



Documentation

EUROPEAN YOUTH IN ACTION FOR DIVERSITY AND TOLERANCE

6 - 9 NOVEMBER 05
BERLIN/GERMANY



organized by:



Federal Ministry for
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,
Women and Youth



European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture



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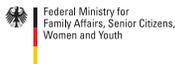
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Foreword

The ever closer contact brought about by globalisation, economic difficulties and the loss of traditional social ties have led to insecurities and tensions, including the relationships between the various community and ethnic groups in many EU Member States. Prejudices and inadequate knowledge reinforces this uncertainty among women and men alike. This, in turn, fuels radical positions and leads to the growth of numerous forms of discrimination. The European integration progress must be perceived as benefiting and enriching everyone in Europe. Our societies are being enhanced and vitalised by the ongoing exchange between people from different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. It is important to support this understanding on a broad front by encouraging open-mindedness, respect, tolerance and a readiness to commit to democracy.

It is consequently an important signal that young people are committing themselves to the ideals of the European integration process and are drawing up an action plan for an open, tolerant and diverse Europe, as at the conference "European Youth in Action for Diversity and Tolerance". Approximately 180 young people and experts from 39 European countries took part in the Conference "European Youth in Action for Diversity and Tolerance" organised by the Federal Government of Germany and the European Commission, which was held in Berlin from 6 to 9 November 2005. The conference referred to the first international conference "Youth for Tolerance and Democracy", also held in Berlin in 2001. For the first time, not only did young people want to put demands to political decision-makers, but they also wished to put forward their own contributions for improving the situation in the form of a binding action plan. The participants benefited from joint activities during the conference for exchanging good practice as well as for networking.

Following intensive and rather controversial discussions, at the close of the conference, the young participants presented a declaration - based on current developments in Europe - putting forward political recommendations along with proposals for their implementation at European, national and local level. The participants feel a sense of responsibility to play an active role in their implementation. Other key issues included improving opportunities for young people to take part in society, the development of a European action plan to combat all forms of extremism, ongoing support for antiracism projects, a common European immigration strategy as well as a proposal on how Europe's cultural diversity can be defined more clearly in formal education systems, which should then be closely interlinked with informal education. The participants demanded that the debate initiated should now be continued by Europe-wide conferences every two years. Germany accepts this challenge, and has stated its willingness to provide a platform for the continuation of the dialogue during the German Presidency in early 2007. After the conference, several participants reported about networks and projects which have emerged from the conference. Participants underlined that they wish to have a deepened cooperation from which should generate results for the European discourse.

The conference website www.youth-against-racism.net assures the sustainability of the conference results by providing the platform for a continuing discussion as well as for a continuous exchange on the implementation of the conference results among the participants.

We wish good discussions.



Gerd Hoofe

*State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Family Affairs,
Senior Citizens, Women and Youth*



Ján Figel

*Member of the European Commission, responsible for
Education, Training, Culture and Multilingualism*

Opening of the conference



Sunday, 6-11-2005

Arrival of participants in Berlin

- 5:00 pm **Welcoming addresses by the organisers**
Mr Sven-Olaf Obst, German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Head of the Division "Prevention of Delinquency, Right-wing Extremism and Xenophobia"
Ms Karin Lopatta-Loibl, European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, Youth Policies Unit
Moderators: Ms Helle Becker, Mr Jochen Butt-Pósnik
- Introduction of participants and participating organisations**
- Get-together**
- 8:00 pm Live music "Firez"

Monday, 7-11-2005

10:00 am

Opening of the conference in the Centrum Judaicum

Mr Peter Ruhenstroth-Bauer, State Secretary, German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

Mr Pierre Mairesse, Director for Youth, Sports and Relations with the Citizen, European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture

Welcoming – “Talk Show”

Ms Ruth Siemaszko, Divisional Manager, Children, Young People and Families Division, Department for Education and Skills in the UK, EU-Presidency

Mr Ralf-René Weingärtner, Director for Youth and Sports, Council of Europe

Mr Bashy Quraishy, President, European Network Against Racism (ENAR)

Mr Christoph Erbslöh, participant to the 2001 conference

11:00 – 12:30 am

Keynote speeches

Ms Beate Winkler, Director, European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC)

Mr Renaldas Vaisbrodas, President, European Youth Forum (EYF)



Opening speech

Peter Ruhenstroth-Bauer, State Secretary,
German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

**Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Participants,**

I am delighted to be able to welcome you here to Berlin today for the opening of the European Youth Conference “European Youth in Action for Diversity and Tolerance”. You have come here from all corners of Europe in order to discuss together the causes of anti-Semitism and xenophobia, of intolerance and racism, as well as the possible ways and strategies to overcome these problems. In the coming days we will find ample opportunity to share our experiences, discuss joint projects, get new connections and, I hope so, maybe even make new friends.

With that I warmly welcome you here to Berlin. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the European Commission for co-organising this conference, and I am especially extending my welcome to their representatives. Let me also thank the International Youth Exchange and Visitors’ Service of the Federal Republic of Germany (IJAB) and the German National Agency for the European YOUTH Programme and their staffs for their preliminary work in the organisation of this conference. The Advisory Board also played an important role in the preparation of the conference. You have met twice during the run-up to the conference, giving important input in terms of the contents to be dealt with and in terms of the winning participants and referees. I would like to explicitly thank you for your work.

