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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 overview of the structured dialogue with young people on youth participation in democratic life in Europe

(2012/C 380/01)

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

I. RECALLING THAT:

1. The Council Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) ⁽¹⁾ 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.
2. The Resolution of 19 May 2011 ⁽²⁾ of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the structured dialogue with young people on youth employment, stated that the overall thematic priority for European cooperation in the youth field for the second 18-month work cycle (the period 1 July 2011-31 December 2012) is youth participation with special emphasis on participation in democratic life in Europe.

II. ACKNOWLEDGE THAT:

3. The structured dialogue is a participatory bottom-up process and the outcome of the second 18-month work cycle is based on the results achieved by the national consultations during the Polish, Danish and Cyprus Presidencies, as well as the EU Youth Conferences in Warsaw in September 2011, Sorø in March 2012 and Nicosia in September 2012.
4. In the second cycle of the structured dialogue, national consultations were held in all the 27 Member States and a great number of youth leaders and young people were

directly involved in the process ⁽³⁾. In addition, contributions were received from other stakeholders, including international non-governmental youth organisations.

5. The Commission is adapting and developing the European Youth Portal to make it useful and accessible for all young people, from all across Europe. A section has been added to the European Youth Portal with the outcomes of the European Youth Conferences and another section with information on structured dialogue ⁽⁴⁾.
6. The specific priority for the Polish Presidency was to increase the cooperation between young people from the European Union and youth from Eastern Europe and Caucasus countries with particular regard to youth mobility and participation. There was also a focus on the role of promotion and validation of informal and non-formal learning for young people.
7. Under the Polish Presidency, the Council agreed to continue fostering youth cooperation between the EU and Eastern Partnership countries ⁽⁵⁾. Over the period 2012-2013, additional funds were made available by the Commission in order to increase the number of 'Youth in Action' projects and participants from the six neighbouring partner countries of the Eastern Partnership under the Eastern Partnership Youth Window ⁽⁶⁾.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 311, 19.12.2009, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 164, 2.6.2011, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ COM(2012) 495 final 'Draft 2012 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018)'.
⁽⁴⁾ Commission staff working document 'Results of the first cycle of the open method of coordination in the youth field (2010-2012)'.
⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 372, 20.12.2011, p. 10.
⁽⁶⁾ Following the adoption of the Joint Communication 'A new response to a changing neighbourhood — A review of European Neighbourhood Policy' in May 2011.

8. The specific priority for the Danish Presidency was 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. In this regard, participation was seen in the broad sense, which includes young people's participation in representative democracy and civil society at all levels.
9. Under the Danish Presidency the Council invited the Member States and the Commission to establish a thematic expert group with the participation of national experts appointed by Member States under the principle of the open method of coordination with the objective to share good practices on how to promote the creativity and innovative capacity of young people by identifying competences and skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning relevant for employability.
10. The specific priority for the Cyprus Presidency was to promote youth participation and social inclusion of all young people, with emphasis on the inclusion of young people with a migrant background. Strengthening the participation of youth organisations and all young people in social and democratic life, especially in decision-making, was highlighted as an important factor for the creation of inclusive, democratic and prosperous societies. The purpose was to promote the inclusion of all young people in the wider social and democratic life through their active participation.
11. The Joint EU Youth Report which evaluates the progress made towards the overall objectives of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) and includes the first two work cycles of the structured dialogue was adopted on 27 November 2012.

III. TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING PROPOSALS FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRUCTURED DIALOGUE PROCESS:

The following issues have emerged from the structured dialogue process:

Inclusivity of the process

12. The process of the structured dialogue empowers young people and gives them an opportunity to be active citizens and part of the democratic life. Therefore young people should be involved in all stages of the structured dialogue, from setting the priorities of each Presidency to monitoring the follow-up and evaluating the implementation of the dialogue outcomes. Whereas the decision on the priorities remains within the competence of the Council and the Member States. Incoming Team Presidencies should engage in early consultation with youth representatives and the European Commission prior to proposing the overall thematic priorities to be pursued during cycles of structured dialogue.
13. The work of the national working groups towards the joint objective of consistent and increased participation of young people, especially from different backgrounds, in the structured dialogue process should be supported. National working groups should be sufficiently inclusive in their composition to ensure a participatory process open to all young people.
14. The guiding questions of the structured dialogue should be formulated in an understandable way with the aim of facilitating the national working groups to reach more young people.

Enhancement of the cross-sectoral approach

15. For the improvement of the consultation process and its monitoring, the participation of other experts at local, regional, national and European level in the national working groups should be promoted, depending on the relevant thematic priority of the structured dialogue⁽¹⁾. Moreover, the results of the structured dialogue should be disseminated to cross-sectoral stakeholders. There should be a clear role for youth researchers of the process.

Political follow-up and visibility

16. The political follow-up of the results of the structured dialogue and their implementation should be enhanced⁽²⁾.
17. The link between the outcomes of the structured dialogue and policy-making in the youth field at national and European level should be stressed, made clearer and better communicated by all actors from the beginning and during the whole process.
18. Measures and initiatives should be taken to enhance the visibility and recognition of the structured dialogue process at local, regional, national and European level. The European Youth Portal should be further developed to enhance the visibility of the process.

