



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



## **Council resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018)**

*2978th EDUCATION, YOUTH AND CULTURE Council meeting  
Brussels, 27 November 2009*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING

the Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 27 June 2002 establishing a framework for European cooperation in the youth field<sup>1</sup>, which included the application of the open method of coordination and mainstreaming of youth issues into other policies, and the European Youth Pact adopted by the March 2005 European Council<sup>2</sup> as one of the instruments contributing to the achievement of the Lisbon objectives for growth and jobs;

the Renewed Social Agenda which targets youth and children as a main priority<sup>3</sup>;

and ACKNOWLEDGING

the conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 11 May 2009 on the evaluation of the current framework for European cooperation in the youth field and on future perspectives for the renewed framework<sup>4</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 168, 13.7.2002, pp 2-5.

<sup>2</sup> 7619/1/05.

<sup>3</sup> 11517/08.

<sup>4</sup> 9169/09.

## WELCOMES

the communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled *An EU strategy for youth – Investing and empowering. A renewed open method of coordination to address youth challenges and opportunities*<sup>5</sup>;

## RECOGNISES that

1. Young women and men have a crucial role to play in meeting the many socio-economic, demographic, cultural, environmental and technological challenges and opportunities facing the European Union and its citizens today and in the years ahead. Promoting the social and professional integration of young women and men is an essential component to reach the objectives of Europe's Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs, at the same time as promoting personal fulfilment, social cohesion and active citizenship.
2. The EU Youth Report 2009<sup>6</sup> shows that, although a majority of today's young Europeans enjoy good living conditions, there are still challenges to be met such as youth unemployment, young people not participating in education or training, poverty among youth, low levels of participation and representation of young people in the democratic process and various health problems. Economic downturns, such as the one which began in 2008, tend to have a significant negative impact on young people and the effects risk being long term.
3. The current framework for European cooperation in the youth field has proved to be a valuable platform for the Member States in addressing youth-related issues and that the open method of coordination, the mainstreaming of youth issues into other policy areas and initiatives such as the European Youth Pact<sup>7</sup> have facilitated a flexible approach in a manner suited to the youth field, with due regard for the competences of the Member States and the principle of subsidiarity.
4. A renewed framework setting out a strategy for European cooperation in the youth field over the next decade - while building on the progress made and experiences gained to date and while continuing to respect the Member States' responsibility for youth policy - would further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of such cooperation and provide increased benefits to young people in the European Union, especially in the context of the post-2010 Lisbon Strategy.

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<sup>5</sup> 9008/09.

<sup>6</sup> 9008/09 ADD 4.

<sup>7</sup> 7619/05 : Annex I to the European Council conclusions, 22-23 March 2005.

5. It is of vital importance to enable all young women and men to make the best of their potential. This entails not only investing in youth, by putting in place greater resources to develop policy areas that affect young people in their daily lives and improve their well being, but also empowering youth by promoting their autonomy and the potential of young people to contribute to a sustainable development of society and to European values and goals. It also calls for greater cooperation between youth policies and relevant policy areas, in particular education, employment, social inclusion, culture and health.

ACCORDINGLY AGREES that

1. In the period up to and including 2018, the overall objectives of European cooperation in the youth field should be to:
  - (i) create more and equal opportunities for all young people in education and in the labour market, and to
  - (ii) promote the active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity of all young people.
2. The main fields of action in which initiatives should be taken are outlined below and detailed in Annex I hereto:
  - Education and training
  - Employment and entrepreneurship
  - Health and well-being
  - Participation
  - Voluntary activities
  - Social inclusion
  - Youth and the world
  - Creativity and culture
3. While fully respecting Member States' responsibility for youth policy and the voluntary nature of European cooperation in the youth field, achieving the two interrelated overall objectives implies a dual approach involving the development and promotion of both:
  - (i) specific initiatives in the youth field - i.e. policies and actions specifically targeted at young people in areas such as non-formal learning, participation, voluntary activities, youth work, mobility and information;and

- (ii) mainstreaming initiatives - i.e. initiatives to enable a cross-sectoral approach where due account is taken of youth issues when formulating, implementing and evaluating policies and actions in other policy fields which have a significant impact on the lives of young people. Building on the example of the European Youth Pact, a youth dimension should continue to be integrated in the post-2010 Lisbon Strategy and the Renewed Social Agenda as well as in relevant EU strategies and programmes, such as the new Strategic Framework for European cooperation in Education and Training, the Employment Guidelines, the Health Strategy and the Agenda for Culture.

