

“ALL DIFFERENT – ALL EQUAL” EUROPEAN YOUTH CAMPAIGN FOR DIVERSITY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND PARTICIPATION

First background paper

1. Accession and Inclusion

Accession and Inclusion – this is, in a nutshell, what all policy with and for young people is about. “All different – all equal” was the slogan chosen 10 years ago, when the Council of Europe ran a major Youth Campaign against Racism, Anti-Semitism, Xenophobia and Intolerance (RAXI). It cannot be said shorter and more precisely – that all human beings are different as to their individuality, their talents, their gifts and their potential; but that they are all equal before the law, as citizens and with regard to their Human Rights as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights.

This is where the elements of the new campaign have to come together – it needs to be an **anti-racist** campaign, because it is inclusive of all groups of young people hit by discrimination; it needs to be a **Human Rights** campaign, because it is based on the respect of human dignity and because it calls on public authorities, the media and the population at large to stand up for this respect; it needs to be a **Participation** campaign because it promotes a fair and just policy for and with young people as a result of social co-production between civil society and public authority.

Three entrances to arrive at the core of the campaign have been suggested – **Diversity** as a condition for cultural and social life, the promotion of Human Rights and Participation as the concept of **active democratic citizenship**. Indeed, there is much work to be done on all three items. But how are they connected?

This is where **access** and **inclusion** come in. If progress on providing access for all young people can be made and if all of them can be included in the full range of public policy offers, the prerequisite to achieve progress within the three dimensions of the campaign exists. If one imagines the campaign as a fair with simultaneous activities in three arenas, there needs to be something which is common and which makes up the fair: **the fight against racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, sexism, nationalism, anti-Gypsyism, homophobia, xenophobia and intolerance**. All these ‘isms’ stand for different concepts of exclusion, be they ethnic, territorial, spiritual, societal, physical or economic.

2. Solidarity – Social Cohesion - Globalisation

Much of what youth work is about has to do with **empathy, solidarity** and **responsibility**. These are ‘youth work’ core values; they are acquired through non-formal, informal and social learning within youth organisations, in neighbourhoods, in sport and leisure activities and within European and international youth exchanges, work camps, seminars and voluntary work. However, there is a strong need for citizens, young or old, to live in a society which provides guidance, a sense of belonging and a minimum of decent living conditions. **These are prerequisites for participation.**

Actors in this Campaign need to agree on its character as outlined above and on the necessity to link the concepts of solidarity and participation with individual freedom and cultural production.

It has become obvious that many young people feel distant from or even ignore European institutions and governments and, even worse, they also feel ignored by these governments and European institutions. So they create their own fields of participation and social action.

What can the Council of Europe do about this? The answer is: continue co-operation between research, civil society and public authorities, even if this can sometimes be difficult. It is necessary to distinguish structural change within industrial production and distribution (a permanent process), the influence of **globalisation, European integration** and European and international co-operation. It is an important job of **political education** to demystify these processes, to identify the place for citizenship, to keep young people involved as social actors and not to lose sight of the **European Project**, which for the Council of Europe is a genuinely pan-European Project of promoting Human Rights, the Rule of Law, and democratic security within a culture of peace.

3. **The Campaign after the 3rd Council of Europe Summit**

This Campaign is part of the Action Plan adopted at the **3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government** of the Council of Europe. The Secretary General, the European Youth Forum, the Directorate General of Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport (DG IV), the Directorate of Youth and Sport (DYS) and the Joint Council on Youth have all co-operated successfully in achieving this result. How does the Campaign fit with other parts of the Action Plan? Are there links, connotations, and possible synergies?

The youth sector's paragraph, and the source of the Campaign, appears in Part III.4 "Developing youth co-operation". Next to the Campaign it is important to retain references to the Centres and the Foundation and the commitment to "...integrate a youth perspective." Taking the **Action Plan** as a whole, there are at first sight quite a few possible areas of co-operation and joint activity, in such areas as developing participation (through the **Forum for the Future of Democracy**), civil society development, combating trafficking of human beings, building a Europe for children, promoting intercultural dialogue, and strengthening co-operation with the European Union (EU), including in the youth field.

It is strategically important not to run a "youth campaign", but a **Council of Europe campaign** with and by young people for the general public and within an open co-ordination process with the whole Organisation, governments, the EU institutions, and NGOs. This is why one should look at the complete Action Plan as a kind of agenda for the Council of Europe and try to place the campaign within it.