Sustainability of the process

19. The EU Youth Conference should be strengthened as a forum for structured dialogue between all young people, youth organisations and policy-makers with a view to reaching tangible political outcomes. Where possible, the involvement of youth researchers should be promoted.
20. The European Commission, in close coordination with youth stakeholders, should ensure the organisation of a dialogue with the main actors of structured dialogue as an integral part of future European Youth Weeks.

⁽¹⁾ According to the EU Youth Report 2012, only six EU countries have other national ministries playing an active role in the National Working Group.

⁽²⁾ According to the EU Youth Report 2012, 11 EU countries took initiatives to follow up the results of the structured dialogue of the first cycle.

21. Without prejudice to negotiations on the future multi-annual financial framework, sustainable support for the structured dialogue should be ensured.
- IV. TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING PROPOSALS TO ENHANCE YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE IN EUROPE:
- The following points deriving from the joint recommendations of the Youth Conferences in Warsaw, Sorø and Nicosia, were raised as priority areas on the overarching priority of youth participation in democratic life.
22. Youth participation in decision-making procedures at all levels should be supported and promoted by using new methods and instruments, such as social media and e-participation possibilities.
23. Youth organisations, youth information and counselling structures and professional youth work should be recognised as channels for developing the skills and competences of young people, especially those with fewer opportunities.
24. Awareness of common European values should be raised through expanding the structured dialogue to all young people, including specific target groups, such as non-organised youth and young people with fewer opportunities.
25. The support of youth activities at all levels that focus on the participation and intercultural dialogue of young people from EU and non-EU countries should be strengthened.
26. It is essential to establish youth facilities guided by youth workers, where all young people, including non-organised youth and young people with fewer opportunities, can meet, create and get involved in projects.
- V. INVITE THE MEMBER STATES AND/OR THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES OF COMPETENCE AND WITH DUE REGARD FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY, TO:
27. Take due account of the above proposals emerging from the structured dialogue aiming at evaluation and further development of the structured dialogue process and the enhancement of youth participation in democratic life in Europe.
- VI. AGREE THAT:
28. The EU Youth Report 2012 provides information about the challenges of social inclusion of young people, with reference to the relevant EU youth indicators. It highlights that the group of young people mainly at risk of poverty and social exclusion are the so-called NEETs (young people not in employment, education and training) and indicates that in the EU-27, the at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion rate for young people stands at 29,1 % and is higher than that of the general population (23,5 %). This illustrates the importance of paying special attention to this segment of the population and setting social inclusion as a priority in the youth field.
29. The overall thematic priority for the structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations for the next work cycle (the period 1 January 2013 to 30 June 2014) is therefore social inclusion. The specific priorities for the Team Presidency of the third work cycle are set out in Annex.
30. The priority areas chosen can be complemented by each Presidency in the light of any possible new developments.
31. The priority areas for the following Team Presidency cycle (1 July 2014-31 December 2015) should be defined before the beginning of its term.
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ANNEX

Priorities for European cooperation in the youth field during the period 1 January 2013-30 June 2014**Overall priority — social inclusion**

The overall thematic priority for European cooperation in the youth field for the period 1 January 2013-30 June 2014 will be social inclusion. 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. Ireland, Lithuania and Greece will work together to ensure support for the overall theme of social inclusion via their national priorities during their respective Presidency tenures and throughout the 18-month Trio.

The concept of social inclusion will be as a broad unifying theme, involving all young people, in addition to those with fewer opportunities. The term and concept of social inclusion will therefore be considered and applied in the broadest sense and will be seen to accommodate, and be inclusive of, the range of issues young people face.

1 January 2013-30 June 2013 — Quality youth work

The Irish Presidency will focus on the contribution of quality youth work to enhancing the social inclusion of all young people. During the first half of 2013, the following issues will be highlighted:

- contribution of quality youth work to young people's development and well-being,
- contribution of quality standards in youth work as a means of achieving positive outcomes for young people in areas such as personal and social development, educational and vocational readiness etc.,
- contribution of youth work to achieving the goals of 'Europe 2020', in particular in relation to employment for youth,
- exchange of good practices and sharing of knowledge in these areas among Member States.

1 July 2013-31 December 2013 — Young people not in employment, education and training

During the second half of 2013, the following issues will be highlighted:

- enhancing the social inclusion of young people, with particular emphasis on young people not in employment, education and training (NEETs),
- promoting cross-sectoral cooperation as the underlying principle of integral youth policy,
- exchanging good practices on social inclusion of young people,
- promoting cooperation in the youth policy field between young people from European Union and Eastern Europe and Caucasus countries.

1 January 2014-30 June 2014 — Culture and entrepreneurship

During the first half of 2014, the following issues will be highlighted:

- drawing actions to strengthen young people's entrepreneurial spirit, promote youth entrepreneurship, with special focus on social entrepreneurship, and 'green jobs' and new job opportunities in the field of culture to foster the social inclusion of all young people,
 - increasing accessibility of young people, particularly of those living in remote areas, to new technologies to empower youth talent and attract interest in the field of culture,
 - promoting the contribution of youth work to support and enhance the creativity and entrepreneurship of young people, including the exchange of good practices.
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