Almost exactly four years ago the first European Youth Conference, “Youth for Tolerance and Democracy – a European Perspective”, was also held here in Berlin. This triggered a still ongoing discussion, initiated and promoted by the federal government. The objective of the first conference was to integrate and promote the ideas, actions and impulses of young people into the battle against racism and xenophobia in Europe. Young people were given the opportunity to share their experiences in the battle against racism and xenophobia and to participate in a debate with politicians and experts on possible strategies of fighting these



phenomena. This first conference has shown its effects – not only here in Germany, but also within the European Union. In a conversation with the former Youth Commissioner, Ms Reding, it was therefore only natural for me to take up her idea to organise a follow-up conference in cooperation with the European Commission. For today, four years later, we must go through this process again and develop it further to examine what has been achieved these last years. Did we make any progress? Where do we have to make more of an effort? What has changed in the last few years? And – most of all – what solid actions still need to be taken in the coming years? In the next few days, you, dear Participants, will have the opportunity to discuss all these questions, find joint answers and come up with specific actions and objectives for the future.

However, I think we can say today that one thing is certain: Europe has become more colourful and more diverse in recent years. In May of 2004, ten new members acceded to the European Union – more will follow. The end of the East-West conflict and the integration of the Central and Eastern European states in the European family of nations mark the final victory over the iron curtain which separated Europe for decades. Today Europe is home to millions of people with the most varied cultural, ethnical and religious backgrounds. To create a Europe of diversity and freedom – that shall be our goal for the coming years and decades. Even beyond the borders of our continent, the world at large is moving closer together. Telecommunication networks, globalisation and global trade, an increased mobility of large parts of the population and flourishing tourism contribute to closer relations and interdependence among countries and regions. This also concerns us Europeans; we should not build walls around us, but we have to be open to other ideas, other products and also other experiences and influences. And that which in economics long ago became second nature must also become a reality in society: the time of the national state as such, of isolating ourselves from others, of living and working only for ourselves is definitely over. Today, our society is marked by a diversity of cultures – anyhow by a diversity of ethnic groups. That is the reality and that is, for all particular conflicts which may exist, no horror scenario but, in the contrary, something positive.

In the coming years, dealing with foreigners and their cultures will become more and more of an everyday experience for many people. We know that a feeling of insecurity and disapproval among some people will be the consequence. There is fear at the root of this attitude – the fear of losing jobs in particular. Other factors, such as the impossibility to control glo-

balization with the old national mechanisms, economic problems and the loss of traditional social bonds, enhance the feeling of uncertainty and cause tensions in the relations among the different social and ethnic groups within our society. Plain prejudices, ignorance and insufficient knowledge of the overall context also contribute. This in turn strengthens radical positions and washes people and parties to the political surface who appear to have simple solutions. Currently there are far-right wingers or at least right-wing populists on the rise in many European countries. These parties take advantage of the worries and fears of the people and use them for their own ideologically blind and inhumane purposes. This is a danger we have to tackle. Because if we do not succeed in presenting the European integration process for what it is – that is, a gain and an enrichment for all of Europe and for all the people living here – this process may fail, causing the European house to collapse. Together we have to fight this threat.

For me it is important and encouraging to see that especially young people are enthusiastic about the ideals of the European integration process and that they are fighting for an open, tolerant and diverse Europe. Because if people are interested in different cultures, languages and religions from an early age, they will later not shy away from what is foreign. Therefore, the promotion of tolerance and cosmopolitanism, of key democratic skills and the commitment of civil society are of pivotal importance. It is the basic condition for a long-term policy, a policy to effectively combat right-wing extremism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and the attitudinal and behavioural patterns they are associated with. This combat must be strengthened and extended on all levels – international, national, regional and local.

For this reason the federal government employs a multi-dimensional strategy with repressive and preventive elements to combat right-wing extremism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and racism.

The repressive area lies within the authority of the police and judiciary. When crimes are committed, the state has to defend itself and enforce the existing laws with severity. But if we want to get to the root of the problem instead of fighting the symptoms, we have to do more than prosecute the worst offences with all the force of the criminal law. We have to take preventive action, promote the extension and strengthening of civil and democratic structures and support tolerance and cosmopolitanism. With the action programme "Youth for Tolerance and Democracy – against Right-Wing Extremism, Xenophobia and anti-Semitism", the federal government has set important priorities in this area over the last four years: Mobile consultation teams strengthen democratic awareness; consulting services for victims support victims of racist assaults; network services collect data, experiences and insights concerning the treatment of victims and perpetrators and interconnect those locally involved; initiatives of young people against intolerance and xenophobia, international youth movements, history workshops, film projects, poster competitions or photo workshops – the action programme supports a wide range of projects. Since the start of the programme in 2001, more than 4,000 preventive projects, initiatives and schemes were subsidised with more than Euro 163 million.

