council of Europe and the European Commission**

European Youth Centre Budapest, 7-9 November, 2007

Call for applicants

Deadline – September 25, 2007

Introduction

The Partnership in the Youth Field between the Council of Europe and the European Commission is organised around the triangle of youth work practice/training, youth research and youth policy as well as horizontal activities with a regional focus (e.g., the Euro-Med; South East Europe; Eastern Europe and Caucasus).

The Partnership's programme of seminars, research networking and knowledge production through the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (www.youth-knowledge.net) is based on the promotion of a dialogue between young people and their organizations, researchers, policy makers, youth workers and practitioners.

The youth research seminars are typically organised around key themes of relevance to young people in Europe that have been identified by the European Commission and the Council of Europe. For information on previous seminars and accompanying publications, please consult:

<http://www.youth-partnership.net/INTEGRATION/EKC/Research/seminar.html>

Thematic Background

International migration, enlargement and increased mobility contribute towards the European Union and many Council of Europe countries growing in terms of ethnicity, culture, language and diversity.

The need to promote the principles of equality, equal opportunities and non discrimination through policies and programmes has therefore become a priority both in the Council of Europe (CoE) and in the European Commission (EC).

The youth research strand of the Partnership programme between the CoE and EC aims to step forward the work on equal opportunities and youth inclusion by enabling evidenced-based analysis of the issues at stake in equality and anti-discrimination. The role of research in this domain is both to reflect more generally on the topic of equality and its particular relevance in the European context, and more specifically to enter into dialogue with youth NGOs, youth policy makers and practitioners on the outcomes of European programmes and policies for young people.

The **Council of Europe's** involvement in the development of the principle of Equality dates back to 1950, to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. The framework was later complemented by the Social Charter (from 1961 and revised in 1996), which guarantees social and economic human rights.

At the 7th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth, held in September 2005 in Budapest, the Resolution on the Priorities of the Council of Europe's Youth Sector for 2006-2008 was accepted. The resolution puts an emphasis on a number of priorities, including the "promotion of intercultural dialogue, inter-religious co-operation and respect for cultural difference" and "facilitating the access of young people to working life and to social rights".

In this context, major emphasis has been put on the **European Youth Campaign on Diversity, Human Rights and Participation** (2006-2007), conceived in the spirit of the 1995 Campaign "**All Different – All Equal**", (<http://alldifferent-allegal.info/>).

The **European Commission** has been committed to the fight against discrimination since its creation. For many years, the main focus was the prevention of discrimination on the basis of nationality and gender. More recently, the focus has enlarged, in response to the demand from civil society generally and the changing needs of European society, to include other forms of discrimination. New powers for combating discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, religion or beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation were conferred under substantive amendments to the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997, together with a strengthening of those already agreed in relation to discrimination in general.

The broadening of the competencies of the EC institutions led to the passing of the anti-discrimination directives 2000/43/CE (Racial Equality Directive) and 2000/78/CE (Employment Equality Directive), the so called *Equality Directives*, providing everyone in the EU (citizens and Third Country nationals) with a common minimum level of legal protection against discrimination.

The promotion of "**Equal Opportunities for All**" was also set as a priority by the European institutions with the Decision No 771/2006/EC of the European Parliament

and of the European Council of 17 May 2006 establishing the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007) – towards a just society (http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/eyeq/index.cfm?page_id=13#1).

With specific regard to the youth field, the EC's new Youth in Action Programme (2007 – 2013) complements the general European equality policies, stressing, among its priorities, the access of young people with fewer opportunities to its activities and the promotion of cultural diversity.

In order to draw up an effective implementation at national level of the new policy enhancing equality, the Directives encouraged member States “to take adequate measures to promote the social dialogue between the two sides of industry with a view to fostering equal treatment, including through the monitoring of workplace practices, collective agreements, codes of conduct, research or exchange of experiences and good practices”.¹ The EC itself tried to improve social dialogue with EU citizens promoting a public consultation process linked to the Green Paper on *Equality and Non-discrimination in An Enlarged EU*, [COM(2004)379], the results of which lead to the communication from the Commission in 2005 [SEC(2005) 689].

The Commission invited comments and reactions to the Green Paper from all of the relevant stakeholders (national authorities, specialised equality bodies, non-governmental organisations, regional and local authorities, the social partners, experts and individual members of the public).

On 04.07.2007 the EC has launched an online consultation, open till 15.10.2007, on combating discrimination in the Member States and at EU level, which will help the Commission plan new measures to tackle discrimination on the basis of gender, religion, belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in areas beyond the job market².

Even if the deadline for the implementation of the described legal framework has expired, it seems to be still in process, given the formal requests sent on 27-06-2007 by the Commission to 14 Member States to fully complete the EU rules banning discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic origin (2000/43/CE).

