



**Youth**Partnership

**Joint report of the  
4th EKCYP-correspondents meeting  
and the 14th meeting of Experts on  
Youth Research  
13<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> October 2008  
Strasbourg**

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Council of Europe  
European Commission



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## **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008 : Meeting of EKCYP-correspondents only**

### **The EC-CoE Partnership on youth and the EKCYP**

Purpose of the morning session was to introduce the new EKCYP correspondents to their tasks and to the main features of the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy, the afternoon session was for both, old and new, correspondents. The introduction of the new correspondents showed that some of these correspondents were only nominated a few weeks before and had only very vague picture of their responsibilities. So it was of high importance that an overview of the structure and tasks of the Partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission was provided by Hanjo Schild, coordinator of the partnership.

The Partnership between the European Union and the Council of Europe started 1998 with youth worker training on specific topics and was enlarged in 2003 by two other pillars: Cooperation in the Europe-Mediterranean Region and Cooperation in Youth Research. The research cooperation aims for better knowledge on young people to support policy makers and youth workers with information and hence foster evidence based youth policy.

2005 the three pillars were merged to one single partnership with the three thematic strands and with a regional focus (on Europe-Mediterranean, South East Europe, SEE and the Eastern Europe and Caucasus, EECA). For these regions workshops for policy development took place this year in Serbia (for SEE) and Budapest (for EEC).

The main 4 objectives of the partnership are :

- "Citizenship, participation, human rights education and intercultural dialogue"
- "Social cohesion, inclusion and equal opportunities"
- "Recognition, quality and visibility of youth work and training"
- "Better understanding and knowledge of youth and youth policy development".

Inside the fourth objective on better knowledge the methods and tools used are seminars and workshops, networking, knowledge provision and production, regional cooperation and information and publication. For networking annual meetings of experts on youth research (taking part already since the mid 90ies) and the EKCYP-correspondents have been established. The correspondents for both of these networks are nominated by the national ministries in charge of youth.

The network of EKCYP-correspondents is growing. It started with 15 countries in a pilot phase; now 40 correspondents are nominated to provide data for the EKCYP. One of the purposes of these meetings is to support the correspondents in their work related to the provision of data. In the correspondents meetings the Partnership secretariat also learns what kind of additional support would be needed for the correspondents to improve the

quality of the data in the EKCYP. Through the joint meeting with the experts on youth research cooperation between the two networks can be organised and improved.

Inside the objective better knowledge of youth and youth policy development also the EKCYP is positioned, but moreover research seminars, youth policy seminars and thematic workshops and the provision of information through publications and the website belong to this strand. The research publications provide a selection of the papers presented at the seminars. The next seminar will be on health and well-being of young people in Europe. Future aim for the work in the 4<sup>th</sup> objective (better knowledge and youth policy) is to bring the different activities closer together and to use synergies. Better Knowledge on Youth is one main objective in the White Paper on Youth which makes the EKCYP a high priority for the European Union

For the Council of Europe other instruments for youth policy development based on knowledge of youth are the policy reviews that were carried out in 16 countries until now and the advisory missions.

### **The Features of EKCYP**

Philipp Boetzelen presented the European Knowledge Center for Youth Policy to the new correspondents (as well as to the experienced once that were present).

The origin of the European Knowledge Center for Youth Policy lies in the three objectives of the main priority on Better Knowledge;

- 1) Identify existing knowledge in priority areas of the youth field and implement measures to supplement, update and facilitate access to it,
- 2) Ensure quality, comparability and relevance of knowledge in the youth field by using appropriate methods and tools
- 3) Facilitate and promote exchange, dialogue and networks to ensure visibility of knowledge in the youth field and anticipate future needs

These tasks should be tackled with the EKCYP,. Its main aims were from the beginning in the pilot phase to provide the transfer of knowledge from research to policy and practice, to follow the implementation of the Common Objectives and the White Paper on Youth and CoE observation of youth policy. Furthermore the EKCYP should provide exchange between researchers, policy makers and practitioners (and in between these groups).

### **The importance of the EKCYP for the European Commission**

Ekatarini Kareniki gave an introduction on the work of the Youth unit of the European Commission and explained the importance of the EKCYP for their work. The European Union's youth policy is orientated on the priorities developed in the White paper on Youth, a

new impetus for the youth in Europe, from 2000. Additionally the European Youth Pact gave the orientation of political directions and impulses on European level.

With 2008 the cycle of youth policy ends and from 2009 on new priorities for the European Youth policy will follow.

To find and define these new priorities different instruments were used:

- An online questionnaire was launched to collect information. In a second step consultations with young people following the ideas of the structured dialogue were established.
- The national reports on the implementation of the existing priority topics and on the implementation of the European youth pact as well as on national youth policy in the 27 member states are another source to find the future directions. In combination with visits to all members states, these reports give a very good impression on the state of the art of European youth policy respectively on youth policy in Europe.

Out of these different forms of information and in cooperation with the research community and the EuNYK network<sup>1</sup> new priorities will be defined until spring 2009.

For this time being a first report on the situation of young people in Europe will be prepared by the European Commission. That report will play an important role with regard to evidence for youth policy development. Such reports should be carried out on a three-annual basis from now on. Topics of next years report will be trajectories from education to labour market, participation as well as health, well being and consumerism. Beside participation, which is already a topic in the EKCYP, the other topics are not represented in the European Knowledge Centre until now. With the data collection on transversal topics this gap will be closed.

The backbone of the reports will be data collected in the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy. Even though the report should be produced every third year the data should be collected annually to allow comparisons in the countries.

In the beginning of the EKCYP the results were disappointing since a lot of interesting data was missing. This was a cause for the EC to alter together with the CoE in the partnership and with the correspondents the questionnaires for the priority topics and develop new questionnaires for the transversal topics. It is the hope and the wish of the youth policy unit of the EC that from now on the EKCYP correspondents will be able to collect all the data for the questionnaires on an annually basis, so the reports can be produced and have influence on the policy development on European level.