But in the past years, the federal government was also committed to combating right-wing extremism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and racism on an international level. The anti-Semitism conference of the OSCE in Berlin in April 2004 was surely an especially conspicuous milestone – an internationally perceived sign to jointly combat and overcome anti-Semitism in all its forms. But it is not only the big signals seen far and wide that are impor-

tant – one can also achieve a lot by taking smaller steps that are not so apparent in the focus of the public eye. It is particularly important to the federal government that especially young people play an important role in this field. The declaration of the Council of Youth Ministers on racism and intolerance, adopted on the 18th of May, 2004 clearly emphasises this. That is why I also welcome the fact that the new draft of the European YOUTH Programme “Youth in Action 2007 – 2013” focuses even more strongly than the current Youth Programme on the promotion of tolerance, solidarity and mutual understanding, as well as on cross-cultural and cross-generational dialogue. The federal government is also actively cooperating with the Council of Europe concerning youth policy – especially regarding the promotion of tolerance and the fight against racism as a pillar of education for democracy and the implementation of human rights. We will firmly support the new campaign “All different – all equal!”

To create a united Europe in equality, unity and diversity is an enormous task into which we will have to put all our effort – and which is well worth fighting for. Therefore, we should never forget how much stronger, richer and more vital our societies become through constant exchange with people of different cultural, ethnical and religious backgrounds. Our common goal must be to relay this idea to all levels of society.



Become active, exchange your ideas and get involved – especially in the development of a joint action plan. Because this is new about this conference: In the coming two days you will not only formulate a political declaration – as is customary at conferences – but also design an action plan with specific recommendations, proposals and commitments to support you in your own projects and at the same time support setting up European networks. Thus, the results of this event are aimed at several addressees. On the one hand, they are targeted at the political decision-makers and on the other at yourselves, the participants and responsible local players. I am looking forward to these two days full of events and insights, and I am especially keen on hearing about your conclusions and results. In this spirit I wish this conference to be successful, and I wish you many new encounters and experiences, which will be both technically and personally enriching.

Thank you very much for your attention!

Opening speech

Pierre Mairese, Director for Youth, Sport and Relations with the Citizen at
the European Commission

Introduction

- ▶ It is a pleasure and an honour for me to open this second joint conference of the European Commission and the German government on young people and the fight against racism and xenophobia.
- ▶ In this context I would like to thank the German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth for the excellent cooperation in the preparation of this conference.
- ▶ The European Commissioner in charge of Youth, Mr Figel, very much regrets not being able to be here today but he sends his best wishes to all of you for a successful conference.

1. The fight against racism and xenophobia is an important priority

- ▶ The last 5 years have seen the development of a political process in the youth field at European level as well as the adoption and implementation of the current YOUTH Programme.
- ▶ Since 2000 the promotion of diversity and mutual respect and the fight against racism and xenophobia has been a priority in the calls for projects of the YOUTH Programme.
- ▶ In 2001 the fight against racism and xenophobia was identified as one of the key priorities of the White Paper "A New Impetus for European Youth".
- ▶ 2001 was also the year when the Commission organised in cooperation with the German government the first European youth conference entitled "Youth for Tolerance and Democracy" to which this conference is a follow-up.
- ▶ In 2002 the Youth Ministers of the European Union agreed on a common framework for cooperation in the youth field, the open method of coordination. In their Resolution the Ministers called for the inclusion of the youth dimension in other policies, and expressly referred to the combat against racism and xenophobia.
- ▶ In 2004 the Youth Ministers adopted a Declaration on Racism and Intolerance in relation to young people.
- ▶ Today, the Commission is organising, in cooperation with the German government, another conference for young people on this issue.
- ▶ Next week, on 15 November, the Youth Ministers will pronounce on their cooperation in the youth field. In this framework they are expected to reconfirm the fight against racism and xenophobia as a priority.
- ▶ In fact the fight against racism and xenophobia touches upon all three strands of cooperation in the youth field. The three strands are:
 - ▶ active citizenship,
 - ▶ social and professional inclusion – in this context I would like to mention the European



Pact for Youth, a recent initiative of the Heads of State and Governments that aims to ensure that employment and education policies benefit young people,

- ▶ the mainstreaming of youth in other policies.
- ▶ If cultural diversity and mutual respect and the fight against racism and xenophobia have been a priority in the youth field in the past years, this priority will be even more important in the future.
- ▶ The reasons therefore are many:
 - ▶ Our societies are becoming more and more multicultural
 - ▶ This multiculturalism is being and will be reinforced by the enlargement of the European Union
 - ▶ Globalisation contributes to this development
 - ▶ Last not least immigration policies add their share.
- ▶ In this situation the Member States have adopted two directives against discrimination, Directive 2000/43/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, and Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation. Once transposed into national law these Directives are a powerful tool to fight discrimination.
- ▶ In my opinion young people and their organisations as well as youth workers are an essential part of the solution to discrimination, and to racial discrimination and xenophobia in particular.

2. What has been done in the youth sector

- ▶ In the framework of the current YOUTH Programme the Commission has co-financed about 50.000 youth projects between 2000- 2005 aiming at intercultural learning and mutual understanding. As many as 3.000 of these projects were explicit projects against racism and xenophobia.
- ▶ As it is not possible to name all of these projects, I will just mention two outstanding ones:
 - ▶ DASH is an Internet platform for and by young people that helps young people to set up their own Internet platforms against racism and xenophobia.