UNDERLINES that

1. European Youth Policy cooperation should be firmly anchored in the international system of human rights. A number of guiding principles should be observed in all policies and activities concerning young people, namely the importance of
  - (a) promoting gender equality and combating all forms of discrimination, respecting the rights and observing the principles recognised *inter alia* in Articles 21 and 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;
  - (b) taking account of possible differences in the living conditions, needs, aspirations, interests and attitudes of young people due to various factors, paying particular attention to those who, for different reasons, may have fewer opportunities;
  - (c) recognising all young people as a resource to society, and 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.

FURTHER AGREES that

1. In the period up to 2018 European cooperation in the youth field should be implemented by means of a renewed open method of coordination, and should draw on the overall objectives, dual approach and main fields of action outlined above.
2. European cooperation in the youth field should be evidence based, pertinent and concrete. It should produce clear and visible results which should be presented, reviewed and disseminated on a regular basis and in a structured manner, thereby establishing a basis for continuous evaluation and development.

3. The success of the open method of coordination in the youth field depends on the political commitment of Member States and on effective working methods at national and EU level. From this perspective, the working methods used in the context of European cooperation should be based on the following:
- (i) *Work cycles*: The period up to 2018 will be divided into a series of 3-year cycles, with the first cycle covering the years from 2010 to 2012.
  - (ii) *Priorities*: For each of these cycles, a number of priorities for European cooperation will be chosen which contribute to the fields of action identified under this framework. The priorities will be adopted by the Council on the basis of the relevant joint Council/Commission report - as referred to hereafter - and in cooperation with the representatives of the two Presidency trios covering the work cycle in question. These priorities for European cooperation will be designed to allow for cooperation between all the Member States or for closer cooperation between a more limited number of Member States (clusters), in accordance with national priorities. The priorities for the first part of the first work cycle under this new framework are set out in Annex II hereto. The priorities for the second part of this cycle will be presented and adopted by the Council at a later date.
  - (iii) *Implementation instruments*: For the framework of cooperation to be effectively implemented, there is a need both for instruments in the specific youth field and for instruments in other related policy fields.

In the specific youth field, the instruments are outlined in sub-paragraphs (a)-(g). These should be used to support the dual approach, i.e. to implement specific initiatives in the youth field, as well as to promote a cross-sectoral approach to support mainstreaming of a youth perspective in other related policy fields. In the mainstreaming work, the instruments should be used as a basis for dialogue with, and support for, other policy fields in order for these to integrate a youth perspective where and when relevant.

- (a) *Knowledge building and evidence-based youth policy*: Youth policy should be evidence-based. Better knowledge and understanding of the living conditions, values and attitudes of young women and men needs to be gathered and shared with other relevant policy fields so as to enable appropriate and timely measures to be taken. Such knowledge can be promoted *inter alia* via support to the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy and its correspondents, EU-wide analytical capacity (Eurydice), youth research, studies, special European youth surveys and networks of researchers. The EU Youth Report will also be an essential contribution towards evidence-based policy making. Cooperation between relevant authorities, youth researchers, young people, youth organisations and those active in youth work should be promoted.

- (b) *Mutual learning*: Mutual learning is a key element in this framework of cooperation. It provides the opportunity to identify and learn from good practices in different Member States. Mutual learning will be carried out by such means as peer learning activities, conferences and seminars, high level fora or expert groups as well as through, studies and analyses, and web-based networks, with the involvement of relevant stakeholders. The subjects of these activities should be closely linked to the priorities for the respective three year work cycles. All of these initiatives should be developed with clear objectives and on the basis of clear mandates, time schedules and planned outputs to be proposed by the Commission in cooperation with the Member States.

Policy dialogue with third countries and cooperation with international organisations such as the Council of Europe, OECD<sup>8</sup> and the United Nations should be continued, thereby providing a source of reference and inspiration.