4. **Links to the 1995 Youth Campaign against Racism, Anti-Semitism, Xenophobia and Intolerance (RAXI)**

There are a few elements of the RAXI campaign, which have created a continuity of action in the youth field and which should be mentioned as elements which the new Campaign can build on.:

- The **Human Rights Education Programme** and the **COMPASS** process. Two very successful educational products of the RAXI campaign have been **DOMINO** and the Education Pack; both these publications have been recently reprinted. The editorial process, the presentation in links with seminars, the national promotion strategies and the building of networks around these materials are a kind of forerunner of the way the Human Rights Education Programme is run today. This is the strongest link to the RAXI campaign, in some sense even its continuation;

- The strong role the youth field has played in the creation of minority networks such as “Minorities in Europe”, “Young Women from Minorities”, the “Forum of Young Roma People in Europe” and the support to numerous other organisations;
- **Anti-racism** and minority issues: these are an important part of the **international youth policy** reviews, the **peace and conflict education** programmes, the field activities, regional work such as in South East Europe and the EUROMED region and , more generally, the objectives of the youth field over the last 10 years.

It is in this sense that the new Campaign will benefit; there is a collective memory to go by, there is continuity, there are partners and networks belonging to a common history and there are, most importantly, the same unsolved questions and challenges. Europe has still not learned to deal adequately with otherness; this remains the – sad – link between 1995 and the present.

5. Campaigning today

- (a) This cannot be only a “general public” campaign, it does not meet the conditions for it. The Campaign can successfully reach out to education circles, the research community, youth and community workers, public administration, European and international organisations, Human Rights and minority networks, the publics of the European Youth Centres and the European Youth Foundation, the publics of the Youth Programme of the European Union, culture producers, municipalities and, generally, youth field actors in the member States of the Council of Europe.
- (b) This being said, the campaign must reach out to the general public through the **media** and the **internet**; this is quite possible, and demands the involvement of the relevant expertise.
- (c) The campaign needs to work very conscientiously with the assets already in the possession of the youth field of the Council of Europe (and its member governments and NGOs). It cannot and should not reinvent the wheel. What it does have to do is no mean task – the Campaign has to change the attitude of many youth activity and non-formal education providers, who often seem purely to preach to the converted. This is not enough. Providers must show that they have made active efforts to seek an effect outside their own milieu; they will have to work towards specific publics (e.g. local communities) and they will have to show where what they are doing fits into the policy agenda of the Campaign. **This way much of what is done can be dynamised and turned public.**
- (d) Many networks and circles of youth activity exist around the programmes of the **European Youth Centres** and the **European Youth Foundation**. Again, a prominent example is the Human Rights Education Programme, which has national networks and is in the process of building **e-learning** communities. To involve these groups in the Campaign is also a validation of their work and an appeal to them, to give this programme higher visibility. This can be done throughout the knowledge system, which the Council of Europe and the European Commission constitute today in the field of youth.
- (e) The European Youth Forum will place emphasis on the campaign at national and local level. The process of the **formation of National Committees** has now started; **new dynamics between local and international situations** have to be created, to overcome difficulties that might be faced establishing National Committees in places where no obvious lead agency exists.

- (f) **Significant financial and human resources will need to be allocated to create a large and successful Campaign.** This would provide an opportunity for the whole of the youth sector to become dynamised through the Campaign.

It is important, moreover, to identify the added value to the youth field and to the Council of Europe as a whole. Such added value should be:

- to innovate working methods and styles, work with new publics
- the training of youth and social workers for campaigning; i.e. work towards larger publics, media, political circles, public administration
- the mobilisation of existing reference groups related to the priority programmes for the campaign
- the inclusion of the campaign objectives into the training programmes of the EYCs, the trainers' pool and the expert and working groups of the field
- to create a bond between the youth sector's work priorities and focus them accordingly on the objectives of the campaign
- to give the statutory organs a common project
- to strengthen the European Youth Forum and its member organisations
- to co-operate with all other sectors in the Council of Europe, working on issues close to the objectives of the campaign
- to develop synergies with the follow-up to the 2005 European Year of Democratic Citizenship
- to involve the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
- to create new areas of co-operation between the European Union and the Council of Europe

6. **Conclusion**

Much work must still be done, on, for example, sharpening the objectives of the Campaign, diversifying the target groups, mobilising the biggest possible number of campaigners. It also needs a revised time-line and a structure for how to manage it. The time-line fixed by the European Steering Group of the campaign of June 2006 – September 2007 gives ample opportunity for a proper preparation of the Campaign at national and European level.

Certainly, this new Campaign, with the support of governments and of all the involved parties, can make a major contribution to overcoming the ills that still beset European societies in the form of racism, discrimination, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.