- ▶ EPTO – the European Peer Training Organisation is a network of young trainers committed to combating racism and xenophobia and all forms of discrimination.
- ▶ Both of these organisations are present at this conference. DASH has made the conference website.
- ▶ In the youth field the Commission cooperates closely with the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Youth is an important target group of the Commission's campaign "For Diversity-Against Discrimination" and will most probably be a main subject of the campaign next year.
- ▶ The Commission also cooperates with the Council of Europe. Diversity is an important horizontal priority of the partnership framework agreement of our institutions. The Commission also supports the campaign "All Different-All Equal".
- ▶ Last not least, the Commission's youth sector cooperates with the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC). I am very pleased that the Director of the EUMC, Mrs Winkler, who has already participated in the 2001 conference, is also here today.
- ▶ In my view, the requests that young people made at the 2001 conference have been tackled and are still being tackled by the Commission.



3. What does the Commission expect from this conference?

- ▶ First of all the Commission expects you, the young people, to tell us what you need in your fight against racism and xenophobia and I invite you to elaborate concrete and realistic proposals.
- ▶ These proposals should also cover networking aspects. In this context I am thinking of the new Youth in Action Programme which will run from 2007-2013. How can the Commission best support you in your efforts via the new programme?
- ▶ I also expect the conference to be the theatre of a lively exchange of best practices, and I invite you to tell us how an exchange of best practice could be organised in the future to be most effective.
- ▶ An important means in the fight of young people against racism and xenophobia is the use of the Internet. How can this means be better used in this fight? How can the awareness and vigilance of young people be enhanced concerning the use of Internet for racist and xenophobe purposes? What do you need to make the best use of it for combating racism and xenophobia?
- ▶ I very much welcome the idea that you will not only formulate requests to policy-makers but that you will also commit yourselves to an Action Plan.
- ▶ This seems to be the best possible means to successfully combat racism and xenophobia and to promote diversity and mutual respect: to take action...
- ▶ I invite you to take a lot of action towards our common goal in the next two days and I wish you a successful conference!

Expert discussions and good practice

Monday, 7-11-2005

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Expert discussions in small groups

1. When young people are affected by racism

Concepts and experiences from work with young people affected by racism

Mr Alem Belayeneh, British Refugee Council

Facilitator: Mr Lionel Schreiber, European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS)

2. Young people as peer leaders for diversity and tolerance

How to develop and approach peer education for diversity and tolerance among young people

Mr Luis Manuel Pinto, European Peer Training Organisation (EPTO)

Facilitator: Ms Julia Franz, Anne Frank Zentrum, Berlin

3. Youth in Action

Examples of civil commitment of young Europeans for diversity and tolerance

Ms Mirjam Sander, UNITED against Racism (Netherlands)

Mr Bernhard Kristen, UNITED against Racism (Austria)

Ms Samantha Tanni, UNITED against Racism (Norway)

Facilitator: Mr Christoffer Grønstad, Norwegian Youth Council



4. National youth policy strategies for diversity and tolerance

Strategies and campaigns of national youth policies for diversity and tolerance

Mr Matthias Pohlig, ex-volunteer at Landelijk Bureau ter Bestrijding van Rassendiscriminatie (LBR), Netherlands

Mr Henning Krüger, ex-volunteer at UNITED, Netherlands

Mr Christian Lüders, German Youth Institute (DJI)

Facilitator: Mr Sami Kontola, Mannerheim League, Finland

5. Strategies and campaigns for diversity in Europe

Strategies and campaigns of European youth policy for diversity and tolerance, strategies of the European Union and the Council of Europe

Ms Deirdre Hodson, European Commission – Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

Mr Hans-Joachim Schild, Partnership Council of Europe and European Commission

Facilitator: Mr Christoph Erbslöh, Action Reconciliation Service for Peace, Germany

6. European Programmes for non-formal learning in the field of diversity and tolerance

Youth and Youth in Action – Contributions of the European Youth Programmes to a non-formal youth education for diversity and tolerance
Mr Artur Payer, European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture

Facilitator: Ms Katarzyna Pilarczyk, AEGEE, Belgium

7. “Let’s bring down the walls” – Activities with young migrants

Experiences from activities with young migrants – from the point of view of both, youth workers and young people

Mr Bashy Quraishy, President of ENAR (European Network Against Racism)

Facilitator: Susie Green, Salto Youth Resource Center Cultural Diversity, United Kingdom

8. Approaches of non-formal learning with young people

Experiences with approaches and concepts of non-formal youth education as a contribution to diversity and tolerance

Mr Bram Goris, European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL)

Facilitator: Ms Adina Pop, Youth Action for Peace (YAP), Italy

9. Training concepts for out-of school education for diversity and tolerance

Exchange of experiences concerning the aims and effects of national and international training concepts for diversity and tolerance as well as support strategies for youth workers and trainers

Mr Rui Gomes, Education and Training Unit, Directorate of Youth and Sports, Council of Europe

Facilitator: Ms Birgit Jagusch, IDA e.V., Germany



10. “Come on – let’s chat”

The internet as an information and interaction platform for youth projects for diversity and tolerance

Mr Florian Schneider, Ms Susanne Lang, D-A-S-H, Internet platform of and for young people

Facilitator: Ms Agnieszka Erlenbusch, German National YOUTH Agency

5:30 – 7:00 pm

Reports from the small groups and definition of the topics for Tuesday’s workshops