- (c) *Progress reporting*: The European Union Youth Report should be drawn up by the Commission at the end of each work cycle - and in the case of the first under the new framework, in 2012. The EU Youth Report shall consist of two parts: A joint Council-Commission report (political part), and supporting documents (statistical and analytical part). The EU Youth report will evaluate progress made towards the overall objectives of the framework, as well as progress regarding the priorities defined for the most recent work cycle and identify good practises. The EU Youth Report should be based on national reports drawn up by the Member States in the youth field and in other relevant policy areas, as well as on other existing information and statistical data. Duplication of reporting obligations should be avoided. The EU Youth Report should also serve as a basis for establishing a set of priorities for the following work cycle.
- (d) *Dissemination of results*: To enhance visibility and impact of cooperation under this framework at local, regional, national and European level, the outcomes of cooperation should be widely disseminated among all relevant stakeholders and, where appropriate, discussed at the level of Directors-General or Ministers.
- (e) *Monitoring of the process*: To promote the delivery of results through the open method of coordination, as well as ownership of the method at both national and EU level, the Member States and the Commission will work closely together in steering, taking forward and evaluating the process and its outcomes. In this context, work should be carried out on the basis of existing indicators which have a bearing on the situation of young people in fields such as education, employment, health, social inclusion and, where appropriate, proposals should be developed on potential new indicators for consideration by the Council.

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<sup>8</sup> The right of participation in such work of all Member States should be ensured.

- (f) *Consultations and structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations*: The structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations, which serves as a forum for continuous joint reflection on the priorities, implementation and follow-up of European cooperation in the youth field, should be pursued and developed.

The themes of the dialogue should be aligned with the overall objectives of European cooperation in the youth field and the priorities for each work cycle. Clear objectives and realistic procedures should be established for each cycle of dialogue in order to ensure continuity and follow-up. The dialogue should be as inclusive as possible and developed at local, regional, national and EU level and include youth researchers and those active in youth work. Structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations in other policy fields should also be supported. The implementation of the structured dialogue is further outlined in Annex III.

- (g) *Mobilisation of EU Programmes and Funds*: Effective use should be made of available EU funds such as the Structural Funds, and of relevant programmes such as the *Youth in Action*, *Lifelong Learning*, *Culture*, *Progress*, *Media*, *Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs* and *Competitiveness and Innovation* programmes as well as the relevant EU Programmes and Funds in the areas of external relations and development cooperation.

4. For each 3 year cycle, instruments should, as far as possible, be used for work towards the priorities.
5. Under this framework of cooperation, supporting and developing youth work should be regarded as cross-sectoral issues. Youth work is a broad term covering a large scope of activities of a social, cultural, educational or political nature both by, with and for young people. Increasingly, such activities also include sport and services for young people. Youth work belongs to the area of "out-of-school" education, as well as specific leisure time activities managed by professional or voluntary youth workers and youth leaders and is based on non-formal learning processes and on voluntary participation. The ways in which youth work can contribute to achieving the overall objectives identified above - as well as be supported and recognised as an added value for its economic and social contribution - should be further examined and discussed under this framework. Among the issues to be discussed are: appropriate training for youth workers and leaders, the recognition of their skills using the appropriate European instruments, support for the mobility of youth workers and leaders and the promotion of innovative services and approaches for youth work.

6. The renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field may be reviewed and necessary adjustments made by the Council in the light of any major new developments in Europe, particularly decisions taken on a post-2010 Lisbon Strategy.

ACCORDINGLY INVITES THE MEMBER STATES to

1. Work together, with the support of the Commission and using the open method of coordination as outlined in this Resolution, to enhance European cooperation in the youth field in the period up to 2018 on the basis of the overall objectives, the fields of action, the dual approach, principles and implementation instruments described above, and of the priorities agreed for each work cycle.
2. Adopt, on the basis of national priorities, measures at national level which can contribute to achieving the overall objectives outlined in the renewed framework, as well as consider whether inspiration can be drawn from mutual learning at EU level, when devising national policies in the youth field and other related policy areas.

INVITES THE COMMISSION to

1. Work with and support the Member States - during the period up to 2018 - in cooperating within this framework on the basis of the overall objectives, the fields of action, the dual approach, principles and implementation instruments described above, and the priorities agreed for each work cycle.
2. Examine, in particular through the EU Youth Report, the degree to which the overall objectives of this framework have been met. In this context the Commission is invited to set up a working group to discuss, in consultation with relevant policy areas, existing data on the situation of young people and the possible need for development of indicators in fields where they do not exist, or where no youth perspective is apparent. The results of this work and proposals on potential new indicators should be submitted for consideration by the Council no later than December 2010.
3. Propose a flexible framework for peer-learning activities and launch studies relevant to the overall objectives and priorities, as well as to regularly report to the Council on these various activities.
4. Prepare in 2017, in association with Member States, a final evaluation report covering this framework of cooperation. The final evaluation report should be discussed by the Council in 2018."

For further details, see [15131/09](#).

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