



4 April, 2005

**YOUTH POLICY SEMINAR
11-14 September, 2005**

"Exchanging experiences and current practices in Europe and Middle East countries in the field of Youth Policy and Youth participation."

We have the pleasure to invite you to the above mentioned seminar that will take place in the Swedish Institute, Alexandria, 11-14 September, 2005.

The seminar is a contribution to the youth policy developments and initiatives in the participating countries, and is based on the following:

- To exchange practices of youth policy definition, implementation and monitoring
- To debate and exchange on the role and functions of youth policy in a democratic society
- To identify forms of youth participation and its role on developing cohesive youth policies
- To initiate dialogue and cooperation among youth policy practitioners in European and Middle East/Mediterranean countries
- To take stock of recent developments and initiatives in Europe and the Middle East regarding youth policy development.

We will invite 7-8 countries, and from each country about 3 participants with the following profile:

1. Officials of governmental institutions involved in the definition or/and implementation youth policy

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2. Representatives of national youth organisations or platforms of youth organisations, if possible with a personal experience in the process of defining, implementing or monitoring youth policy;
 3. Parliamentarians or other elected representatives in charge of or dealing youth questions or
 4. Experts and researchers actively involved in youth policy definition.

The program will include presentations about Youth Policy design, implementation and follow-up. We will also build on the experiences from the Youth Policy Program organized by UNICEF in Beirut last December. But of course the main objective is to share experiences between the participants and to draft an action plan regarding regional youth cooperation.

The organizers of this seminar are Ministry of Youth in Egypt, Swedish Institute in Alexandria, Council of Europe and The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs (see the enclosed presentations).

If you are interested please contact one of the organizers and we will send you the necessary information about the seminar and what needs to be prepared beforehand. The dead-line for registration is 15 May, 2005 (Please contact Mrs Randa Hafez: randa.hafez@swedalex.org).

Please note that the seminar will be held in English. Finally, you need to assign a person to replace you in case of last minute cancellation!

We are looking forward to welcoming you to Alexandria!

Ministry of Youth, Dr Nourhan el Sheikh (nourhansh@hotmail.com)

Swedish Institute, Ms Ingrid Sandström
(ingrid.sandstrom@swedalex.org)

Council of Europe, Mr Rui Gomes (Rui.GOMES@coe.int)

The Swedish Board for Youth Affairs, Ms Åsa Fahlgren and Ms Lisa Modée (asa@ungdomsstyrelsen.se) (lisa@ungdomsstyrelsen.se)

PRESENTATION OF THE ORGANISERS

THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH IN EGYPT

Founded in October 1999, the Ministry of Youth, Egypt, (MOY) committed to the youth development and empowerment for a better future, developing of youth policies and programmes. With a perspective to associate young people in the formulation and implementation of these policies and programmes.

Over 19 million of Egypt's citizens are young people between the ages 15 and 29. The MOY is responsible for the national youth policy and deals with the governmental policies in the field of youth and sports both in monitoring and implementation.

The MOY policy is based on the adequate respond to young people needs and problems, and cross-sectorial cooperation between different authorities. An emphasis on participation and partnership with youth organisations, both local and international, is an integral part of MOY policy.

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Council of Europe is a pan-European organisation committed to the development of parliamentary democracy, the safeguard of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the promotion of Europe's cultural diversity. Founded in 1949, the Council of Europe has always paid a particular attention to matters affecting young people, with a double perspective: to associate young people to the building of a European space of democratic participation and cooperation and to promote cooperation among member states with the view to address issues that affect young people.

The role of the Council of Europe in relation to youth policy has progressively increased since the International Youth Year in 1985. The last twenty years have witnessed a reinforced inter-governmental cooperation in this field, through the creation of the European Steering Committee on Youth, the holding of regular Ministerial Conferences and, more broadly, through the programme of activities of the European Youth Centers and the European Youth Foundation.

The Directorate of Youth and Sport, the organisation's body dealing with youth matters, has in recent years engaged in a programme of national youth policy reviews, under which the youth policies of some 12 countries have been reviewed by a European team of experts and policy makers. This work has been complemented by research into national youth policy

indicators and several field and assistance activities aimed at initiating or supporting processes of youth policy definition or revision.

The Council of Europe and the European Commission cooperate on youth policy matters since a long time. This cooperation was particularly fruitful during the process of definition and consultation about the Commission's White Paper on Youth. In terms of programmes for youth, the Council of Europe and the European Commission run a Youth Partnership programme, covering the areas of youth research, training of youth workers and Euro-Med youth work.

The involvement of the Partnership in the seminar is the natural reflection of the experience of both organisations that youth programmes need to be sustained by consistent, embracing and explicit youth policies. The present seminar should thus contribute to start taking into account the youth policy developments in the Euro-Med youth programme and in the other programmes of the two institutions aimed at cooperation between Europe and neighboring regions.

THE SWEDISH NATIONAL BOARD FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS

The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs is a governmental authority which works within four policy areas: We allocate grants and work with method development within the areas of *Leisure and associative activities* and *International youth programmes*.

We stimulate the development of *Municipal youth policy* and follow up the objectives of the *National youth policy*.

Over 1,4 million of Sweden's citizens are young people between the ages 13 and 25. The Swedish youth policy is built on cross-sectorial cooperation between different authorities. The United Nations International Youth Year in 1985, which focused on participation, development and peace have had a great impact in the development of the Swedish youth policy, both concerning content and objectives.

Since 1985 the policy has been developed several times, and also evaluated for example by the Council of Europe in 1999. There are today two main objectives of Swedish youth policy, and they were adopted by the Swedish parliament in 2004:

- Young people are to have the genuine access to welfare.
- Young people are to have the genuine power to decide

The National Board for Youth Affairs is responsible for the national youth policy, both in monitoring and implementation. On a national level we are the coordinating body and on local level we support interested municipalities in developing youth policy. We are also responsible for presenting regular statistics and results from research on young peoples living condition and report to the government. Policy and suggestions of

improvement should be built on knowledge of young peoples living conditions and launched through joint actions. Young people should be

consulted and their knowledge utilized as a resource. The purpose is to make them involved and also to have real influence in the making of youth policy.

THE SWEDISH INSTITUTE IN ALEXANDRIA

The Swedish Institute is dedicated to the dialogue of civilizations.

When Sweden joined the European Union in 1995, leading diplomats, scholars & politicians displayed a strong commitment to promoting intercultural understanding. It was felt that Sweden should contribute to building trust between the peoples of Europe and the Arab world.

The Institute was established in October 2000 as a autonomous mission within the Swedish Foreign Service, following an agreement between the governments of Sweden and Egypt.

The Institute's main task is to promote broad contacts between Europe and the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region. We place strong emphasis on developing cooperation and networking in the areas of Youth, Media and Education/Research. We also follow closely the themes highlighted in the Barcelona process, giving priority to multilateral projects, involving groups of countries on both sides of the Mediterranean. We aim to facilitate dialogue on issues of common concern and to contribute to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.