8:30 – 10:00 pm

Presentation of good practice projects in Berlin

1. Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste (Action Reconciliation Service for Peace)
www.asf-ev.de
2. Deutsch Russischer Austausch e.V. (German-Russian Exchange Association)
www.austausch.org
3. RAA Berlin (Regional Centre for Foreigners, Intercultural Education, Youth and School – RAA Berlin – a Promotion Agency for Democratic School Development and Intercultural Projects)
www.raa-berlin.de
4. Mostar Friedensprojekt e.V. (Mostar Peace Project Association)
5. Jugendbildungsstätte Kurt Löwenstein e.V. (Kurt Löwenstein Educational Centre)
www.kurt-loewenstein.de
6. Amadeu Antonio Stiftung (Amadeu Antonio Foundation)
www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de
7. Paul Singer.Verein für politische, soziale und kulturelle Bildung e.V. (Paul Singer. Association for Political, Social and Cultural Education)
www.paulsinger.de
8. 8.K 77 Studios (Open Space for Dance, Drama, Music, and Performance) und Amt für evangelische Kinder- und Jugendarbeit in Berlin, Brandenburg und der schlesischen Oberlausitz (Agency for Protestant Youth Work in Berlin, Brandenburg and Silesian Oberlausitz)
www.k77.org
9. Berliner Senat
Bezirksamt Spandau von Berlin, Abt. Jugend und Familie
(Berlin Senate, Regional Office Spandau, Department for Youth and Family)
10. AriC Berlin e.V., Antirassistisch-Interkulturelles Informationszentrum (Intercultural Information Centre against Racism)
www.aric.de

W

orkshops and closing of the conference

Tuesday, 8-11-2005

9:00 – 12:30 am **Workshops**

1. Islamophobia. How to make the topic more a priority
2. Media and culture in the fight against discrimination and racism
3. Set up a strategy for effective and regular networking between all anti-racism actors
4. Training concepts and approaches in the work with right wing young people
5. New faces of fascism
6. Diversity in educational structures – requirements for peer leadership
7. Empowerment of young people as a root for change
8. Immigration policy and fortress Europe
9. Causes of racism and solutions
10. Non-formal education to promote diversity and tolerance / how to reach young people (non-organised, not speaking languages, etc.)



2:00 – 4:00 pm

Continuation of the workshops

4:00 – 5:00 pm

Market-Café (Project market): Privileged time for networking
Editing phase

5:00 – 6:30 pm

Presentation of the workshop results (proposals for the declaration/action plan)

8:30 pm

Conference party with live music “b-town busted”

Wednesday, 9-11-2005

- 9:00 – 12:00 am **Presentation of the declaration/action plan and discussion in the plenary**
- 12:00 am **Adoption of the declaration/action plan**
- 2:00 – 3:30 pm **Handing over of the political declaration/action plan to**
Mr Peter Fricke, Head of the Youth Division of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth
Ms Karin Lopatta-Loibl, European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, Youth Policies Unit
Ms Ruth Siemaszko, Divisional Manager, Children, Young People and Families Division, Department for Education and Skills in the UK, EU-Presidency
Mr Ralf-René Weingärtner, Director for Youth and Sports, Council of Europe
- Panel discussion**
Official closing of the conference
- 4:00 – 7:15 pm **Optional study tour “Diversity in Berlin”**
Berlin’s main sights and the quarter of Kreuzberg





Final Declaration European Youth in Action for Diversity and Tolerance 6-9 November 2005

The European Conference “Youth in Action for Diversity and Tolerance” took place in Berlin, Germany from 6th to 9th November 2005 with the participation of 141 participants from 41 countries.

I. PREAMBLE

We

the participants of the European Youth in Action for Diversity and Tolerance, representing several youth organizations and networks in Europe,

noting the results of the International Conference “Youth for Tolerance and Democracy” that took place in Berlin, Germany from 20th to 23rd October 2001,

realising that the recommendations developed by the 2001 Conference have not been fully taken into account by the European Union, Council of Europe and its member states,

addressing the constant reality of discrimination that is prevalent in all countries on the European continent,

therefore, acknowledging the role of youth non governmental organizations and in shaping youth policies in Europe, reasserting the prevailing values of Human Rights, diversity and participation,

we insist on the necessity for the European policy makers to re-examine their own actions taking into consideration the following message that we convey today:

commemorating the Reichspogromnacht of 9th November and by adopting this Declaration of the “European Youth in Action for Diversity and Tolerance” on the same date the participants show their awareness of the still existing anti-Semitism, and all other forms of discrimination.

People in Europe are constantly being discriminated on various grounds such as gender, sexual orientation, age, racial/ethnic origin, religion or belief and disability. This persistent reality is not acceptable and thus calls for immediate action to ensure that Europe becomes a continent based on diversity and offering equal opportunities for all. To address these concerns European Institutions and National Governments should not only support measures aimed at fighting discrimination but also refrain from implementing discriminatory policies themselves. It is in the hands of Governments themselves not to violate the principles of Human Rights, participation and diversity; as well as support organisations that are promoting those principles.

In view of the constant reality of discrimination in Europe, we believe that it is not sufficient any more to seek “tolerance”, it is time to address the current fear and ignorance of others by seeking respect for human dignity.

We believe that young people can play a significant part in improving the situation by personally taking an active stand on all levels from local to international, from the decision making to implementation of concrete measures.

Only with the involvement on all levels, constant assessment and evaluation of institutional policies, as well our own actions, can change the painful reality of discrimination and lead to the true respect of diversity and Human Dignity in Europe.

