

**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS
OF THE MEMBER STATES, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL**

of 27 June 2002

regarding the framework of European cooperation in the youth field

(2002/C 168/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES, MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

'how to bring citizens, and primarily the young, closer to the European design and the European institutions',

Whereas:

RECALL THAT:

(1) The Commission White Paper entitled 'A new impetus for European youth' (hereinafter referred to as the 'White Paper') suggests a new framework for European cooperation in the youth field.

1. In the framework of European cooperation in the youth field, as set out in the White Paper, there are complementary aspects that need to be addressed in practical terms:

(2) The Council (Education/Youth) of 29 November 2001 took a positive view of the White Paper and proposed further debate to define a framework for future cooperation.

(a) application of the OMC to the thematic priorities of the specific youth field;

(3) In its conclusions of 14 February 2002 the Council (Education/Youth) acknowledged that the White Paper was a starting point for the establishment of a framework of European cooperation in the youth field which includes two strands: on the one hand the application of the open method of coordination (OMC), and on the other taking more into account the youth dimension in other policies. The Council also undertook to carry on drawing up such a framework with a view to adoption by the Council (Education/Youth) of 30 May 2002.

(b) taking more account of the youth dimension in other policies.

STRESS THAT:

(4) The Council (Education/Youth) has already adopted various Resolutions regarding youth participation⁽¹⁾, social inclusion of young people⁽²⁾, promoting young people's initiative, enterprise and creativity⁽³⁾, and the added value of voluntary activity for young people in the context of the development of Community action on youth⁽⁴⁾, as well as the declaration on combating racism and xenophobia on the Internet by intensifying work with young people.

2. The OMC will be applied with a flexible approach in a manner suited to the youth field, with due regard for the competencies of the Member States and the principle of subsidiarity.

(5) By Decision No 1031/2000/EC of 13 April 2000, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the 'Youth' Community action programme⁽⁵⁾, on the basis of Article 149 of the Treaty, implemented by the Commission, in order to allow young people to acquire knowledge, skills and competencies which may be one of the foundations of their future development, and to exercise responsible citizenship so as to become an active part of society.

3. The principles of equality between men and women as set out in Article 2 and Article 3(2) and of non-discrimination as set out in Articles 12 and 13 of the Treaty must be taken into account in any proposed initiative coming within the framework of European cooperation in the youth field.

(6) The Laeken Declaration, annexed to the conclusions of the European Council of 14-15 December 2001, states that one of the basic challenges facing the European Union is

4. Young people, whether organised or not, as well as youth associations as representatives of youth, should be associated with the cooperation framework both at the European and national level.

5. Candidate countries should be associated with the framework of European cooperation in the youth field through whatever means are deemed appropriate.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 42, 17.2.1999, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 374, 28.12.2000, p. 5.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 196, 12.7.2001, p. 2.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 50, 23.2.2002, p. 3.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ L 117, 18.5.2000, p. 1.

6. INVITE THE COMMISSION AND THE MEMBER STATES, EACH WITHIN THEIR OWN AREAS OF COMPETENCE, as regards the OMC and the horizontal consideration of the Youth dimension in other policies and initiatives relevant to youth, to see, where appropriate, that those policies and initiatives that affect the young people both at national and at European level, take into consideration matters such as the needs, the situation, the living conditions and the expectations of youth.

CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF THE OMC:

7. ENDORSE the four thematic priorities as proposed in the White Paper, and with whose importance the Council conclusions of 14 February 2002 agreed:

(a) participation;

(b) information;

(c) voluntary activities among young people;

(d) greater understanding and knowledge of youth.

8. UNDERLINE the view that these thematic priorities can best be approached in a flexible, phased and progressive way, using, *inter alia*, as appropriate, elements of the OMC as defined in the Lisbon European Council conclusions and subsequently.

9. STRESS that the following thematic priorities should be aimed at:

(a) Participation

— to encourage participation by young people in the exercise of active citizenship,

— to involve young people in decision-making, in particular support for the work of youth associations and for different forms of active participation by young people in civil society,

— to enhance participation at a local level to promote socially cohesive communities,

— to stimulate the exchange of good practices, *inter alia*, by promoting and encouraging networks;

(b) Information

— to enhance the existing youth information services promoting in particular the information for those working with and for young people,

— to encourage the linkage of these services and the use of new technologies;

(c) Voluntary activities among young people

— to facilitate opportunities for the exercise of solidarity and voluntary commitment on the part of

young people, and the promotion of networks among all the actors involved,

— to promote voluntary activities that allow young people to develop their sense of commitment and active citizenship, individual and social skills and to gain useful knowledge and abilities which contribute to their participation in society in general and to their greater employability,

— to foster recognition and appreciation of voluntary activities, *inter alia*, by public authorities, enterprise sector and civil society;

(d) Greater understanding and knowledge of youth

— to facilitate the compilation of studies on youth matters at national and European level including by research structures and youth associations,

— to facilitate the networking of research structures; to contribute to the creation of study and research tools (e.g. indicators),

— to consider, in the light of existing studies, what further work, if necessary, might be needed to support current priorities, youth autonomy issues and other relevant topics for the future.