Despite the significant efforts of States, institutions, organisations and citizens in the implementation of anti-discrimination legal instruments and policies, many young people are still far from equal opportunities in practice and suffer social marginalisation and daily inequalities in improving their life conditions in different sectors (at work, in the access to education and vocational trainings, health assistance, housing, access to good and services, etc.)

According to the Eurobarometer Report “Discrimination in the European Union”³, published in January 2007, “to be young and aged under 25” is not considered a major disadvantage in itself compared to the following conditions/categories: Disabled, Roma, different ethnic origin than the rest of the population, homosexuality, having a faith different from the main religion in the country.

¹ Art. 11 Directive 2000/43 and art.13 Directive 2000/78

² <http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=Discrimination&lang=EN>

³ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_263_sum_en.pdf

However, it has long been recognised that young people in general are particularly vulnerable to fluctuations in economic trends and that disadvantaged young people have fewer possibilities to participate to all aspects of social life and to enter labour market. The 2004/2005 Joint Employment Report indicates that there are: "worrying signs of deteriorating job prospects for the young, the low-skilled and other vulnerable groups, such as disabled people, immigrants and minorities, who face compounded disadvantages, including risks of discrimination."⁴

The subject of equal opportunities for youth has been given an impetus by the EU institutions because of its strong link with social exclusion and the destabilising effect this can have on the society.

Relevant studies carried out by international organizations and universities show that the effective access of young people to formal education system contribute to shaping their sense of community and improve both their social well being (personal level) and their active citizenship (social level).⁵ The Eurobarometer states that schools and universities have an important role to play in combating discrimination⁶.

This situation of exclusion from education concerns particularly all Roma young people, whose protection has been set as a priority for the Enlarged Europe, but it is not limited to them. For example, young non-citizens, many of them born and brought-up in Europe as the children of immigrants, face the 'cycle of social exclusion' within the walls of the so called, "Fortress Europe".

Among the youth living in the EU, the situation has improved but many of them are treated as "others" because of their religion, sexual orientation, colour of skin, etc. or are faced with different kinds of "phobias" (homophobia, xenophobia, islamophobia, handicaphobia, etc.). When youth experience discrimination of multiple kinds, negative effects of the resultant marginalization often dramatically increase.

Thus, the discriminations faced by many youth raise important questions for law makers, governments and civil society.

In the recent years a number of important studies have contributed to the debate on equality/inequality and discrimination. There is, however, a lack of specific studies on discrimination suffered by young people in many domains of life. Studies that employ longitudinal methods are particularly needed to better understand the dynamics and effects of discrimination in the lives of youth.

This seminar aims to explore various realities of equality and discrimination as well as policies, strategies and mechanisms enhancing equal opportunities for all, in order to do a step forward in the contemporary panorama.

⁴ <http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/05/st07/st07010.en05.pdf>

⁵ Voices of Youth , www.unicef.org/voy, October 2002; Albanesi C., Zani B. Cicognani E. (2004) Adolescents' sense of community: Which measures for which communities? In A. Sanchez.Vidal, A. Zambrano, and M. Palacio (eds.), Community, ethics, and values. Barcelona: Publicacions Universitat de Barcelona.

⁶ 42% of respondents chose educational institutions (followed by parents 40% , media 34%, the National Governments 31%, Employers/Companies20%) when presented with a list of actors in the fight against discrimination.

Key Themes of the Seminar

In order to allow a holistic approach to relevant topics, the organizers welcome participants from a wide range of perspectives, disciplines and backgrounds. Thematic sessions have therefore not been strictly determined and will emerge from the papers to be presented at the seminar.

Nonetheless some guidance may be helpful to envisage the framework of the Seminar. First, given the nature of the Partnership between CoE and EC, the organisers are particularly interested in papers which include policy development and better practices in the youth field. The Seminar provides an important opportunity to share ideas, strategies, policies practices that have been developed in diverse national and regional settings. Therefore papers of varied geographical focus as well as theoretical, practice and policy orientation are welcome.

Secondly, this research seminar has its roots in the European political framework in the field of Equality, Equal Opportunities and Anti-discrimination, which cover important key documents partly listed below in the “References and Resources”.