II. OPERATIVE CLAUSES

1. Empowerment of young people

Introductory Note

Through empowerment, young people can be valued as active participants in the society by giving them self-confidence and increasing their belief that change is possible in Europe. The development of diversity inside youth organizations can have a “mirror” effect on the society as a whole.

Political Recommendation

We demand the guarantee of possibilities for youth involvement through laws and structural measures:

The creation of Local Youth Councils

- ▶ Quotas for youth representation in decision making bodies
- ▶ We propose a continuous distribution of funding for institutions working with youth, according to the following guidelines:
- ▶ Empowerment of local NGO's in order to support young people who want to activate themselves.
- ▶ Distribution according to needs, not only according to the number of members.
- ▶ Funding for the training of peer leaders and those trained in pedagogy
- ▶ Encouraging affirmative action, in order to avoid tokenism

Action Plan

- ▶ We strive for the social recognition of non-formal education, such as organisational skills, through information campaigns about NGO's for young people and their parents, and through NGO activities in educational institutions.
- ▶ We commit ourselves as youth workers to interact constantly with young people in their environment, through innovative and creative methods, independent of who they are and where they come from.
- ▶ We, as participants of this conference, struggle to raise political awareness on this declaration and to ensure its implementation on a national level. We identify ourselves as multipliers, commit ourselves to be multipliers, and by doing this, we will empower youth.

2. Media

Introductory Note

Media and Culture reach a wide range of young people by different means. Since young people are “factors” of change in the society, the media should offer them better visibility. Young people engage themselves to spread the “youth message” for diversity and respect in Europe in different ways.

Political Recommendations

The media should be used as a method to promote and publicise youth activities against discrimination.

Resources should be invested on a national basis so that projects may be launched. Due to limited funds, programmes should be broadened up and revised so that they will be effective, efficient and viable. These projects should be marketed through culture and the media so as to reach young people on a global scale.

Films, artists, musical and cultural activities such as drama should be maximised. Music and culture can unite young people who admire the same artists and thus, these artists have a role to play in terms of portraying a positive image of diversity.

We are against stereotyping and scape goating in the media. Public figures, leaders and decision-making bodies and the media must have appropriate use of language when addressing immigration.

Reinforce the freedom of media through financial support.

Action Plan

- ▶ Working together with the media to promote a positive image of diversity.
- ▶ Increase the visibility of youth work through the media

3. Fight Against Discriminative Extremism

Introductory Note

Extremist views both among advantaged and disadvantaged youth are found to be very dangerous. These views are both expressed in spontaneous violence but also in sophisticated intelligential propoganda thus defining the strong need to fight against causes of extremism and its appearance, in particular anti-Semitism, anti-Islamism and other forms of discrimination.

Political Recommendations

Think globally in Europe, act locally.

We want to see an elaboration of a European action plan to combat extremism implemented at grassroots and individual level. This could be achieved by regional (not necessarily national) action plans, including the involvement of relevant partners.

There is a need for a European coordination unit, preferably embedded in the Council of Europe, coordinating a process for anti-extremism action. This could include research, development, a launch and implementation at grass roots level of education work, and an evaluation phase to improve future activity and ensure continuity in this area. This unit should encompass a network of national and local NGOs.

We strongly demand European support to this initiative: on technical, moral, organisational, financial levels.

We request cooperation with the European Network Against Racism and the European Union Monitoring Centre in this.

There must be a strong commitment of the member states.

Action Plan

We see the requirement for communicating with other European young people who need to be involved in different methods of education in this area. We should no longer preach to the converted.

4. Anti-Islamism

Introductory Note

The rising of anti-Islamism and all other forms of discrimination in Europe were seen by participants as issues deserving a separate treatment.

Political Recommendation

More funding to support projects dealing with the issues of discrimination and racism among youth

To promote and commit to the education of the reality of discrimination bases and different religious groups, including the diversities that exist

Encourage intercultural and interfaith dialogues, notably through the promotion of diversity training and exchange in Europe

Action Plan

Establish a European Newspaper reporting on projects and youth issues:

- ▶ establish an email network informing each other about youth issues and articles in the newspaper
- ▶ provide long-term investment in sustainable projects to ensure that the media are presented with a positive image of minority ethnic groups
- ▶ organise conferences with interreligious participants on an international level, including participation, for example, from the OIC region (Organisation of Islamic Conference) and ECJC (European Council of Jewish Communities)
- ▶ organising meeting between young people, governments and institutions on the issues concerned
- ▶ target two groups: youth and teachers by creating educational programmes and teachers training programmes that address the issues of the positive aspects of the different religious and ethnic groups
- ▶ organise intercultural and interfaith dialogue on a regular basis at the local level

5. New Faces of Fascism

Introductory Note

The rise of fascism in Europe is an important threat to the cohesion of European society. Building upon reflections on the elements characterising the concept of fascism, and in view of its dramatic previous applications on the European continent, participants identified recent political developments, as well as increase of anti-Semitic incidents throughout Europe, that could lead to the rise of new forms of "fascism" and a renewal of a "fascism of state" if kept without control. Youth organisations can play a big role to fight against fascism in Europe if they are given the necessary financial means to fund their projects.

