**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

from:	General Secretariat of the Council
to	delegations
Subject:	Joint conclusions of the EU Youth Conference (Dublin, 11-13 March 2013)

Delegations will find attached the joint conclusions of the EU Youth Conference that was held on Dublin on 11-13 March 2013.

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EU Youth Conference of the Irish Presidency
11 March – 13 March 2013, Dublin
Joint Conclusions

The EU Youth Conference is an element of the Structured Dialogue process which brings together young people and policy makers across the European Union to jointly discuss and inform the development of youth policy at national and European level. The Structured Dialogue process was established by the Council of the European Union in its Resolution for a Renewed Framework for cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018). The Structured Dialogue process is an important instrument to ensure that the opinions and views of young people are taken into account in the formation of policies in the youth field.

For the 18 month cycle (1 January 2013 – 30 June 2014), the Trio Presidency, Ireland, Lithuania and Greece, in cooperation with the European Commission and the European Youth Forum have agreed that the theme of the Structured Dialogue process throughout the cycle is Social Inclusion. This was subsequently endorsed by the Council in a Resolution adopted in November 2012. Each of the three consultation phases will reflect this thematic priority, with the results from each phase informing the next phase, leading towards a collective outcome at the end of the cycle. Presidency specific priorities will contribute to the overall thematic priority of social inclusion.

The Irish EU Youth Conference is the first conference within the Trio Presidencies of Ireland, Lithuania and Greece, highlighting the theme of the social inclusion of young people. Seven thematic areas drawn from the results of national consultations provided by 27 Member States and 10 International Non-Governmental Organisations were explored at the Conference via joint workshop sessions. Young people and Ministry officials from the 27 Member States have jointly defined the following conclusions. These will inform a *Council Resolution on Social Inclusion* at the end of the 18 month cycle. They will also inform *Council Conclusions on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people* to be proposed by the Irish Presidency to the Council of Youth Ministers in May 2013.

1. EMPLOYMENT – Employment Leads to Inclusion

- Young people in employment should have the right to equal and fair treatment, especially the right to decent work and salary, non-precarious jobs, training and promotion opportunities and should not face discrimination based on age.

- To ensure the transition from education to employment, young people should be provided with quality career guidance counselling and job coaching, paid internships and paid apprenticeships of good quality that meet their skills and interests.

- Financial, administrative and other necessary support, as well as entrepreneurial education and training, should be provided to encourage youth entrepreneurship with an emphasis on green and social entrepreneurship.

2. EDUCATION – Inclusive Education for All Young People

- To provide a holistic approach to education, sustainable frameworks that ensure collaboration between formal and non-formal education and learning should be established, whilst platforms between schools, universities, youth organisations and non-formal learning providers are also developed.

- Secure equal access to free and good quality education from primary to tertiary level for all young people, including those with citizenship other than that of the country of residence, and others at risk of social exclusion.

- To build a culture of understanding, acceptance and respect, education systems must promote participation in decision-making, diversity and inclusion rather than focus solely on exams and certificates. This should also be reflected in everyday school practices.

3. PARTICIPATION – Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities to Participate in Civic Life

- International legal provisions grant young people rights. It is essential that all young people have equal access to these rights and are provided with equal opportunities to fully participate in society.

- Young people often experience multiple discrimination on grounds such as age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, and gender identity. Therefore an Anti-Discrimination Directive[1] should be adopted by the EU and implemented and evaluated at all levels.

- Young people are demotivated to participate, and under-represented, in democratic life. They should be encouraged and empowered through education, civil society and representative institutions. Existing and new tools should be developed to enhance youth participation in policy making.

4. WELFARE – Access to Welfare

- In order to meet young people's needs and to ensure coherent welfare policies and equal access to welfare systems, cross-departmental and cross-sectoral cooperation on and between local, regional, national and European levels should be strengthened.

- Young people must be guaranteed social rights, in particular equal and free access to mental and physical healthcare and affordable, decent housing.

- Young people should be provided with youth-friendly information, guidance, financial support and training on employment, migration, healthcare, housing, etc. at an accessible ''one stop service". This should also serve as a place for dialogue between generations and with social partners.

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[1] See proposed Council Directive of 2008 (426) final:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0426:FIN:EN:PDF

5. SUPPORT – Social and Youth Services for Young People

- Youth services, social services and formal education institutions should work together with young people and their families to prevent the social exclusion of young people.

- Quality psychological support and counselling in formal and non-formal education settings, including youth centres, information and counselling centres, should be enhanced and tailored to the specific needs of youth groups, especially those who are socially excluded.

- All media, traditional and social, should be better utilised to increase visibility of, access to and awareness of youth work in order to engage more diverse groups of young people.

6. YOUTH ORGANISATIONS – Youth Organisations and Social Inclusion

- In order to reach out to more diverse groups of young people, especially those at risk of social exclusion, youth organisations should create and continuously update their support structures, working methods and channels of communication.

- Youth-led organisations and democratic, representative youth structures should be actively involved at local, regional, national and European level, from the initiation, in the creation, deliberation, implementation and monitoring of policies that affect young people's lives.

- Youth organisations should be recognised for their contribution to the social inclusion of young people through non-formal education and learning, which provides necessary skills and competences for active citizenship.

7. QUALITY – Assuring Quality in Youth Work to Ensure Social Inclusion

- Recognition of youth work should be ensured at EU and national level through participatory policy development, sustainable financial support, an institutional framework and development of evidence in order to acknowledge the impact of youth work on social inclusion and across different policy fields.

- To foster social inclusion, the development of self-assessment frameworks for quality assurance in youth work should be encouraged. Such frameworks should be progressively implemented, supported and communicated, and involve all stakeholders in the youth field.

- Young people should always have a decisive role and voice in shaping youth work, as a safe and inclusive space for them to be empowered, co-decide, grow and contribute to social change.

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