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<sup>1</sup> The third network (EuNYK) is organised by the EU and should help to foster national networks on youth.

## **Data collection in the EKCYP**

The EKCYP is an online database, where data and information on the national realities of youth are offered via a country sheet, and the questionnaires.

The data on youth in the countries is collected in country sheets and in 4 questionnaires on priority topics - participation, information, voluntary activities and better knowledge on youth. The EKCYP tries to fulfil the objectives of the priority on better knowledge on youth - facilitating access to data, make data comparable, and facilitate the dialogue between the stakeholders in the youth field.

In the beginning of the EKCYP the questionnaires were very similar to the reports of the member states of the EU to the European Commission on the national developments in the 4 key priorities of the White paper process. But these questionnaires were remodelled in the last years, because not all data was available in all countries and various questions were multidimensional or unclear.

The country sheet provides an overview of the institutions, the legislation and the structure of youth policy in the countries. It should give a description and links to the national information. And from 2008 on country fact sheets on the transversal topics “Health and well-being”, “Social inclusion”, “Employment”, and “Attitudes of young People” will be provided. The first data collection on these topics was commissioned to the Turku University of Applied Science.. From next year on, the EKCYP-correspondents should update the data on these transversal topics. These data should already be available on other EU or national web pages (because national reports on these topics are produced and are collected in other DGs of the European Commission).

Carole Schnitzler, webmaster of the Partnership, and Philipp Boetzelen moreover presented the other features of the EKCYP that should encourage users to provide knowledge. In the document library policy documents are collected, but also registered users can upload interesting documents. Documents in the national languages with an abstract in English would be of interest, since the search engine is scanning the whole text and therefore one can find any document when using national language in the search function.

The database of youth experts gives information on the working fields of experts in the countries. The section on good practice is also open for all registered users to upload models of good practice in different fields – be it youth work, or research. Via the news section the users can inform other registered users about ongoing activities.

The glossary provides information on basic terms of European youth work and youth policy and on those used in the questionnaires to enable a common understanding inside the EKCYP. Furthermore it is planned to provide information on national glossaries in the different countries, if they exist.

Furthermore it is planned to provide different forums on various topics. But these forums make only sense if they are used and if they are moderated. The correct forms of how to develop this feature will be topic of future discussions. These forums are furthermore understood as a support measure for the correspondents. In special forums the correspondents can support each other with advice on where to find data, how to interpret questions and so on. This would allow newcomers to learn just already by reading the guidance given in an existing forum. This forum should be restricted and only accessible to the correspondents only. Some other forums could be open in the future to a broader public, depending on the given topic for invited researchers and practitioners, or for everybody.

Furthermore the wish of the correspondents for a special e-mail account was fulfilled. So all correspondents will have an e-mail-address, that will also be the reference address provided on the country sheets and the questionnaires.

The main tasks of the EKCYP correspondents are the provision of data for the EKCYP in the questionnaires and the country sheets, to update the country sheet according the needs and the promotion of the EKCYP on national level. The partnership tries to support the correspondents to fulfil their tasks, also the ministries that nominated the correspondents are asked to provide them with all support they could offer. Two annual meetings, support letters from the Partnership and the Ministries, also country visits from the Partnership secretariat to strengthen the role of the correspondent in the country are offered. These country visits could also be in form of participation in national network meetings.

### **Quality assurance**

The quality assurance of the data is provided on several levels. The first step is the member check in the countries followed by the validation of the ministry (if this is done by the ministry or by a national institute is up to the countries). The data is checked once more by the Partnership secretariat if more information is needed or if something is not clear.

The quality group contributes to the development of quality standards of the whole website, and the EKCYP. The first meeting of the quality group has lead to many changes on the structure of the website, the second one was mainly dedicated to the clarification and simplification of the questionnaires. Until now no document on how to assure the quality of data is available. The next meeting of the quality group will be in November 2008.

Concerning the country sheets and the questionnaire on participation, the Partnership secretariat and some experienced correspondents gave the new correspondents some information of how to work with these questionnaires and where to find the data.

## **Tuesday 14 October : Joint session EKCYP Correspondents & the European Network of Experts on Youth Research**

### **Opening of the Joint meeting**

- **Introduction** by Hans-Joachim Schild (Partnership Programme) and Howard Williamson, chair of the Researchers Network

In the most recent meeting of the Network (24-26 september 2007) it was argued that the existing variety of networks on youth policy and research leads to confusion about respective identities and roles. This was one of the main topics of this meeting, which offered the possibility to clarify the role and relations between the the group of EKCYP correspondents and the research network members, The meeting focused also on sharing updates about the developments in youth research and policy on a European and national levels, presenting interesting youth research projects, discussing the current and anticipate future trends in youth research in Europe.

- **Tour de table**, brief introductions of everybody present

### **Updates Council of Europe**

#### **o Publications**

Two new publications were presented:

- Ohana, Y. et al (2008) Born in Flensburg, Europe. Journeys with Peter Lauritzen. Demokratie & Dialog.
- Lauritzen, P. (2008) Eggs in a Pan - Youth work : Speeches, Writings and Reflections by Peter Lauritzen. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

#### **o 8<sup>th</sup> Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth (Ulrich Bunjes, DYS)**

This event brought together ministers responsible for youth from the 49 signatory countries of the European Cultural Convention as well as representatives of the European Youth Forum, international non-governmental youth organisations and representatives of international organisations and institutions, professional networks, and parliamentarians. The conference, held in Kyiv, Ukraine from 10 to 11 October 2008 and entitled "The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: Agenda 2020", focused on challenges that young people across Europe are facing today. These included:

- Promoting equal opportunities for girls and boys, young women and young men;
- Supporting young people's access to social rights;

- Empowering young people to promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue and its religious dimension;
- Promoting intergenerational dialogue and solidarity;

The aim of the Conference was the approval of Agenda 2020. Agenda 2020 sets out the priorities for the Council of Europe's youth policy in the coming years. Ulrich Bunjes clarified that the declaration was unanimously accepted by the Conference (see appendix). Ulrich Bunjes drew the attention to the points 2.10 up to 2.12 in the declaration. These points emphasised the co-operation between youth researchers and policy makers in order to promote evidence-based youth policies and support the work of practitioners in the youth field.

