

Council of Europe
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European Union
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Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth

6th Meeting
of the Correspondents of EKCYP

18-19th November 2010
Brussels, Belgium

Meeting report

Participants list and agenda: see annex 1

I. Opening of the meeting by Hanjo Schild (*coordinator of the EU-CoE youth partnership team*) **and Finn Denstad** (*European Commission*).

A) Hanjo Schild gave an update on recent developments in the field of better knowledge of youth for both the Council of Europe (on behalf of Ulrich Bunjes who had to cancel his participation) and the EU-CoE Partnership in the field of youth.

Council of Europe

- The knowledge based approach to youth policy plays a relevant role for the implementation of the Council of Europe Agenda 2020; the main tools in this respect are the Council of Europe youth policy reviews and youth policy advisory missions. The next youth policy review will be on Belgium and is planned for 2011.
- At present the CoE youth directorate is preparing the next youth ministers conference which should be held in September 2012 and take place in St. Petersburg Russia

EU-CoE partnership in the field of youth

- The new framework partnership agreement between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth 2010 - 2013 covers three priorities:
 - Promoting knowledge-based youth policy by developing and providing efficient tools for it;
 - Supporting youth work and building capacity of youth workers at European level;
 - Paying special attention to the EU-CoE youth partnership's geographical dimension of activities prioritising CoE Members which are candidate countries to the EU, CoE Member States which are part of the EU Neighbourhood Policy (including the Eastern Partnership and the Mediterranean) and the Russian Federation as well as the EU-Africa cooperation.
- Promotion of knowledge-based youth policy is the first priority and consists of the following elements:
 - Further development of the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCYP)
 - establishment of a Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR) to replace the former network of researchers (in February 2011 a meeting of preselected candidates will be held and decision will be taken regarding the composition of the pool)
 - organisation of a biannual youth knowledge forum (up to 150 people will be invited to exchange on needs, trends and strategies in the field of youth)
 - the already well established EC-CoE youth partnership seminars and publications
- The secretariat of the EU-CoE Partnership underwent a number of changes since the last meeting of EKCYP correspondents in January 2010:
 - Following application of the new CoE staff policy, the positions of EKCYP coordinator and research officer have been posted; from beginning of 2011 the two newly recruited post holders will work in office of the Council of Europe in Brussels.
 - Elisa Briga and Lilia Kolombet are fulfilling the tasks of EKCYP coordinator and research officer for the interim period. Carolina Larghi and Julia Kowalski have been recruited respectively as assistant to the youth knowledge team and communication officer
 - The former coordinator of EKCYP, Philipp Boetzelen, has been supporting the development of EKCYP on the basis of a short term consultant's contract.

B) Finn Denstad updated the participants with regard to recent developments in the field of better knowledge on youth in the European Commission.

Denstad informed the participants of the emerging involvement of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) in the field of youth policy. EACEA unit P-9 has been tasked by the Commission (Youth Policy Unit of DG EAC) to draft the next EU Youth report, which will be released in 2012 (published every three years). Naturally, EKCYP should contribute as much as possible with relevant and comparable data for the 2012 EU Youth Report. For that reason, Denstad introduced two EACEA staff: Ms Giulia Paolini, EACEA policy analyst who will be involved in data collection and in writing the report, and Ms Arlette Delhaxe, Head of Sector of unit P-9.

The main task of EACEA P-9 is to manage the Network of Education systems and policies in Europe, EURYDICE (www.eurydice.org). The EURYDICE network was established in 1980 and has accumulated a comprehensive experience regarding knowledge provision based on a European-wide network. The further development of EKCYP can benefit from this experience. In order to ensure good cooperation and overlap rather than duplication of tasks, the Commission will invite the EU-CoE Youth Partnership and EACEA to coordination meetings on evidence-based youth policy on a regular basis.

Clear common indicators are essential for acquiring a better overview of the situation of young people and increase visibility and recognition of the youth field., for this reason, and in following up the EU Youth Strategy, the EC created an expert group on youth indicators to which 26 countries (Norway included) are participating. The dashboard will consist of 3-6 indicators for every field of action of the EU Youth Strategy. A Eurobarometer survey on youth will be conducted in early 2011, with the main purpose of supplying data for the most of the indicators on youth participation and volunteering. A sample of 1000 young people aged 15-30 from all EU Member States will be interviewed and the results will be released in May 2011 during the European Youth Week.