Finally, it may be helpful to identify some of the themes and issues likely to be considered at the Seminar, which are not intended to be exhaustive. There may well be other important areas that have not been mentioned. The principal aim of this guidance is to assist prospective participants frame their proposals. It should, though, be emphasised that applicants may select for analysis either a highly specific subject or a combination of different themes and issues:

- 1) Conceptual work on equality and inequality, studies measuring youth discrimination in specific fields (employment, education, housing, health assistance, private and public services and goods, social assistance, etc.), or in multiple domains, analysis of perceived discrimination, comparative work, work examining the impact of EU anti-discrimination policies.
- 2) Antidiscrimination policies (particularly those that target particular groups of young people), integrative analysis of relevant case studies, good practices concerning equality in different areas, programs/cases of solutions provided for young people who have suffered discrimination, positive actions implemented especially in youth field, studies focusing on equal opportunities for youth in urban and rural areas; actions promoting gender equality, good practices established by the cooperation of different youth groups or by practitioners working with different youth groups, cases of anti-discrimination mainstreaming.
- 3) Specific differentiated experiences of social exclusion; programmes promoting social inclusion, support/advisory services focused on discrimination and equal opportunities; social inclusion strategies; groups vulnerable to unemployment; new patterns of discrimination and inequality.
- 4) Youth Participation: the contribution of young people to anti-discrimination policy formation, action and possibly research, case studies of youth changing discriminatory practices and challenging opportunity structures, civic and/or political involvement of minority youth, other actions and expressions by youth who

experience discrimination, cooperation between youth “at risk of discrimination” youth and other youth, peer education, and so on.

Profile of Participants

1) All participants must be able to work in English

2) Participants should belong to at least to one of the following categories:

- Established academic researchers in the field;
- Researchers with or about to complete Masters or PhD studies on relevant topics;
- Researchers interested to contribute to the development of thinking in the specific field of youth with regards to the seminar themes;
- Practitioners with a theoretically informed and analytical approach to the subject;
- Policy makers actively involved in addressing the issues relevant to the topic.

Application Process

Applicants should submit:

- a completed application form,
- a 500-word abstract in English explaining their potential contribution to the seminar and its outcomes; to elaborate findings, tables or figures can be appended to the abstract (maximum 2 additional pages),
- a succinct CV (no more than 2 pages).

The requested documents should be sent **by 25th September 2007** to the following **e-mail address**: marta.medlinska@coe.int. Applications sent by post, fax or other e-mail addresses **will not be accepted!**

Selection

A diverse group of participants is encouraged to apply to present a paper at the seminar. Selection of presenters will be made on the basis of quality and clear relevance to the seminar themes. The final selection will also take into account gender and regional balance amongst participants.

Logistics

The seminar will take place in the European Youth Centre in Budapest on November 7-9, 2007. Board and lodging will be provided and travel costs reimbursed. Further information will be provided for the participants of the seminar at a later stage.

The working language of the seminar will be English.

Timeframe

The candidates will be informed about the selection results by 5th October.

The successful applicants will then be provided with further guidance and requested to present a draft version of their completed papers before the seminar for circulation to all participants. Following the event the authors will be invited to revise their papers, taking

into account the discussions that took place with fellow experts during the course of the seminar. The final versions of their papers will then be uploaded to the European Knowledge Centre on Youth Policy:

(<http://www.youth-partnership.net/INTEGRATION/EKC/Intro/index.html>).

APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN 25th September, 2007

Presentation of Papers for Publication

The main outcome of the seminar will be the publication of an edited collection. Papers presented at the seminar may be selected by organisers for inclusion (as one of approximately 15 chapters). Paper presenters invited to publish their contribution in the collection should expect to revise and edit their manuscript to publication standard and in accordance with the editor's recommendations.

Coordination

For clarification and further information on the seminar please contact:

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email: marta.medlinska@coe.int

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References and Resources:

Council of Europe, European Youth Campaign

<http://alldifferent-allegal.info/>

Council of Europe (1961 and 1996) European Social Charter

http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/esc/1_general_presentation/treaties.asp

European Court of Human Rights

<http://www.echr.coe.int/ECHR/EN/Header/Basic+Texts/Basic+Texts/The+European+Convention+on+Human+Rights+and+its+Protocols/>

European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/legis/legln_en.htm

European Parliament webpage: Texts of the Equality Directives

1) Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0043:EN:HTML>

2) Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0078:EN:HTML>

European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

Equality and non-discrimination in an enlarged European Union Green Paper

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/pubst/grpap04_en.pdf

European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

Annual report 2006 Equality and non-discrimination

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/pubst/poldoc/annualrep06_en.pdf

European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/pubst/stud/busicase_en.pdf

European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/pubst/stud/roma04_en.pdf

European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/pubst/news/nl7_07_en.pdf

European Commission, European Year of Equal Opportunities for All

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/eyeq/index.cfm?cat_id=SPLASH

Fundamental Rights Agency

Trends and Developments 1997-2005

Combating Ethnic and Racial Discrimination and Promoting Equality in the European Union

http://fra.europa.eu/fra/material/pub/Trends/Trends_en.pdf

Also for your information:

[Youth Partnership website / European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy](#)

[Council of Europe Youth Directorate website](#)

[European Commission – Directorate of Youth website](#)

[European Youth Portal](#)