Political Recommendations

- ▶ Respect for the rule of law to strike a reasonable balance between Human Rights (privacy in particular) and security measures
- ▶ Increase Council of Europe funding to ensure more rapid decision-making in the European Court of Human Rights, and ensure control of the decisions' realisation at national level
- ▶ Maintain the independence of NGOs through private sector funding
- ▶ Encourage the activity of labour unions and provide them with relevant power in the company's decision making
- ▶ Raise the awareness about the fact that anti-Semitism remains an important problem by organizing conferences and increasing funding of relevant organizations

Action Plan

- ▶ Encourage critical thinking through education
- ▶ Peer education: conflict management courses provided at schools, leading to a reduction of youth violence.
- ▶ Essay competition on several topics such as "Fascism in Europe","Immigration policies"...
- ▶ Advise policy makers on how to promote active citizenship of young people
- ▶ Organize activities for underprivileged youth on current events, civic duties and politics
- ▶ Translation of information and websites into different languages: including reports and educational material

6. "Fortress Europe"

Introductory Note

A conscious debate about the political contradiction between the European Union strict immigration policy and the open willingness to fight against discrimination should be launched at the European level. "Fortress Europe" cannot be developed anymore as it puts the European integration model into danger.

Political Recommendation

The respect for diversity is a value that must be upheld. To achieve this there must be a common European Union (and other European countries) Strategy on immigration. We support a more consistent European policy towards the outside world in addressing the problems that cause forced migration. A management system of immigration that does not violate Human Rights must be developed.

We protest against the existence of immigrant detention centres, particularly those for asylum-seekers and recommend their immediate closure.

There must be a more consistent European policy towards non-European countries that aims to end the problems that cause forced migration.

The right of establishment (understood as right of entry and settlement) must be a basic right everyone is entitled to. Certain conditions for granting any individual with the right to establish in Europe must be guaranteed.

The concerns of human rights NGOs, regarding the maltreatment and death of immigrants into "Fortress Europe" should be taken seriously and incorporated into any immigration strategy.

Action Plan

Make a clear distinction between refugees and asylum-seekers.

Lobbying

- ▶ For closure of detention centres designed for asylum seekers
- ▶ For governmental campaigns to treat immigrants with respect and dignity
- ▶ For each government to ratify the "UN Convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families"

Activities & events

- ▶ Organising workshops during the Council of Europe's All Different, All Equal campaign about the issues of migration
- ▶ Memorial plates in the cities with names and information about death cases

Demonstrations

- ▶ Commemorate the 18th of December (International Migrants Day), and
- ▶ the 20th of June International Refugee Day

Local Community Action

- ▶ Bringing the local population and immigrants closer by visiting detention centres
- ▶ Schools and youth groups to visit asylum-seekers homes

Empowerment of Asylum-seekers and immigrants

- ▶ Informing asylum-seekers of their rights and empowering them to take action to defend them
- ▶ Produce a book with personal stories of Unaccompanied Minors

Information

- ▶ Keep organisations up to date in any development in law and policy about immigration in other European countries
- ▶ Creating databases with documentation of Human Rights violations at immigration procedures, and make them available internationally
- ▶ Carry out and publish research into the causes of forced migration, following this process all possible actions to end forced migration must be taken

7. Networking

Introductory Note

There is a big number of NGOs and institutions working for diversity and respect in Europe, organising many good initiatives. However, they could be even more effective by increasing communication and finding a "common language". Today, the different actors do not know enough about each others' roles and actions, or how to find possible project partners. Therefore, we need better cooperation and more regular networking. There must be more interaction both between and within NGOs, as well as between NGOs and official institutions (national and international). This includes the exchange of ideas and good practice projects, in order not to re-invent the wheel.

The main actors are NGOs, international institutions (EU Commission, EU Parliament, Council of Europe/European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, EU Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe), national and local governments

Political Recommendations

EU Commission and/or the Council of Europe, in cooperation with national governments should fund and organise a Europe-wide conference for all diversity actors every second year. The years in-between, fund and organise a big international “diversity fair”.

- ▶ target groups: same for conference and fair
- ▶ participants: mix of young people (50%) and experienced NGO members, (high-level) politicians, civil servants, minority representatives (in total 50%)
- ▶ format: all participants involved in the working groups on an equal level; combined with cultural activities. The fair should be comparable to the “Grüne Woche” in Germany, or to “Maailma Kylässä” in Finland, and focus on the issues of diversity and respect
- ▶ organizers: at least half of the preparatory committee must be youth

The EU Commission / the Council of Europe should fund the setting up/continuation and active maintenance of a permanent “networking homepage” for NGOs for diversity and respect. This homepage must be linked to the conference and fair activities. Such a homepage shall provide project ideas and increase the possibility to find project partners.

We encourage NGOs to foster/join existing Europe-wide networks of NGOs for diversity and respect. Consider initiating a Europe-wide network of religious diversity organisations.

Action Plan

- ▶ If the institutions provide funding, the participants of this Youth conference will happily contribute to the designing and setting-up of the bi-annual fair and the bi-annual conferences for all NGOs and institutions working for diversity and respect in Europe
- ▶ We will foster interaction between our organisations and other organisations for diversity (gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation) at our (local) level, thus to ensure networking and joint action first at national and then at international level
- ▶ The participants of the Youth Conference 2005 commit themselves to make the conference webpage an active place of networking, aiming to contribute with the gained experience to a permanent “networking homepage” for NGOs for diversity and respect

8. Diversity in Education

Introductory Note

Respect for diversity must be included as a high priority issue in education at all levels (formal, non formal, informal). There is a growing need to include non formal education tools into formal education systems. The European Union, the Council of Europe and National Governments should create a good climate for partnership between formal and non-formal systems.

