



Including young people in Europe

Briefing paper from Youth and European Social Work
www.yes-forum.org

April 2005

European Youth Pact

The Youth and European Social Work Forum warmly welcomes the conclusions of the Spring European Council 22-23 March 2005, in particular the adoption of the European Youth Pact. We highly value that the ***importance of education, training and social inclusion of young people*** is emphasized and urge all stakeholders to follow the initiators appeal to invest in youth and see it as an asset for the future.

Young people are our future potential and we believe it is significant to promote their participation, social inclusion and life long learning. This is in particular true for Y.E.S. FORUM's target group, young people at risk of social inclusion and it is important for them, that solutions promoting active citizenship will be ones that encourage education for life – not merely for job skills, and are sustainable over the long term.

Y.E.S. FORUM is happy to support the European Youth Pact with our growing number of member organisations throughout Europe and we strongly want to express our wish that the initiative not only remains a rhetorical exercise but that concrete action will follow. The European Youth Pact marks a ***cornerstone for youth policy and youth policy coordination*** on a European Level as a cross-sector policy and it will be powerful if linked strongly to other strategies and policy instruments such as the European Employment Strategy, the European Social Fund the Commission's White Paper A new impetus for European youth and the initiative for validation and recognition of non-formal learning.

The European Youth Pact is supporting our view that investment in young people can not explicitly focus on their employability. Instead we are suggesting an approach which entitles young people to be provided with support and opportunities because they are human beings. However we observe a change from relative long-term and secured funding for social services to short-term project funding allocated within a competitive market system. This will hit the disadvantaged groups the hardest and we are concerned that the quality of services and professionals working in the field decrease and the duration for which support and assistance schemes are provided will be more and more limited. For us it raises the question, how we can secure the quality of services and long-term support for those who are in need. The New Deal for young people in the UK provides an example how 'quick-fix solutions' and short term interventions fail for those who are affected by years of deprivation and more serious degrees of marginalisation.

Y.E.S. FORUM can contribute to the process following the European Youth Pact as the strength of Y.E.S. FORUM is in its day to day involvement of, and support for, young people through its member organisations - who are working with hundreds of thousands of young people and have a strong commitment to involve young people directly in voicing their concerns and wishes to policy makers.



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Since Y.E.S. FORUM was set up in 2001 with the support of the EU programme to prevent and combat social exclusion and promotes it has gained extended knowledge and expertise in running transnational project activities and being involved in policy processes promoting social inclusion and participation of young people.

Our approach in creating collaborative relationships between government bodies, non-governmental institutions and the research sector enables us to support a deeper understanding of problems and offer a close co-operation to develop solutions and strategies.

From our day-to-day involvement with young people at risk of social inclusion we can offer a direct insight view in their life situation, help to generate general statistic material on their situation and provide case studies on certain aspects of social exclusion such as school drop outs, long term unemployment and the situation of young migrants.

Stuttgart, 11/4/2005
Y.E.S. FORUM Board



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