

Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of youth



Youth policy symposium with EECA countries

Concept Paper

Dates: 13-14 November 2013

Venue: Armenia

Partners: Ministry of Youth of Armenia, SALTO Resource Centre for Eastern Europe and Caucasus, European Youth Forum

Main theme: Role of youth work in education for democratic citizenship and participation.

Outline:

Education for democratic citizenship and youth participation are challenging topics throughout Europe and represent a common focus of both the EU and the Council of Europe youth policy. The goal of this event will be to examine the situation more closely in the context of Eastern Europe and South Caucasus. What is the situation of education for democratic citizenship and youth participation in the region? How can the education for democratic citizenship and participation be further developed and made accessible to all young people through education (formal and non-formal)? How can the national and local authorities, but also the society at large become more receptive for youth participation and self-expression? Equally, in a region that still has its share of conflict, how can we foster transnational and cross-cultural interaction of young people and through education for democratic citizenship and human rights education support young people in overcoming the spirals of hatred and conflict? These will be some of the questions that the event will strive to address. The structure of the event will allow for discussion from a regional perspective, as well as for a more targeted view of the specific needs and situations per country.

The event would follow the workshops on youth policy development in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus (Budapest, Hungary 2008; Konstancin-Jeziorna, Poland 2009), the symposium on Youth Policy Cooperation in the EECA region in Odessa, Ukraine in July 2011 and the symposium on youth policy and health and well-being of young people in the EECA region in Tbilisi, Georgia in June 2012. It would again serve as a platform for exchange and furthering discussions on youth participation and evidence based youth policies in the region, in line with the conclusions of the previous events. Links with the EU's Eastern Partnership Youth Window of the Youth in Action Programme and the Council of Europe's Human Rights Education Youth Programme will be established.

Participants:

The symposium will bring together approximately 50-60 key stakeholders of the youth field from different countries of the region (and some experts from other parts of Europe), including in particular national governmental authorities in charge of youth and education, youth workers and youth leaders with interest and experience in the topic, but also representatives of municipalities/districts (depending on structures existing in countries), researchers and other relevant stakeholders, e.g. from formal education and employment sectors, as well as National Agencies and SALTO Resource Centres of the Youth in Action Programme.

Policy Context:

Both the CoE and the EU continue to place great importance on cooperation in the youth field with EECA countries. In the 2012-2013 period, the European Commission allocated 31.5 million euros for cooperation within Youth in Action Programme with the Eastern Partnership countries through the "Eastern Partnership Youth Window". The European Commission supported the establishment of Eastern Partnership Youth Regional Unit whose purpose is to, inter alia, support capacity development of government and civil society actors in the youth sector in Eastern Partnership countries and encourage the involvement of a broad range of stakeholders.

The Council of Europe's Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (2010) calls on member states to adopt "the aim of providing every person within their territory with the opportunity of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education". The Charter builds on the experiences of the Human Rights Education Youth Programme, which the youth sector initiated in 2002, centred on manuals Compass and Compasito. The Council of Europe Action Plans with individual countries, include also capacity-building for youth organisations and youth workers in mainstreaming human rights education and EDC in youth work. The framework cooperation agreements of the Council of Europe with the Russian Federation and with Ukraine are also largely based on youth participation and human rights education. These are also underlying the No Hate Speech Movement campaign, which all countries in the region have joined.

National youth policy reviews and a summary report for the region were produced by the EU-CoE youth partnership in 2011 and discussed at the Odessa Symposium. They shed the necessary light on the situation in the youth field in the region and served as a first step for discussing further development. With the 2012 symposium that took place in Tbilisi, the regional cooperation moved from a general discussion on youth policy development to discussing a particular theme of well-being and health of young people in the region. This year's event will continue in the same line by focusing its discussions on the role of youth work in education for democratic citizenship and participation.

Themes

Overall theme

- Role of youth work in education for democratic citizenship and participation- a knowledge based approach to youth policy-making and to practice development in the region.

Aim and objectives:

Aim:

To better understand, demonstrate/exemplify and promote the role of youth work in education for democratic citizenship and participation.

Objectives:

- Initiating dialogues, discussions, debates, exchanges and possible co-operations among all stakeholders;
- Creating opportunities for peer-learning
- Presenting good practices
- Learning from research based evidence and improving policy and practice
- Come up with conclusions and ideas on how to enhance policy-making and practice in this field

Main themes

- Creating and fostering links between youth policy and youth work in the field of education for democratic citizenship, human rights education and participation: policy, research and practice perspective
- Role of youth work in supporting cross-cultural interaction of young people
- Role of new technologies in fostering education for democratic citizenship and participation

Programme outline

12 November

Arrival of participants

13 November

09h00

Welcome and Introduction

Opening remarks by Representative of the Host Country

Welcome addresses by representatives of partner institutions:

Representative of EU Delegation to Armenia

Representative of the Council of Europe Office in Yerevan

09h45

European experiences: the role of youth work in education for democratic citizenship and youth participation

11h15

Coffee break

11h30

Regional experiences: the role of youth work in education for democratic citizenship and youth participation

Short presentations (up to 10 min) of the countries in the region

Discussion

13h00

Lunch

14h30

Working Groups on Role of youth work in education for democratic citizenship and participation:

[The state of the art as a starting point in each group. Three introductory inputs will be given in each group by a researcher, policy-maker and youth worker]

WG I. What is effective? (Research and practical experience into effectiveness of youth work in the education for democratic citizenship and participation)

WG II. Role of youth work in supporting cross-cultural interaction of young people (national and regional perspective)

WG III. New technologies and youth work (what are the trends in this field? How can youth work incorporate them in their non-formal education for democratic citizenship and participation?)

WG IV. Reaching out to disadvantaged groups (how to use youth work to engage rural and disadvantaged youth?)

	Break
17h30	Reports from Working Groups and Discussion
20h00	Dinner

14 November

09h00	A visit to an example of a youth work project in Armenia
11h00	Panel: Knowledge based approach to connecting youth policy and youth work (how can policy makers involve youth work in the implementation of youth policy objectives? How is evidence gathered on effectiveness of youth work and what for? How can research help youth work to achieve better results? – input from regional and wider European stakeholders)
12h30	Lunch
14h00	Open Session (break included): Stakeholders Meeting Point (discussion in groups related to topics of panels and working groups, policy discussions and ideas for activities in the future – all topics are chosen and proposed by participants)
17h00	Plenary session: Conclusions and Follow-up
18h00	End
19:00	Dinner

15 November

Leaving early hours in the morning or a cultural/field visit