Finally Ulrich Bunjes underlined the attention paid to the promotion of intercultural dialogue and gave a short update on the developments concerning the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue.

Octav Marcovici asked if there was something as a follow-up of the policy reviews that had been done. Ulrich Bunjes indicated that the interest in the reviews was increasing. Also the countries that have been CoE-members since 1949 would like to submit their policy of the previous decennia to this kind of "peer review". The attention to follow-up therefore has been rather limited, but could be placed higher on the agenda.

Charles Berg, speaking from experience in Luxemburg and Malta, expressed his conviction that most countries experienced the review as inspiring and thought provoking. He welcomed the Kiev declaration and the recognition of the added value of these policy reviews.

Howard Williamson shared his observation that only eight countries represented in the room did not participate in either a review or an advisory mission. He added that there are even countries who asked for a re-visit of a review team. In that case it seems more feasible if those countries invite an advisory mission on some burning questions in their policies.

○ **International reviews of the national youth policy**

International reviews have been carried out by the Directorate of Youth and Sport in the CoE since 1997. International youth policy reviews have the objective to improve good governance in the youth field of the particular country reviewed; to contribute to the body of youth policy knowledge and development of the Council of Europe and to make contributions to greater unity of Europe in the youth field and set standards for public policies in the field of youth.

16 reports have been completed so far: Finland, Netherlands, Spain, Norway, Sweden, Romania, Estonia, Luxembourg, Lithuania, Malta, Cyprus, Slovakia and lately Hungary, Latvija, Armenia and Moldova. A review in Albania is on the agenda for next year.

Howard Williamson, who coordinated the most recent reviews, emphasised that these 16 reports present a rich body of knowledge on youth policy in very different countries and the way things have been changing through the years.

- **Advisory Missions**

The purpose of advisory missions is to provide competent advice to a country on a particular issue in its youth policy, upon a request of relevant authorities. It is also up to the government to decide on making a discussion and findings of the advisory mission public. Advisory missions have been carried out for Hungary, the Czech Republic, FYROM, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Moldova, Ukraine...

### **Updates on European Commission undertakings (Ekaterini Karanika)**

- **Evaluation of the Open Method of Coordination**

Youth policy falls under the remit of the Member States. This means that there is no EU-wide legislation in the field of youth policies. However, in 2002, Member States decided to use the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) to co-operate in enhancing the four priority areas identified by the White Paper on Youth, which was adopted in November 2001. 2009 will be a crucial year for the current youth policy cycle that started with the European White Paper in 2001 is coming to an end. The Commission has sent out a questionnaire to the member states to identify future priorities. There is also an on-line consultation of civil society concerning these topics.

- **Youth Report 2009**

Eurostat, the EU's statistical office, provides data on youth, and efforts are made to increase the scope and quality of youth-related statistics. Through the European statistical system, Eurostat co-operates with Member States to build up comparable and reliable statistics. For the first time Eurostat works on a comprehensible overview of facts and figures focused on young people, which would be presented in spring 2009 and repeated three-annually.

- **Update on the European Network of Youth Knowledge (EuNYK)**

**EuNYK** was set up by the Commission in 2006 to exchange good practice on developing national youth knowledge networks between policy-makers, young people and researchers and thereby facilitate the implementation of the common objectives for a

better knowledge and understanding of youth. The Network came together three times. Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> of October will be the fourth meeting in Brussels.

- **Other undertakings of the Commission in the Youth Research Field**

Special attention is given to the accessibility for young people of cultural activities.

There will be a review of all researches done so far, to come to some conclusions for policymakers.

### **Updates on the Youth Partnership**

- **Thematic Seminars and Publications (Marta Medlinska)**

The Partnership's commitment to research includes a programme of youth research seminars. Such events promote dialogue between young people, youth organisations, researchers, policy makers and practitioners. Following research seminars were/are organised:

- Equal Opportunities for All (November 2007, Budapest, Hungary)
- Health and Well Being of Young People in Europe (December 2008, Marly-le-Roi, France): organized in cooperation with the French government within the EU Presidency.

Marta Medlinska (Youth Partnership) attracted the attention to Coyote, a magazine on issues around "Youth-Training-Europe",

More seminar reports would soon be available on-line and further publications comprising research papers presented at the research seminars were in preparation on 'European citizenship' (2006), 'youth employment' (2007) and 'equal opportunities' (2007).

Concerning the thematic seminars Stefania Rota wanted to know how people were invited. Marta Medlinska clarified that invitations were preceded by a call for papers drawn up by a preparatory team also responsible for the evaluation of the papers. Furthermore there were the regular mechanisms to invite people from practice and policy through youth forums and national ministries.

Howard Williamson pointed out that the Youth Researchers Network could be an excellent pool to put together such a preparatory team. This could also ease the workload of the Youth Partnership Secretariat.

- **Youth Policy Seminars (Marta Medlinska and Hans-Joachim Schild)**

The Partnership aims to encourage and create opportunities for dialogue within the triangle of youth governance: youth research, youth policy and youth work practice.