The Youth Policy Unit of DG EAC also cooperates closely with Eurostat (ESTAT). In December 2009 ESTAT released a publication with recent data and statistics on youth. In 2011, it is foreseen to develop a section on youth on ESTAT's website. In addition, the Youth Policy Unit of DG EAC maintains contact with 6 projects on youth and social exclusion funded under Research FP 7 (DG RTD) and 5 projects on the use of ICT for social inclusion in FP 7 (DG INFSO). Finally, the Youth Policy Unit is launching several youth studies in the close future: one on participation of young people (in society, in political life, new forms of participation) in 2010 and one on the social and economic impact of youth work (to be launched in 2011).

The evidence-based approach to youth policy of the EU includes also the structured dialogue, which is a comprehensive and on-going consultation with young people, youth organisations and «non-organised youth» at all levels (local, national, EU). It is coordinated by a European Steering Committee (with representatives of the European Youth Forum, Trio-Presidencies, National Youth Councils, YiA National Agencies, European Commission) and National Working Groups in all Member States.



Recent developments on bet

Commenting Denstad's presentation, Hanjo Schild underlined that the role of the EU-CoE partnership is to also bring in the interests of CoE Member States (MS) which are not covered by other networks nor taking part in the development of youth indicators. Such a balancing role is also in the interest of the European Commission.

II. Tour de table (correspondents' background, state of play of their provision of knowledge to the EKCYP, network)

This extensive presentation round focused on the following aspects of the correspondent's situation and role:

- Their institutional background
- State of affairs regarding knowledge provision for EKCYP
- Membership in national or international networks
- Issues faced regarding the provision of knowledge to the EKCYP

Most correspondents (including those that were not present at the meeting) do belong to the diverse group of policy makers (8 working in governmental agencies, 12 in ministries and 1 in a semi-governmental agency), the second biggest group belongs to the field of research (9 belonging to research institutes, 7 to universities) and two correspondents are from the field of youth work working in NGOs. With regard to membership in networks it can be summarized that most correspondents do use informal networks, many are organised in international networks and are members of the national level working groups on structured dialogue. A national network on youth knowledge does not exist so far but could be build on existing (informal) cooperation structures (further information on correspondent's situation see Annex 2).

III. European Commission expectations with regard to further development of EKCYP and EKCYP-correspondents

On this item, the following statements were made by Finn Denstad (COM):

- As the further development of EKCYP is explicitly mentioned in the new youth strategy adopted by the European Council in November 2009, a commitment to this common project has already been made by EU Member States. EKCYP correspondents can make reference to this in their dialogue with their ministries.
- The Commission recognises that volunteering of EKCYP correspondents has its limits; therefore the Commission is looking into potential ways of addressing this issue together with the Council of Europe, among others the provision of financial compensation to correspondents;
- EKCYP is still a relatively new project, and much work remains to be done before the Commission is satisfied with the EKCYP web portal. However, the Commission is aware of the work that has been done so far, especially from side of the national EKCYP correspondents
- Further commitment from the less active correspondents and /or Member States is necessary.
- It is important that the correspondents realise that the establishment of national youth knowledge networks – although they will require some investment in the short term – will be beneficial for the correspondents in the long term. While correspondents today are often left alone and without sufficient support from their administration, the networks will support correspondents and be an added resource in their work.
- The appeal of EKCYP depends on the availability of up to date information. Today, there is too much outdated country information and data, and this must change. EKCYP correspondents and the EU-CoE youth partnership team are responsible for providing latest available data. It is also important with references to when data and information was downloaded/inserted.
- With regard to the new information templates: All the available country information must be comparable across countries. This is a serious weakness today. We need more comparable data, in particular quantitative data which is not collected through other sources. Answers on the templates should always be to the point and not exhaustive.

IV. Update on activities with regard to EKCYP and overview on the correspondent's network and the knowledge provided (Hanjo Schild, Elisa Briga).