10. TAKE NOTE OF THE COMMISSION'S INTENTIONS AS OUTLINED IN THE WHITE PAPER AND INVITE THE COMMISSION:

(a) to draw up, in consultation with the Member States, a questionnaire for each priority, including key issues, to be transmitted to the Member States;

(b) — to prepare, on the basis of the answers of the Member States, a synthesis report for each priority, identifying the good practices and the innovative approaches, which are of common interest for the Member States,

— to present to the Council drafts for common objectives after consulting the European Youth Forum, without excluding other forms of consultation at European level;

(c) to proceed within the indicative timetable proposed in paragraph 19 and, on the basis of the Member States' report, to follow-up the common objectives of each priority, which can lead to their adjustment;

- (d) to inform, in a suitable way, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

11. INVITE THE MEMBER STATES:

- (a) on the basis of the Commission's questionnaire, to respond to each priority following the indicative timetable proposed in paragraph 19. The questionnaire will be structured so as to be able to identify existing mechanisms, policy initiatives, measures which the Member States plan to adopt in the short and medium term as well as examples of good practice. Issues for prospective discussion in connection with the subject may also be submitted;
- (b) before responding to the Commission's questionnaire, to set up such channels as they deem appropriate for consultation with young people, youth associations and, where applicable, national youth councils or similar bodies;
- (c) within the area of their competence and in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, to implement the measures they deem appropriate to achieve the common objectives decided by the Council, as well as the procedure of follow-up which makes the reporting possible;
- (d) in order to allow for the follow-up of the implementation of the measures taken in the carrying out of the common objectives mentioned in point (c), to define as appropriate, at their level, follow-up mechanisms, including indicators, to assess the progress achieved for each thematic priority.

12. TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES:

- (a) The Council will establish, taking into account a Commission draft, the common objectives and a timetable for follow-up reports from the Member States for each priority, as appropriate;
- (b) The Council will establish, taking into account a Commission draft, the proposed adjustments of the common objectives, as appropriate;
- (c) The Council, in cooperation with the Commission, plays a central role through successive presidencies by ensuring continuity and maintaining the momentum of the process;
- (d) The Council may, in cooperation with the Commission, review the application of the OMC in the youth field in the light of progress made, and having regard to the evaluation exercise indicated in paragraph 18.

CONCERNING HORIZONTAL ASPECTS (TAKING MORE ACCOUNT OF THE YOUTH DIMENSION IN OTHER POLICIES)

13. CALL FOR:

- (a) the inclusion of the youth dimension in other policies and programmes, both at national and at European level, in line with the priorities set forth in the White Paper (education, lifelong learning, mobility, employment and social integration, combating racism and xenophobia, autonomy) and other priorities to be defined by the Council in cooperation with the Commission;
- (b) initiatives targeted at youth at both national and Community level, to be considered in a coherent way.

14. TAKE NOTE OF THE COMMISSION'S INTENTIONS AS OUTLINED IN THE WHITE PAPER AND INVITE THE COMMISSION to explore the ways and means for matters concerning young people to be taken into consideration in its proposals and in the Community programmes and initiatives.

15. TAKE NOTE OF THE COMMISSION'S INTENTION to set up a working group to reflect on youth autonomy.

16. INDICATE that the Council will undertake, in the framework of its competence, to see that the interests of young people are taken into consideration in other policy areas.

17. INVITE THE MEMBER STATES, in the framework of their own areas of competence, to attempt as far as possible to implement the general objectives identified with regard to horizontal consideration of the youth dimension in other policies.

CONCERNING EVALUATION OF THE FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION IN THE YOUTH FIELD:

18. TAKE NOTE OF THE COMMISSIONS INTENTIONS, AS OUTLINED IN THE WHITE PAPER, AND INVITE THE COMMISSION no later than the end of the first implementation exercise for the application of the four thematic priorities, to prepare an evaluation report in association with the Member States on the framework for cooperation which will then, after consulting the European Youth Forum, without excluding other forms of consultation, be transmitted to the Council for consideration. The report will cover:

- (a) the evaluation of the OMC and, as appropriate, suggestions for its modification;

- (b) on the basis of information furnished by Member States, a summary of national and Community initiatives taken on the inclusion of the horizontal consideration of the youth dimension in other policies.
19. PROPOSE the following indicative timetable:
- (a) the application of the OMC will start in July 2002, with the priorities concerning participation and information;
- (b) other priorities will be dealt with in a phased, flexible and progressive manner according to a timetable to be determined by the Presidency in consultation with the Member States and the Commission;
- (c) regarding the inclusion of the youth dimension in other policies and programmes, the timetable will be coordinated with the processes concerned;
- (d) the evaluation report on the framework of cooperation, mentioned in paragraph 18 will be discussed by the Council in 2004.
-