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(Resolutions, recommendations and opinions)

RESOLUTIONS

COUNCIL

Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the structured dialogue with young people on youth employment

(2011/C 164/01)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES,

RECALLING THAT:

The Resolution of 15 November 2005 ⁽¹⁾ invited the European Commission and the Member States to develop a structured dialogue with young people and their organisations, researchers in the youth field and policy-makers.

The concept of structured dialogue was further supported by the Resolution of 26 October 2006 ⁽²⁾ which states that due account should be taken of the structured dialogue and its outcome in policy-making at the relevant levels.

The Council Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) ⁽³⁾ recognised all young people as a resource to society and highlighted the importance of upholding the right of young people to participate in the development of policies affecting them by means of a continuous structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations.

ACKNOWLEDGE THAT:

The aim of the structured dialogue is to serve as a forum for continuous joint reflection on the priorities, implementation and follow-up of European cooperation in the youth field. Its objective is to involve a diverse range of young people and youth organisations in the consultations, at all levels in the Member States, at the EU Youth Conferences and during the European Youth Week.

The structured dialogue consultations are based on work cycles of 18 months with an overall thematic priority and specific topics that correspond to the overall objectives of European cooperation in the youth field. In this regard, youth employment was agreed by the Council in November 2009 to be the overall thematic priority for European cooperation in the youth field for the first 18-month work cycle (the period 1 January 2010 to 30 June 2011).

The consultations within the structured dialogue are debates on common themes, from local to EU level. At the European level, the European Steering Committee for the structured dialogue is the coordinating body of the consultations. It is composed of representatives of Member States from the Team Presidency (Ministry, National Youth Councils and National Agencies of the Youth in Action Programme), European Commission and the European Youth Forum. At the national level, Member States have supported the establishment of national working groups or utilised existing structures to consult young people and youth organisations. The results of the national consultations considered and compiled by the European Steering Committee are brought to the EU Youth Conferences.

RECOGNISE THAT:

Following the process defined in the Council Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018), the first cycle of structured dialogue has provided a forum for joint reflection in the field of youth-related policies, and identified further challenges to be met. Resulting from the nature of the process, young people living throughout the European Union had the opportunity to express their opinions and ideas during the same consultation phase on a common priority theme.

Apart from national youth councils, other actors of youth policy, such as the ministries, the national agencies of the Youth in Action Programme, youth workers and youth researchers were involved.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 292, 24.11.2005, p. 5.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 297, 7.12.2006, p. 6.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 311, 19.12.2009, p. 1.

An increasing number of national working groups are contributing to the consecutive rounds of consultations by developing strategies and methodologies to implement structured dialogue with young people and providing the European Steering Committee with national reports. These contributions and the further discussions that took place during the EU Youth Conferences put forward policy messages, providing input for EU policies.

RECOMMEND THAT:

The structured dialogue should be further developed and that several areas could be considered during the second 18-month work cycle, including:

Political follow-up

- (a) promoting a political follow-up of the results of the structured dialogue;
- (b) providing feedback to young people regarding action taken on the results of the structured dialogue.

Participation of all stakeholders

- (a) promoting the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities;
- (b) promoting the involvement of representatives of local and regional authorities;
- (c) promoting the involvement of youth researchers, and making better use of their knowledge and expertise in planning, implementing and following-up the process;
- (d) promoting wider and more transparent communication between all stakeholders.

Financial support of the structured dialogue

Without prejudice to future financial framework, considering sustainable support for the structured dialogue in the youth field in the next generation of EU programmes.

Time frame

Establishing a realistic and adequate time frame and setting deadlines of consultations.

Methods

- (a) applying relevant and efficient methods that stimulate a quality output of the structured dialogue;
- (b) sharing good practices among National Working Groups;
- (c) simplifying the process and structures, with full respect of the principle of subsidiarity;

- (d) using, where appropriate, diverse tools, such as social media, Internet and on-line consultations;
- (e) providing a meaningful process for young people;
- (f) considering clarity and precision of language when forming the consultation questions;
- (g) refining the working methods in the EU youth conferences.