Promoting development of evidence based youth policy the Partnership is focusing on the following regions: South-East Europe, Eastern Europe and Caucasus, Euro-Mediterranean. Organising the youth policy development seminars by the Youth Partnership and relevant regional SALTO Resource Centres serves this purpose. The Final Report from the Seminar on Youth Policy Development in South-East Europe, written by Metka Kuhar (2008), was briefly presented.

In 2009 future evolutions will be discussed with the League of Arab States and the Anna Lindh Foundation.

- **Expert Workshops**

The Partnership invites a small group of experts on a certain theme and works together with a hosting country. In May 2008 the Partnership organized in cooperation with the Flemish Government an expert workshop on "The history of youth work in Europe and its relevance for today's youth work policy". Tracing back the roots of youth work and identifying different evolutions within and between countries must help us to initiate a fundamental discussion on nowadays youth work identity. Filip Coussée presented some main conclusions and announced the sequel for May 2009. The results of the workshop will be documented in a comprehensive report by Griet Verschelden (Ghent University College), to be uploaded by the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy. There will also be a book published comprising papers presented during the workshop.

In June 2008 another expert workshop took place under the title "Continue the Pathway towards Recognition". It focused on the issue of recognition of non-formal learning in the youth field, taking stock of the developments since endorsement of the White Paper 'A new impetus for European youth' adopted by the Commission in November 2001. It was organised with the Czech Government and the Czech National Agency of the "Youth in Action" programme.

- **European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (Philipp Boetzelen)**

Philipp Boetzelen gave an update on the EKCYP features, now imbedded in the new Partnership-web portal. He also presented the new fact sheets on the transversal topics. The EKCYP will provide country-specific information sheets on these topics in the section Country Information.

The group of EKCYP correspondents has extended to 40 members now (in the pilot phase the network started with 15 members).

- **MA European Youth Studies (Charles Berg, University of Luxemburg)**

The M.A. EYS initiative brings together first-rate teaching and research expertise from throughout Europe to create a unique Bologna 120 ECTS Master's degree in European Youth Studies, a specialist and interdisciplinary field that emerged in the 1990s in response to the rapidly changing European social mosaic and its implications for the study of youth in the life-course and for young people's lives.

Manfred Zentner asked what would be the course fees. Charles Berg admitted that the rationale on fee-raising is not the same in the different countries, making this question tricky. The answer depends on where the students are inscribed. The consortium is still working on this point and other questions on credits, validation, etc. Answering a question of Anastassia Ladopoulou Charles Berg added that the languages used most would be English, French and German and that there were also other linguistic capacities available in the MA team (Bulgarian, Greek, Italian, Spanish etc.).

o **Introduction of the evaluation of the youth research and policy strand of the Youth Partnership (Maria Carmen Pantea, Babes Bolyai University, Romania)**

Maria Carmen Pantea presented the preliminary findings of the evaluation study. Maria had interviewed a diverse group of participants and stakeholders on the objectives of the Partnership (knowledge production, provision of knowledge, networking and fostering evidence-based policy) and on the Partnership's methods and tools (thematic seminars, expert workshops, publications, research project, researcher's network and EKCYP).

The aim was to enhance effectiveness, coherency, cost efficiency and adequacy of future performance.

Other sources of information were reports, participation in meetings, previous evaluations and the feedback after the presentation of the preliminary results, which she kindly requested from the experts present.

***Main questions of the study:***

- o Are the aims and objectives realistic and relevant? Are they being achieved?
- o Are the methods and tools used functional? How could they be improved?
- o Does the quality of the activities' outcomes contribute to the overall objectives?
- o How can the EKCYP be further developed and which role(s) should it play?

***Provisional conclusions and recommendations***

- The Partnership is broad and undertaken in an overloaded administrative context
- The Partnership needs to revisit its priorities for the next period
- ECKYP needs increased support at both national and European level
- Researchers' Network needs to clarify its roles, objectives and contributions
- The relation between Researchers' Network and EKCYP network needs clarification

- The Partnership needs to promote the appreciation of the value of data collection for the countries themselves
- The Triangle: research, policy, practice needs to be situated in a broader and more inclusive context.

Before finalising the report an online survey was planned in order to complete the data collection. All experts present were kindly invited to respond to it.

Following this presentation there were questions and suggestions from Charles Berg, Howard Williamson, Michel Vanderkeere, Ekaterini Karanika, Octav Marcovic and Manfred Zentner.

Charles Berg sustained that the **methodology** of the research should be described in the report. The lack of a clear methodological part could cause some doubts on the unbiased position of the researcher. Furthermore a clearer distinction between description and evaluation should be made.

Marta Medlinska pointed out that the final report would contain a methodological section but that it was difficult to clarify the standards for evaluation for the Youth Partnership research and policy strand as its goals were in themselves still 'work in progress'. This was more a **reflection** exercise than a strict clear-cut evaluation.

Howard Williamson agreed that there was a need to clarify what kind of evaluation was conducted. This was not a summative evaluation (impact measurement of a product, at the end of an intervention), but rather a formative one (qualitative feedback concerning the process). He stressed the importance of situating the evaluation in the historical context of the Partnership and underlined the need to learn also from **unsuccessful** practice. For instance, institutional positions and professional pressures are too high, especially for young researchers, to take on the fully-fledged work of correspondents in addition to the regular work. A solution to that needs to be found.

Summarizing Howard Williamson recognised that the work on the evaluation was done in a very limited timeframe and encouraged its finalisation taking into consideration the constructive feedback received. Manfred Zentner agreed.

Michel Vanderkeere insisted that there was more knowledge than the knowledge produced by researchers. The seminar reports have a great potential in this respect, but these seminars should not only be considered as a kind of intellectual exercise, but also a **dialogue** between researchers and practitioners.

Ekaterini Karanika demanded to be clearer about the **stakeholders**. It was not always clear if things were said by the secretariat of the Partnership, EKCYP correspondents or other partners.