Political Recommendations

The European Union, the Council of Europe and National Governments should admit the need for incorporation and mainstreaming of Diversity in educational systems at all levels; in doing this, they should create a climate of partnership between formal and non-formal systems and providers of education.

They should support programmes directed at building capacity and delivering joint arrangements to provide the best results in embedding/mainstreaming diversity and tolerance elements to education and learning. In this regard, international formal learning (SOCRATES programme) and non-formal learning programmes (such as the YOUTH programme of the European Commission) should be built upon to develop the youth work for diversity and respect. This will help to overcome prejudices and stereotypes, which cause discrimination.

Projects aiming to promote diversity in schools and in other forms of education should be firstly developed in consultation and partnership; secondly they should particularly dedicate resources to the participation of young people with fewer opportunities and thirdly they should ensure participation of all stakeholders – including the young people involved, their parents, education authorities and NGOs.



The designing of the “Youth in Action” Programme currently undertaken at the European Union level should give very high priority to our concerns.

The establishment of a code of conduct: using non-racist terminology in education, and supporting campaigns on the topic of terminology will help to promote objectivity and diversity. This campaign should be run as part of short- and long-term diversity projects that create closer communication between education partners and NGO’s.

Non-formal education must be further developed, encouraged and promoted. It is a unique method that is efficient and incisive. In this context, it is essential to further develop the EU YOUTH portal in order to collect, analyse and disseminate exchange of good practices, there fore increasing youth work’s effectiveness.

It is necessary to develop more research capacity, feed the results into policy and make its results available to a larger public. An important element is the training of teachers, trainers and the involvement of youth workers. To promote exchange of experiences to enable young people to face diversity, through which mutual respect can be achieved.

We must address directly, youngsters not having opportunity to travel abroad, study and speak languages, those who are not organised, are disabled, less advantaged, and early school-leavers. It is important to raise awareness of young people who are ignorant towards diversity and tolerance.

Action Plan

- ▶ Research, collect data, and publish good practise from existing educational diversity projects
- ▶ Prioritise the possibility of cooperation between formal and non-formal European education programmes
- ▶ Highlight the topic and look for opportunities to incorporate it into the “Theme Years” of the Council of Europe, European Union
- ▶ Provide a space to collect and share good practise, tools and methods - on the subject of co-operation between Formal and Non-formal education systems, and on the encouragement of young people’s participation in this process
- ▶ NGOs equipped (training, manpower, skills development) to work in partnership in this field, and supported in building the capacity to do so
- ▶ Using schools as a platform for discussions on diversity, racism and discrimination and have families involved in the process
- ▶ Establish joint training programmes, maximise existing facilities (SALTO, European Youth Centres), adopt current structures (where these support joint working) and identify new creative approaches
- ▶ Strengthen relationships between EU institutions and international NGOs
- ▶ The idea of subsidiary (bottom-up approach) should be supported and encouraged
- ▶ NGOs will strive to strengthen cooperation with the formal learning sector at all levels from primary schools to higher education.
- ▶ Qualitative and quantitative analysis of on-going YOUTH programme activity
- ▶ To develop new programmes, which are directly designed for young people not having opportunity (who haven’t travelled abroad, don’t speak languages, who are not organised, disabled, less advantaged, and early school-leavers)
- ▶ To launch and run a campaign in order to reach all young people, called “YOUrope”. For more effectiveness, this Campaign could be linked and complement other European institutional initiatives such as the European Union Campaign “For diversity – Against discrimination” and the Council of Europe Campaign “All different – All equal”
- ▶ Giving support to young people who haven’t travelled abroad before on levels such as financial, administrative and technical (visa) support
- ▶ Encourage and support new projects, which bring other cultures and diversity to youngsters (cultural festivals, internet forum)
- ▶ Harness the experience of the participants of the YOUTH programme as multipliers for the benefit of future participants



List of Participants

Name of the participant	Organisation/Project	Country
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Alpay Abadia	Islamic Conference Youth Forum	Azerbaijan
Nahida Ahmadov	JEF Azerbaijan (Young European Federalists)	Azerbaijan
Petya Alexandrova Petrova		Bulgaria
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Lehel Bájluk-Bráz	Hungarian Ministry of Education	Hungary
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Perspectives



During the conference, participants as well as organisers underlined the necessity to follow-up the results of the conference. This follow-up has been and will be undertaken through several activities:

- ▶ Meeting of EYC-Council of EU Ministers (Part Youth): On 15 November 2005 the EU Youth Ministers met in Brussels. At this occasion then German State Secretary in the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Mr Ruhenstroth-Bauer, and EU Commissioner responsible for youth, Mr Figel, informed the Ministers about the Berlin-conference "European Youth in Action for Diversity and Tolerance" and its results, the Declaration and the Action Plan.
- ▶ Germany has stated its willingness to provide a platform for the continuation of the dialogue during the German Presidency during the first half of 2007.
- ▶ The conference website www.youth-against-racism.net will be relaunched to serve as a platform for diversity and tolerance. It will be used to keep track of the conference follow-up from the side of the national authorities, the European institutions and the participants, but also to facilitate the networking between participants and other interested persons.

