

Youth Ministers ask for Europe-wide survey on Youth

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The EU Council of Youth Ministers calls EU member states for better policy-making through evidence-based planning. This is one of the results of the May Council meeting held under the German EU presidency. Ministers want a European-wide survey on Youth to become an instrument of future co-operation in the Youth field on the EU level.

In the Council's conclusions on the future perspectives for the European youth policy ministers called for a regular Joint Report by the Council and the Commission on the situation of young people in Europe which should involve young people in the drafting process as a part of the structured dialogue. The aim would be to facilitate the analysis and highlight young people's living conditions as well as to allow a more evidence based development of youth policies in Europe. This could be achieved on the basis of relevant data collection and the collection of structured examples of good practices from the Member States, youth organisations and from the research field, as well as by using the information collected through the reporting exercise under the open method of coordination.

The conclusions of the Council summarise the first outcomes of the initiated debate on the EU Youth policy for the period from 2010 on. A review of the existing cooperation has been scheduled for 2009. Nevertheless, the German Presidency has already started to stimulate the first discussions and exchange of ideas in the Youth field. A common position has been reached on several important issues.

A future cooperation is understood as a shared responsibility for addressing young people's living conditions in Europe by means of specific youth policy instruments, but also it is acknowledged that cross-sectoral coordination with related policy fields needs to be improved. A special focus will be put on facilitating young people's transition towards autonomy in order to respond to the demographic challenges, in particular by:

- promoting the reconciliation of professional and private life,
- combining flexibility, including the increased mobility and security ("flexicurity"), and
- promoting the entrepreneurial potential of young people.

Furthermore, a future cooperation has to take responsibility for improving the conditions of growing up in multicultural societies, for increasing young people's well-being (including healthy life style proliferation) and for promoting the cultural and creative engagement of young people. Last but not least, it should take care of young people in disadvantaged urban and rural areas with special attention put on contribution to the improvement of socio-economic conditions they live in.

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