Octav Marcovici agreed with the need to have a clear methodology, but it seemed to him that this research was well designed and the results were strong and **recognisable**.

- **Presentation of the provisional findings on the transversal topics. Discussion on additional sources of data, geographical/thematic extension, etc. (Marta Medlinska and Philipp Boetzelen)**

Following the European Youth Pact the topics: employment, health and well-being, social inclusion, lifestyles and attitudes of young people gained on their importance. There is a need to map this kind of transversal topics. As mentioned earlier most correspondents are overcharged already, therefore the Partnership decided to launch a call, won by Turku University of Applied Sciences (Finland). Marta Medlinska and Philipp Boetzelen gave an overview of the preliminary findings.

Howard Williamson underlined the need to be careful with all the data collection.. The researchers involved in the research network and EKCYP need to situate data in social, economical and political **context** in which they were collected.

Sorin Mitulescu agreed: one result can stand for a multitude of significances. Data on youth unemployment for instance should not be reproduced without explaining the context of general unemployment. Charles Berg indicated that the interpretation could be clarified in the respective country reports.

Ekaterini Karanika suggested to collect some of the **missing** info in Eurostat (HIV) and in the Lisbon process reports (entrepreneurship).

Manfred Zentner approved the need to collect data on the transversal topics, but pointed out that there were more useful **sources** of information than those that have been used in the research. Each country should look for their own sources.

Riccardo Venturini criticized the fact that researchers and policymakers always seem to gather data on problem behaviour. Also information on **positive** behaviours should be gathered. Hans Joachim Schild agreed and pointed at the fact that EKCYP also provided data on volunteering and membership of youth organisations.

Stefania Rota asked to inform the different countries on these data. European policymakers should not use these data without **feedback** of the member states.

**Wednesday 15 October :**  
**Joint session EKCYP Correspondents**  
**& the European Network of Experts on Youth Research**

**Key research issues and activity in particular countries and on pan-European level**

Agnes von Maravic (Council of Europe General Directorate 3 Social Cohesion) explained that family was already a topic at the first Council of Ministers in Vienna, 1949. In 2008 it was high on the agenda because of the declining birth rates, with the Eurobarometer showing that many people would like to have more children than they actually do. Young adults seem to be strongly influenced by external pressures and trends (studies, work, uncertainty, ...). This delicate and highly personal issues is interwoven with religious, gender and ethic factors. Agnes emphasised the need for evidence-based policies and asked for information and feedback from the researchers:

- Which evidence is there on young peoples intentions to have children? What are the reasons to choose not to have children?
- What can family policy do about it?

The session continued with presentations on new research and developments from Estonia, Belgium, Latvia, Serbia, Italy and a four-nation study on peer violence and a ten-nation study on intercultural dialogue.

**1. Estonia (Marti Taru)**

Marti Taru presented two recently initiated research projects:

- Increasing the quality of youth work and youth policy
- Evaluation of the Youth Program

**2. Belgium (Nicole Vettenburg)**

Nicole Vettenburg gave an update on the Flemish youth monitor and youth research platform (JOP), an interdisciplinary cooperation between 3 research groups, initiated by the Flemish government to stimulate systematical and interdisciplinary attention for youth research ([www.jeugdonderzoeksplatform.be](http://www.jeugdonderzoeksplatform.be)). The JOP-monitor covers 12 themes, classified in three C's: Conditions, Convictions and Conduct. By the end of 2009 analyses, reports and publications on JOP-monitor 2 should be finished.

**3. Four-nation Research on peer violence in public spaces (Howard Williamson)**

Howard Williamson announced a research (the Daphne Project 2007-2009) conducted in a similar way in four countries: UK (Glamorgan), Finland (Mikkeli), Austria (Institute for Youth Research) and Estonia (Tartu). It aimed at drawing a picture of the different types of

everyday violent interactions between 13 to 16 year olds in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Austria, Estonia, Finland and the UK.

#### **4. Latvia (Ilze Trapenciere)**

Ilze Trapenciere presented the result of a research on the quality and outcomes of out-of-family care. The aim of the research was to describe life trajectories of these children by describing their life stories and transitions. Many of them faced a high risk of social exclusion. The research was conducted in focus groups with young people, recruited in vocational schools and through social services.

#### **5. Ten-nation research on intercultural dialogue (Manfred Zentner)**

Manfred Zentner presented a EYCAdeMy research on intercultural dialogue. Supported by the European Commission, EYCAdeMy was launched in January 2005. The European Youth Card Association (EYCA) was interested in knowing what young people think and why. EYCA looked for a way to conduct qualitative research and planned to invest in focus group research, where selected groups (according to age, gender, nationality, etc) were brought together with specially trained moderators to talk on specific themes and answer specific questions (see [www.euro26.org](http://www.euro26.org)).

Several researches had been conducted so far to highlight what young people think about youth information (2004), youth participation (2005) and perceptions of human diversity among young people (2006). The most recent research focused on intercultural dialogue (2007).

#### **6. Serbia (Zora Krnjaic and Tamara Nikolic)**

In order to develop evidence based youth policy and National Youth Strategy, Ministry of Youth and Sport initiated wide consultative process and different types of research:

- Practice based research in the framework of the National Youth Strategy: Round tables with NGO's to understand the situation of young people (field research)
- Academic, empirical research projects

The results were then translated, in cooperation with a wide range of stakeholders, into the National Youth Strategy and the Action Plan.

### **Discussion on cooperation and synergies between the Network of Experts on Youth Research and EKCYP correspondents**

One of the conclusions of the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Network of Experts on Youth Research focused on the need to clarify the distinguished roles and functions of different networks. EuNYK, EKCYP and the Researchers Network seem to have similar compositions and tasks. Howard Williamson, chair of the Researchers Network presented three possible models:

1. EKCYP correspondents and the Youth Researchers' Network have their own distinct profile and function. In that case there would be a need to clarify the relationship between them.
2. The two networks are merged. This joint meeting is then a first step in that direction. In that case all members should take care of the critical academic function of research. There must not be a shift from academic to servicing functions only.
3. In a kind of a compromise we could look for a way of organizing two overlapping circles, risking that in the end no one is satisfied.

