



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

EDUCATION, YOUTH & CULTURE



14.08.2009

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Civil Society Platform to promote multilingualism: Extension of deadline for applications

The European Commission is setting up a new civil society platform to promote multilingualism in Europe in the areas of culture, media and non-formal education.

Non-governmental organisations committed to promoting multilingualism are welcome to apply as full members of the platform provided they operate at a trans-national or European-wide level.

Members of the platform will be selected via a call for expression of interest. The deadline has been extended until **18th September 2009**. The platform will be launched in Brussels on **23rd October 2009**.

You will find [further information](#) and an application form [here](#).

Click "[here](#)" to view the information session on the establishment of the platform which was organised on 2nd June in Brussels.

"Promotion of Mental Health and Well-being of Children and Young People– Making it happen"

Thematic Conference Mental health in Youth and Education Organised by European Commission and Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs under the auspices of the Swedish Presidency

Stockholm, 29th – 30th September 2009

A provisional conference agenda can be found [here](#).

This is to be the first in a series of invitation-only events covering mental health throughout the lifespan, in line with the priority areas of the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-being.

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Objective of the conference:

- 1) Raise visibility about the importance of promoting mental health and well-being and of preventing mental disorders in children and young people;
- 2) Enable an exchange at EU-level on policy activities, good practices by stakeholders and research projects in Member States, supported by a Commission database;
- 3) Endorse an implementation framework for the Mental Health Pact in the field of mental health in youth and education.

Main themes of the conference:

The conference is structured around five sub-themes:

Session 1: Parents, family and the early years.

Focus: Promotion in early years, protective factors, good parenting style, population-based promotion and universal prevention programmes as well as selective prevention programmes

Research results from the past few years have increasingly emphasised the importance of pregnancy and the earliest years of childhood for well-being, health and success in later life. Mental health and parenting are inextricably linked. However, not all parents are sufficiently well- equipped for their parenting role and there is a need to look into the specific needs of vulnerable groups, such as teenage parents and parents with mental health problems. Aspects which could be considered include: Group based parent- training programmes, children from socially disadvantage groups, targeted approaches to parenting support for families at high risk.

Session 2: The role of health services in promotion and prevention

Focus: Call for an enlarged scope of health services, which should also encompass a role in the promotion of mental health and well-being and in the prevention of mental disorders .

Traditionally, health services focus on their role of diagnosing and treating disorders. However, treatment alone can only achieve a limited reduction of the burden of mental disorders, and increasingly non-health actors are interested in mental health outcomes. Both arguments call



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for an enlarged scope of health services, which should also encompass a role in the promotion of mental health and well-being and in the prevention of mental disorders.

Session 3: The community environment

Focus: Community organisation, promotion intervention programmes, i.e. community actors, empowerment, urban planning, green spaces, youth centres and delinquency, promotion and prevention.

The community environment in which children and adolescent grow up influences their well-being and their social behaviour via a number of moderating factors. Deprived neighbourhoods with little social cohesion and high levels of unemployment and crime present risks for the mental health and well-being of the children and young people growing up in them. Multi sectoral intervention is needed to promote child and adolescent well-being in the community.

Session 4: The role of media, internet and electronic games

Focus: Using media and new technologies for good mental health. Potential risks posed by the content of media and electronic games and communication through new technologies.

Media are omnipresent in the life of today's children and adolescents. The time spent watching television, on the internet, playing electronic games and using mobile phones has increased significantly in recent decades and, along with this, cyber bullying and exposure to potentially harmful content have become common. Given their importance for children and adolescent, there is a need to maximise the benefits and minimise the risks of media consumption for the mental health and well-being of children and adolescents.

Session 5: Educational settings and learning

Focus: Positive mental health promotion and universal prevention, whole school approaches, socio-emotional learning, social-skill programmes as well as programmes preventing alcohol, drug use/abuse, violence and bullying.



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Children and young people spend a large proportion of their days in educational settings, making them one of the key environments for mental health promotion and mental disorder prevention. On the one hand, schools and colleges are sites which could allow implementers to reach almost the entire population in this age group. At the same time, aligning the climate and practices in educational settings with children's mental health needs has been shown to improve academic achievement and social behaviour.

For each sub theme of the youth and education priority area, a group of scientific advisors are preparing a brief background document. This will include a statement on key messages and actions. The background document and key messages are being sent for consultation to all Member States, key stakeholders and NGOs.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY 12TH AUGUST, 2009

SUSTAINABILITY: OUR CHALLENGE. OUR FUTURE.

The theme of this year's International Youth Day – **"Sustainability: Our Challenge. Our Future"** – is a global call to action for young men and women.

Our world faces multiple, interconnected crises with severe and far-reaching impacts that fall disproportionately on the young.

In 2007, for example, youth comprised 25 per cent of the world's working age population yet accounted for 40 per cent of the unemployed. The global economic downturn means that, in the near term, youth unemployment will continue to climb. Unemployment rates tell only part of the story, especially for the vast majority of youth who live in developing countries. For them, informal, insecure and low-wage employment is the norm, not the exception.

Climate change, meanwhile, continues to compromise economies and threaten tremendous upheaval, saddling young people everywhere with an unjust "ecological debt". This is a potentially crushing burden. At the same time, I am encouraged by the contributions that young people have made to the debate on climate change mitigation and adaptation. Their

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views and proposals can help build the momentum necessary to “seal the deal” in Copenhagen later this year.

Indeed, young people have proven themselves to be key partners in sustainable development. They have gotten involved in international forums such as the Commission on Sustainable Development, and have helped their Governments and communities to formulate poverty reduction strategies, entrepreneurial schemes and many other policies and initiatives.

Young people often lead by example: practicing green and healthy lifestyles, or promoting innovative uses of new technologies, such as mobile devices and on-line social networks. They deserve our full commitment -- full access to education, adequate healthcare, employment opportunities, financial services and full participation in public life. On International Youth Day, let us renew our pledge to support young people in their development. Sustainability is the most promising path forward, and youth can lead the way.

Background of International Youth Day

The General Assembly on 17th December 1999 in its resolution 54/120, endorsed the recommendation made by the **World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth** (Lisbon, 8th – 12th August 1998) that 12th August be declared International Youth Day.

The Assembly recommended that public information activities be organized to support the Day as a way to promote better awareness of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, adopted by the General Assembly in 1995 (resolution 50/81).

Europe's future lies in the hands of young people

The European Union offers young Europeans the opportunity to express their views and help build a sustainable world.

On the eve of the tenth [International Youth Day](#), the European Union has highlighted again that, if society is to make sustainable progress, young people must take a fuller part in social, economic and political life.



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There are 96 million young people aged 15-29 in the EU (about 20% of the population). The programme '[Youth in Action](#)' was designed to meet their expectations and aims to inspire young Europeans with a sense of citizen participation, solidarity and tolerance by involving them more in shaping Europe's future.

In concrete terms, the programme encourages:

- young people to move around the EU and the world to study and work;
- non-formal education and contact with other cultures;
- the inclusion of all young people, regardless of educational, social or cultural background.

To this end, the [European Voluntary Service](#) (EVS) supports young people participating in various voluntary activities within and beyond EU borders. It helps young people aged 18-30 to work on social projects abroad for between two and twelve months, a formative experience at a key stage of their life.

[More on EU youth policies](#)

[European youth portal](#)

**The Applications for grants from the
Civil Society Fund
close on the 26th August**

[Click here for more information](#)