- Correspondents: As of November 2010 there are 39 nominated correspondents belonging to either MS of the European Union or/and the Council of Europe. So far only 9 countries did not nominate a correspondent (Denmark, Bulgaria, Latvia, Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, Switzerland, San Marino, Monaco). Out of those countries Croatia, Switzerland, San Marino and Monaco signalled willingness to nominate a correspondent in 2011.
- Knowledge provision in EKCYP:
 - Country information: a [country sheet on background information of youth policy](#) is available for 36 countries; out of these, 20 were updated in 2010, 14 in 2009 and 2 still date 2008.
 - Thematic information: In 2010 four new youth [policy frameworks](#) have been drafted and will be published before the end of the year (Antidiscrimination and diversity, Culture and Creativity, Employment and History of Youth work) and another four have been updated recently. A French and German Translation should be available soon.



EKCYP state of
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Dec 2010.xls

IV. Council of Europe expectations with regard to further development of EKCYP and EKCYP-correspondents (Hanjo Schild, coordinator of the EU-CoE youth partnership team)

The observations and expectations from side of the European Commission were fully endorsed; Hanjo Schild underlined that the country sheets were the first priority and should be updated upon necessity, every 6 months at the latest. The correspondents are not expected to update the former questionnaires on Participation, Information, Better knowledge of youth and Voluntary activities since the new information templates will be provided. The topic of Information will be included in Participation and the questions on Better knowledge of youth will be included in the new template of the country sheet.

V. Presentation and working groups on the new information templates on participation and voluntary activities

A) Philipp Boetzelen explained the background of the new templates on participation and voluntary activities:

- In the last EKCYP stakeholders meeting the proposal was made to enhance ownership of Member States towards EKCYP by producing a brochure presenting EKCYP data in an appealing way. Modified questionnaires (so called information templates) should contribute to the provision of relevant and -in so far as possible- easily comparable country information for this purpose
- Since beginning of the year the European Commission and representatives of EU Member States discuss a set of indicators in the joint working group on indicators. Based on its experience with the EKCYP, the EU-CoE Partnership contributed with a proposal for indicators on citizenship consisting of the subcategories participation, volunteering and information. The proposed information templates are based on this proposal and take into account the discussions held so far in the working group on indicators.
- The final versions of the information templates will be sent by mid December.

B) Comment on the information templates by EACEA (Giulia Paolini)

EACEA's feedback on the proposed information templates recommends that

- With a few exceptions (e.g. data on participation in elections), quantitative data collected on the national level do not allow for reliable cross country comparisons as each national institution applies its own methods and parameters for data collection. In order to allow for comparisons, quantitative data should be taken from international surveys and therefore do not necessarily need to be collected by correspondents;
- Qualitative data provided by the national correspondents are the great potential of EKCYP. In order to allow for an enhanced cross-country comparability the answers should be as homogeneous as possible. Therefore EACEA suggests to:
 - Draft guidelines for each of the information templates proposed regarding the type of information to be supplied; guidelines should also inform on the time frame for the data collection.
 - Main concepts should be explained through precise definitions in order to avoid different interpretations and avoid diverging answers; a glossary with these definitions at the end of each information template would be useful.

The EU-CoE Partnership team agreed to these proposals; the guidelines of the previous version of the questionnaires need to be updated and specific glossaries in the correspondent's version of the templates could supplement the already existing [glossary](#) in EKCYP.

C) Discussions in the working groups:

- Working group on the information templates on participation

Following discussions concerning the meaning, order and pertinence of the proposed questions the working group agreed that:

- Exact definitions (glossary, see above) of the terms used should be given in the information template
- Quantitative data on participation of young people to elections will still be gathered at national level.
- The format of the template needs some further development in order to enable correspondents to give the correct information (e.g. tick boxes for yes/no questions)
- For questions asking for numbers/percentage of yes/no there should be a space for comments in order to allow for explanations
- The information template should start with information on the context. Meaning and scope of youth participation in a given country and then progress towards the more specific issues (participation in elections, education for participation).
- A pilot phase of a small number of selected countries would allow to test the feasibility of the information templates

- Working group on the information template on voluntary activities

The working group on participation came up with the following recommendations:

- According to the proposal of EACEA any quantitative data could be retrieved as much as possible from international and European surveys.
- As the information template on participation already provides quantitative data on the topic of citizenship there was no further need for such kind of information in the information template on voluntary activities
- The information template on volunteering should build on the results of the working group on youth indicators, the Eurobarometer on volunteering and the recommendations of the expert group on mobility of young volunteers.