Howard Williamson stressed the remaining need of a structural commitment to involve researchers on the level of European policy making.

Manfred Zentner, himself member of all three mentioned networks, argued that the involvement of youth researchers should go beyond a servicing function, typical for EKCYP. Researchers have the job to point at hot items and new trends. They should go beyond the already known and predefined categories of knowledge provision and production.

Charles Berg admitted that there were far too many networks. Furthermore the allocation of statutory powers to form the Triangle had never been imposed. Nevertheless, the European model does have an influence on national developments in the field of youth. According to him the problems were threefold:

- a work overload for everyone, also for the secretariat of the Partnership
- a loss of visibility and influence of the Youth Researchers' Network
- a lack of continuity in the different networks

What to do?

- Merging parts of the networks
- Imposing more continuity
- Establishing a clear mission statement and task description

The Youth Partnership should be the consolidating factor. Charles Berg pointed at the results of the evaluation carried out by Maria Pantea and proposed that a small working group could work out a model to be discussed further with the aim to safeguard the positive functions and eliminate the negative elements.

Ekaterini Karanika agreed that that was a confusing situation and that clear guidelines were needed. In addition she suggested that the EuNYK and the Youth Researchers' Network could perhaps be merged. Hans-Joachim Schild pointed at the fact that EuNYK is EU27 network, whilst the Youth Researchers' Network potentially brings together people from 49 countries. Moreover the EuNYK should integrate the three angles of the Triangle.

Octav Marcovici argued that there should not be a competition or confusion between EKCYP and Youth Researchers' Network. EKCYP was set up by the member states as a knowledge base for youth policy. The Youth Researchers' Network has to explore new questions, produce reports, give advice, give voice to (unorganised) young people, ...

Furthermore he suggested that emerging regional networks (e.g. the Youth Policy Development Centre for South-East Europe) should play a role in the European youth policy structures.

Sorin Mitulescu agreed and underlined that, from a national point of view, each network had its own impact: Youth Researchers' Network stimulated research activities and was a good platform for exchange of information and EKCYP gathered information and statistics on young people. Zora Krnjaic also stressed the function of the Youth Researchers' Network as a forum for exchange and debate.

Manfred Zentner argued that all participants should be nominated by their governments. This was not the case for the regional networks Octav Marcovici mentioned. The representativeness of civil servants (through CDEJ) and practitioners (through the Advisory Council) was assured, but the researchers were underrepresented in the European structures. He reminded that the EKCYP correspondents were never supposed to form a network, but still they function as a network, whilst the Youth Researchers' Network seems to function more as a hub.

It was suggested by several people that the Youth Researchers' Network could play a role in supporting the EKCYP correspondents to gather the needed data. The Youth Researchers' Network could also play a role in analysing the data on a European level and suggesting new items. Majority agreed however that Youth Researchers' Network should not get trapped in the EKCYP agenda. There must be a distinctive added value to this researchers' network. Playing a more productive role in the organisation of the thematic seminars is but one possibility.

Filip Cousse asked to clarify the concept of youth research. To him research that provides policy based evidence seemed to find a place in EKCYP. The Youth Researchers' Network then should focus on the critical-reflexive role of youth research, looking at the situation of young people and analysing the way policy shapes and influences the conditions young people live in.

**Part 2 of the report written by Filip Coussée**

## **Wednesday 15th October 2009 (14:00 – 16:00) : meeting of EKCYP- correspondents only**

### **Follow up discussion joint meeting**

Following the discussions in the joint meeting regarding the role of the two networks, several correspondents expressed their dissatisfaction with regard to the role allocation commented during these discussions: For most of the countries there was no major difference with regard to the profile of either the members of the researcher's network or the EKCYP-correspondents. In some countries, as for example Sweden, the members of both networks are even coming from the same institution. A role allocation where EKCYP-correspondents would fill in questionnaires and members of the researcher's network would carry out research projects was therefore hardly acceptable for many EKCYP-correspondents. Nicole Vettenburg from Flanders reminded that a discussion concerning the roles of both networks had already been held the year before and wondered why the results of that discussions had not been taken into account. Stefania Rota mentioned that it would make sense to first define the mission of both networks and in a next step proceed with the selection of appropriate candidates.

### **Exchange on the forthcoming Quality group meeting**

The Partnership secretariat announced that the Quality Group would take place in the beginning of November. The correspondents were informed that there was a growing interest in youth organisations to contribute to and/or to be associated with the further development of this tool. The participation of the European youth Forum (EYF) in the next meeting of the Quality Group was therefore considered very relevant.

With regard to the the next Quality Group meeting, the participants asked whether they wanted to propose any issues for discussion. The following proposals were made on this:

- correspondents contribution: the yearly reporting exercise regarding the questionnaires on YWP topics should be discussed and revised as in the majority of countries and for most questions new data was not available on a yearly basis
- a clear procedure should be established by the quality group with regard to validation of data; the preparation of guidelines for the validation should be discussed

End of the meeting.

**Part 3 of the report written by Philipp Boetzelen**

## Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2009 (14:00 – 18:00) meeting of the European Network of Experts on Youth Research

### Thematic Sessions

The participants were asked to suggest themes for thematic discussion. Several themes were proposed: family policies, supporting youth research in countries without a research tradition, the quality of training of youth workers, the quality and significance of youth work itself, the relation between national identity and European identity, research on the achievements of the Lisbon Strategy, researchers' networks in different countries, the recognition of long-term research, the promotion of the associational life of young people, the discussion on the usefulness of indicators, the function of new technologies e.g. social network sites, peer violence in its different levels, reactionary trends amongst young people, gaining insight in migratory trends, history of youth work, the presence in international/global Youth Researchers' Networks, ...