AGREE THAT:

- the overall thematic priority for European cooperation in the youth field for the second 18-month work cycle (the period 1 July 2011 to 31 December 2012) is youth participation with special emphasis on participation in democratic life. The specific priorities for the Team Presidency of the second work cycle are set out in Annex I,
- the priority areas chosen can be complemented by each Presidency in the light of any possible new developments,
- the first two work cycles of the structured dialogue should be evaluated by the Council in the context of the EU Youth Report to be presented by the Commission by the end of 2012,
- the areas for the incoming Team Presidency cycle should be defined before the beginning of its term following the evaluation report prepared by the Council.

CONSIDER THAT:

The outcome of the first cycle of the structured dialogue is building on the results achieved by the national consultations during the Spanish, Belgian and Hungarian Presidencies, as well as EU Youth Conferences in Jerez de la Frontera in April 2010, Leuven in October 2010 and Budapest in March 2011. During the Spanish EU Youth Conference, representatives of Member States and youth delegates jointly identified priorities for youth employment, and during the Belgian EU Youth Conference, they jointly transferred them into policy recommendations that were refined into concrete outcomes at the Hungarian EU Youth Conference.

EMPHASISE THAT:

The following points that were raised as priority areas in the conclusions of the structured dialogue on youth employment:

1. Promoting easier access for all young people, in particular young people with fewer opportunities, to a youth-friendly, quality information about the labour market is crucial. Career-oriented training and guidance needs to be integrated at all appropriate levels of formal education and non-formal learning paths in order to raise young people's awareness and create better chances for them with regard to labour market requirements and prepare them for working life.

2. Youth work and non-formal learning could be recognised and further supported as a significant source of support for equipping young people with skills and competences and thereby easing their access to the labour market and contributing to the aims of the Europe 2020 Strategy.
3. It is of vital importance to enhance the access of young people to the labour market through tailored policy measures, where appropriate, and a quality framework for internships is desirable in order to guarantee the educational value of such experience.
4. Improved flexibility as well as security is needed for young people to combine employment with further education, training, voluntary activities and private life.
5. Promoting equal access to mobility opportunities for young people by streamlining administrative procedures with reference to the Europe 2020 Strategy, and particularly the Youth on the Move flagship initiative, is necessary.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE OUTCOMES OUTLINED ABOVE INVITE THE MEMBER STATES AND/OR THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES OF COMPETENCE TO:

Take note of the conclusions of the structured dialogue and design channels of communication and cooperation with other relevant policy fields and departments both within and between the various EU institutions and within the Member States, promoting policies and actions targeted to young people applying the dual approach as it is set in the Council Resolution on the renewed framework.

ANNEX

Priorities for European cooperation in the youth field during the period 1 July 2011-31 December 2012**Overall priority — youth participation**

The overall thematic priority for European cooperation in the youth field for the period 1 July 2011-31 December 2012 will be youth participation with a special emphasis on participation in democratic life in Europe as stated in Article 165 of the Lisbon Treaty. During these 18 months, this topic will be discussed in the framework of the structured dialogue. Specific priorities should, wholly or partially, contribute to the overall thematic priority.

1 July 2011-31 December 2012 — Youth and the world

During the second half of 2011, the following issues will be highlighted:

- increasing cooperation between young people from the European Union and youth from Eastern Europe and Caucasus countries with the particular regard to youth mobility,
- raising awareness on the situation of young people and youth policy in the Eastern European and Caucasus countries in the context of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field,
- reflecting on the role of promotion and validation of informal and non-formal learning for young people, taking into account the context of European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship and the results of midterm evaluation of the 'Youth in Action' programme.

1 January 2012-30 June 2012 — Creativity and innovation

During the first half of 2012, the following issues will be highlighted:

- fostering young people's creativity, innovative capacity and talent as a tool for their active participation in society and increased employability on the labour market,
- drawing on the various initiatives launched during the European Year on Creativity and Innovation,
- exchanging good practices on how to involve more young people in democratic decision-making.

1 July 2012-31 December 2012 — Participation and social inclusion

During the second half of 2012, the following issues will be highlighted:

- strengthening the participation of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and young people in general, in decision-making,
 - enhancing and encouraging the participation of young people on local level,
 - promoting the inclusion of all young people in the wider social and democratic life.
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