VI. National networks on better knowledge of youth

A) Presentation of the guidelines for the creation of national networks on better knowledge of youth (Elisa Briga)



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B) Working group on national networks on better knowledge of youth

As a result of the discussion on the most appropriate way to the planning and set up of national networks the following proposals were made:

- For MS of both the European Union and the Council of Europe, official communication on the set up of youth knowledge networks should be sent to the general directors on youth, the members of the youth working party (cc) and the members of CDEJ (cc); for MS of CoE communication should be send to the national members of CDEJ
- Promotional material on the networks including practical examples of existing models and examples of good practice (especially on networks in federal states) should be made available for the relevant national ministries;
- The guidelines on the creation of national networks should be simplified and updated taking into account that there is not “the model” but a variety of potential models for the construction of national networks on youth knowledge depending on different national realities and structures
- Further information should be given (in the guidelines or any other document) regarding
 - the expected outcomes of the networks following their set up and the respective steps to be taken by the actors involved
 - suggested ways of communication between the network members
 - proposals for the coordination of the national networks

VII. Role of correspondents with regard to other features of EKCYP

A) Elisa Briga informed on the recently implemented and the planned technical modifications related to EKCYP features.

- Good practice database: a quality check of examples of good practice has been implemented and the criteria for good practice as well as the information fields required when submitting a good practice example have been updated
- The creation of a generic E-mail address for all correspondents is under way (e.g. france@ekcyp-coe.eu)
- Expert database: the fields of expert competence should be standardised and consist of the priority topics of both institutions (check boxes); as in the country information section a rule bar will allow the user of EKCYP to search for an expert according to country or expertise. All correspondents should subscribe as experts in order to establish a link between their name on the country page and their expert portfolio.

B) Working group on the further development of EKCYP features and related issues

The items presented (see above) were discussed and the following additional issues/concerns were raised:

- The publication of country information following the submission by EKCYP correspondents should take less time and the date of submission of information should be marked in the country sheet/information template
- The good practices database will mainly collect good practices of cooperation between practitioners, researchers and policy makers on different youth policy topics. The correspondents will promote the good practices database through the national networks and encourage partners to upload good practices.
- It is suggested to include in the country pages a link to all the resources available in the website on the specific country (e.g the national reports on the implementation of the EU youth strategy when they will be available in spring 2012). However, the correspondent should be contacted when the partnership team uploads some document in the country page.
- An adequate tool for enhancement of communication between correspondents has still to be found/developed: a Facebook page for EKCYP might increase visibility but is not a convenient tool for internal communication as not all correspondents are/want to be facebook users; LinkedIn was proposed as an alternative communication platform limited to professional networking but the problem of membership persists. A mailing list or yahoo group might be a more adequate solution.
- As a means to foster dialogue between the users (and stakeholders) of EKCYP the provision of wiki options or a comment box under anything posted on the website was proposed.



Enter a Good Practice_new form_1



new categories for fields of expertise_fir

TIMELINE for the implementation of the decisions taken:

COUNTRY SHEETS: updating the country sheet at least every 6 months is the priority of the correspondents.. A new template with guidelines on how to fill it in will be sent to correspondents at the beginning of 2011. All country sheets available online will have to be on the same new format.

INFORMATION TEMPLATES

- mid December 2011: information templates on participation and volunteering are sent to correspondents together with guidelines and a glossary.
- end of February 2011: correspondents send back the information templates filled in
- March-May 2011: drafting of the brochure on EKCYC providing a comparative analysis on participation and volunteering of young people.

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NATIONAL NETWORKS

- January-February 2011: the document 'towards national networks on better knowledge of youth' and an updated job profile of the correspondent is finalized and sent to General Directors, the members of the Youth Working Party, the CDEJ members and the correspondents.
- National networks on better knowledge of youth are launched by the Ministries in charge of the youth affairs.
- Spring 2011: correspondents report to the EU-CoE youth partnership team on the implementation of the national networks.

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OTHER FEATURES OF EKCYC: the Eu-CoE youth partnership team will implement the changes announced (good practices submission form and browser, expert registration form and browser, email country@ekcyp-coe.eu) and asks the correspondents to register as experts and promote the good practices database. The Eu-CoE youth partnership team will look into tools to foster networking between correspondents,