Charles Berg identified four fields in which youth research can be active:

- Generation and family: links between youth and childhood, youth and social change, ...
- Research and social policy: reviewing policies, reports, ...
- Trajectories and transitions: demographic changes, youth transitions, ...
- Youth Culture: media, knowledge society, political participation, identity

Howard Williamson stated that one of the roles of this kind of thematic discussions was to produce good research questions. For the first field identified by Charles Berg Howard Williamson gave the example of the classic image shown in academic literature: the disappearance of the traditional family in northern Europe versus the finding that most young people in southern Europe living in traditional families. These big regional differences are important if we want to shape a European family policy.

Finally Howard Williamson summed up the earlier discussion and gave an overview of research topics in the area of family policies:

- Alternative lifestyles and families
- Postponed parenthood
- Intergenerational relations
- Boomerang kids
- Poor parenting agenda and parenting programmes, liberation or control?
- Teenage pregnancy
- Reconstituted families
- Boot camps and other institutions

- Role of ICT in educational questions
- Language competence of immigrant parents
- Divorced parents and their children
- Shifting responsibilities
- Young people as contributors to household incomes
- Home-work balance
- Cross-cultural perspectives
- Large families and state support

### **Discussion on the role, structure and terms of reference of the European Network of Experts on Youth Research**

The discussion on the distinct roles of the different networks was reopened. EKCYP seemed to have a relatively clear mission, but the Youth Researchers' Network apparently “got stuck in a home-made limbo”. (cf. mail Howard – February 2008)

Virtually all participants admitted that there was a problem with the network:

- The network has no clear identity of its own
- There are far too many networks (see EKCYP and EuNYK, but also other networks for instance RC 34 – ISA)
- There is a work overload
  - o For individual people who cannot take more work upon their professional activities
  - o For the secretariat of the Youth Partnership (the network functions as a hub, not as a network)
- an unclear relationship with EKCYP (which was initially not set up as a network, but seems to function as one). Both networks are attended by researchers and civil servants, in many cases the same person.
- an unclear position in relation to the structures and decision making procedures on the European level
- no clear profile of participants (civil servants, researchers – and practitioners claim the right to be more intensely involved)
- no clear way of recruiting participants, they are appointed by governments
  - o which leads to discontinuity
  - o which means that some governments make ‘strategic choices’

At the same time all participants emphasized that this network had an added value, which although not always visible, but must not be underestimated.

- Contributing to individual development and capacity building
- Contributing to exchange of information between individuals, but also between national policy levels (provision of knowledge on current research)
- Potential to inspire and 'recharge batteries'
- Stimulating reflection on the work done in the home country
- In some cases the meetings of the network help individuals to increase the legitimacy of youth research in their own country

**Thursday 16 October 2009 : discussion on the role, structure and terms of reference of the European Network of Experts on Youth Research continued**

**Proposal for a sheet on national level research activities**

The Researchers' Network is, these days, a very diverse group whereas in the past most participants more firmly connected to academic youth research and were largely located within research institutions. There were, of course, exceptions, but it was clear at the last meeting that there is now a more equal balance between 'pure' researchers and those who are more part of administrative and governmental structures. As a consequence the composition, as well as role, of this network will require further review and attention.

One of the proposals made in the working session was the production of a country sheet on youth research activities. The sheet would have as a goal a critical, personally filtered info for internal exchange.

Of course duplication with the questionnaires for 27 EU member states on better knowledge should be avoided.

The sheet should reflect the state of youth research in the various countries:

- a) existing documents on youth research, if any
- b) finance
- c) activity
- d) people, institutions
- e) directions

Comments:

- the side effect: proving that the members are experts on youth research
- those mean to be for internal use and therefore frank
- a small committee meeting in between the annual network meetings to analyse those could be envisaged

## **Terms of reference for the researchers' network**

There was a draft by Howard Williamson distributed.

### 1. Composition of the network

49 country nominees; between 6 and 10 additional youth researchers nominated by CoE fixed for (3) years; representatives nominated by EC and CoE; invited guests to make specific contributions

### 2. Process – standing items for annual meetings

Information exchange between members of the network about national activities and developments and cross-European youth research participation; EC/CoE developments in the youth field (reporting); a couple of relatively formal youth research lectures by guests or network members on relevant themes (e.g. on history from countries missing at the seminar in Belgium, such as Russia, Italy or the Baltics might be a good idea for the autumn); one hour private session for network members only to reflect on its role, activities and contribution.

### 3. 'Place' of the research network in the wider activities of the Partnership and the Youth Directorate

The idea should be further debated but there are already examples of such 'representation': in Partnership Sectorial groups. Now such involvement could be envisaged as additional places at CDEJ/Joint Council meetings (more than just the chair, and the chair could be substituted by another member); other relevant groups, working parties or committees. **THE AIM IS TO MAKE MORE ACTIVE AND VISIBLE THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE 'TRIANGLE' CLAIMS!**

### 4. Responsibilities

National: with regard to disseminating results of European youth research and policy activities to national networks and bringing national issues to the European table;

Towards the Partnership: providing research perspectives, response and feedback to the Partnership work programme and reporting;

Towards the Network: being more interactive between meetings by informing the chair on events and conferences that may have a European resonance (for the chair to decide on the best methods of further and wider dissemination).

## **Next steps**

Once consensus is reached in this group the terms of reference of the network could be official and recognised, give legitimacy to the network and the role of the Partnership secretariat could be consolidated.

## **Concluding words (Howard Williamson)**

If the network continues existing... it could possibly contribute to:

- History workshop (planned for the end of May 2009)
- Expert Workshop on Recognition of NFL (foreseen for 2009 and 2010 as a follow-up of the above mentioned event, which took place in June 2008)
- Thematic seminars (e.g. Health and well-being seminar in December 2008, where Manfred Zentner will be present)
- Regional seminars on youth policy development in SEE, EECA and EuroMed (in 2009 and beyond)

In the last words Howard Williamson incited all experts present to use the corrected and completed contact list, which would be available on-line shortly after the meeting. There would also be a possibility to use the on-line forum for both public and restricted access debates. Both tools should facilitate personal contacts, therefore strengthening the response and on-going communication.

**Part 4 of the report written by Filip Coussée and Marta Medlinska**

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EUROPEAN KNOWLEDGE CENTRE FOR YOUTH POLICY  
CORRESPONDENTS

4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING  
**European Youth Centre Strasbourg**  
**13<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

AND

EXPERTS ON YOUTH RESEARCH

14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING  
**European Youth Centre Strasbourg**  
**14<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

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*Organised within the Partnership Programme on Youth  
run by the European Commission and the Council of Europe*

## 1.1. *Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> October*

### Introduction session for (new) EKCYP-correspondents<sup>2</sup>

**09.30 Welcome and introduction round**

**09.45 Introduction to the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy** *Philipp Boetzelen, Partnership Programme*

**11.00 Coffee/tea break [moment for registration on the partnership-portal]**

**11.30 Presentation of the correspondents tasks**

- **Country sheets**
- **Questionnaires**
- **Transversal topics**

**12.45 Lunch**

### Session for all EKCYP-correspondents

**14.00 Information exchange on the correspondent's national working context and needs of support (tour de table)**

**14:30 Interest in and feedback on questionnaires and country sheets**

*Ekaterini Karanika, European Commission*

**15:00 Information on further development of other EKCYP-features** *Philipp Boetzelen and Carole Schnitzler, Partnership Programme*

- **Youth policy themes**
- **Discussion forum and E-mail addresses for EKCYP-correspondents**
- **Amendments to glossary and library**

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<sup>2</sup> The more experienced correspondents are invited to attend this session and to share their experiences with those who have been newly nominated

- **Country fact sheets on transversal topics**
- **Linking the EKCYP with national web-portals**

**16.00 Coffee/tea break**

**16:30 Discussion of further support measures for EKCYP-correspondents**

**17:00 Information on developments at national level having regard to or effects on the provision of knowledge on youth via the EKCYP**

**AOB**

**Joint meeting of the EKCYP Correspondents and the European Network of Experts  
on Youth Research**

**1.2. Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> October**

**9:30 Opening of the Joint meeting**

**Official welcome words**

*Hans-Joachim Schild, Partnership Programme*

*Ulrich Bunjes, DYS, Council of Europe*

*Ekaterini Karanika, European Commission*

**Adoption of the agenda**

**Introductions** (*tour de table*)

**Updates:**

**Council of Europe**

- **The Conference of Ministers Kiev, 10-11 October and Agenda 2020**  
(**Strategy Paper on the CoE youth policy**) *Ulrich Bunjes, DYS, Council of Europe*
- **National youth policy reviews and advisory missions, youth policy synthesis report**, *Howard Williamson, Glamorgan University, UK*

**European Commission, Ekaterini Karanika, European Commission**

- **Evaluation of the Open Method of Coordination**
- **Youth Report 2009**
- **Update on the European Network of Youth Knowledge**

**Other undertakings of the Commission in the youth research field**

**11:00 Coffee break**

**11:30 Youth Research Partnership, Hans-Joachim Schild, Partnership Programme**

- **Updates on the Partnership sectorial group and consultation meeting**
- **Research seminars and publications, youth policy seminars** *Marta Medlinska, Partnership Programme*

- **EKCYP Philipp Boetzelen, Partnership Programme**
- **Thematic expert workshops, Hanjo Schild, Partnership Programme**
- **Seminar on the history of youth work and its implications for youth policy, Filip Cousse, Ghent University, Belgium**
- **MA European Youth Studies, Charles Berg, University of Luxemburg**

**13:00 Lunch**

**14:30 Introduction of the evaluation of the youth research and policy strand of the Youth Partnership. Maria-Carmen Pantea, “Babes Bolyai” University, Romania**  
**Feedbacks, discussion.**

**16:00 Coffee break**

**16:30 Presentation of the provisional findings on the transversal topics.**  
**Discussion on additional sources of data, geographic/thematic extension, usability of results, future updating etc. Marta Medlinska and Philipp Boetzelen, Partnership Programme**

**19:30 Dinner out**

### **1.3. Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> October**

**9:30 Key research issues and activity in particular countries and on pan-European level – information on other research activities.**

**11:00 Coffee break**

**11:30 Discussion on cooperation and synergies between the Network of Experts on Youth Research and EKCYP Correspondents.**

**13:00 Lunch**

### Session for EKCYP-correspondents, optional<sup>3</sup>

**14:30** Preparation session with regard to the next quality group on EKCYP (feedback on EKCYP-features and recommendations)

Practical workshops on the creation of an expert portfolio and the use of the EKCYP- forum for correspondents.

**Closing of the EKCYP Correspondents' session**

**16:00** Coffee

### Session for network of experts on youth research

**14:30** Thematic discussions<sup>4</sup>.

**16:00** Coffee break

**16:30** Discussion on the role, structure and terms of reference of the European Network of Experts on Youth Research.

**19:00** Dinner

#### **1.4. Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> October**

**9:30** Discussion on the role and structure of the terms of references of the research network continued.

**Networking and future action plan, further functioning of the Network**

**12:00** Conclusions and closing of the meeting of the experts on youth research

*12:30 Lunch*

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<sup>3</sup> The EKCYP correspondents may choose to join either session.

<sup>4</sup> The topics of the discussions will be decided jointly by the experts present.