



SALTO YOUTH Good Practices Newsletter

Focus on “minorities in Europe”

The question of how to define 'minority' was on the agenda of the United Nations Sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities from the very first days of its existence (1947). Since then, numerous attempts have been made to reach an agreement on this question. Although no definition of a minority was universally recognized..... nevertheless one can observe that draft definitions, despite concrete formulations, repeat certain elements: (a) a group numerically inferior; (b) in a non-dominant position; (c) having certain characteristics (identity), culture (ethnic, religious, linguistic) which distinguish them from the rest of the population; (d) with a sense of solidarity or will to safeguard their characteristics. However, some of these elements are subjective and, as such, open to various interpretations and understandings, as the various studies carried out by the United Nations on this question show....The notion of 'minority', as implied by normative instruments, is a restrictive one and it applies only to national, ethnic, religious, linguistic groups and is not related to other disadvantage groups (women, children, aged, etc.), neither does it cover indigenous people¹.

□ EVENTS

“Citizenship Matters: The Participation of Women and Minorities in Euro-Med Youth Projects”

This training course address thematic issues related to the Euro-Med programme, which are equally relevant to the culture of human rights, namely women's rights, **minority rights**, approaches for citizenship and participation of young people. As a practical side to the course, the participants should identify guidelines for applying those principles in youth exchanges and other Euro-Med projects. The course took place in April 2004, in Alexandria, Egypt, thanks to the co-operation between the Partnership (formed by the Council of Europe and the European Commission to develop a common project on Euro-Mediterranean youth training) and the Swedish Institute of Alexandria.

Find out more: <http://eycb.coe.int/eycbwwwroot/Euro-Med/index.html>

MA in “European Integration and Regionalism”

The MA general presentation states: “Is “Europe” simply Brussels, London, Paris, Rome and Berlin? Is “Europe” simply made of “Eurocrats” sitting in those capitals? No! Europe is also Graz, Aberdeen, Belgrade, Maastricht, Nancy, Novi Sad, Sarajevo, and Zagreb...Moreover, the enlargement of the European Union will drastically augment the degree of diversity through the enormous increase of not only states, but also of cultures, languages, **minorities** and regional and economic disparities. A special module (www.eurac.edu/Events/meir/ModuleV.htm) is dedicated to “**Minorities and Diversity**”.

Find out more: www.eurac.edu/Events/meir/index.htm

Museum and History of immigration, a stake for all nations (9/10 December 2004 – Paris, France)

Even if this event does not tackle minority related issues in particular, it could be interesting to mention that the “National Museum of the History of Immigration”, created last June in Paris, organised an international symposium to realise an inventory concerning **the history of immigration** and to exchange on the various experiences led by similar organisations on **immigration issues** in Europe and in the United States.

Symposium programme in French www.histoire-immigration.fr/documents/colloque122004.pdf

□ INFORMATION

The European Convention on Human Rights

This document, which is the centre piece of the Council of Europe's normative “*aquis*”, is also of relevance for the **protection of minorities** because its universally applicable individual rights can also be claimed, individually or collectively, by persons

¹ “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities”. 1992 UNESCO 144 EX/15 Item 4.4.1 “Protection and Promotion of the Cultural Rights of Persons Belonging to Minorities within UNESCO’s fields of Competence”, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, April 1994

belonging to national minorities. Relevant provisions include the freedom of thought, conscience and religion, the freedom of expression, the freedom of assembly and association. Within this context the **framework convention for the protection of national minorities** created in 1990 stated that: *the notion of a minority (whether it be linguistic, ethnic, religious, cultural or otherwise) can refer to very diverse situations. In particular, concentrated minorities, for which territorial solutions are possible, should be clearly distinguished from dispersed minorities, for which such solutions are evidently excluded.* The purpose of this report is to attempt to define certain types of rules on the protection of minorities which are found to exist in federal or regional States. www.coe.int/T/E/Human%5FRights/Minorities/2%2E%5FFRAMEWORK%5FCONVENTION%5F%28MONITORING%29/

COYOTE MAGAZINE : Articles on « Minorities and training »

- Empowerment Training with Minority Youth Leaders at European Level
www.training-youth.net/site/publications/coyote/coyote04/leaders.htm
- Let your Heart Beat in their Community
www.training-youth.net/site/publications/coyote/coyote01/community.htm

About the **Roma Community**:

- Young Roma and their Communities . Training can make a difference
www.training-youth.net/site/publications/coyote/coyote00/roma.htm
- The Patchwork of Roma Culture Exploring a World of Diversity
www.training-youth.net/site/publications/coyote/coyote00/culture.htm

Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies

Publication on research linked to all forms of **migration and its consequences**, together with articles on ethnic conflict, discrimination, racism, nationalism, citizenship and policies of integration. www.cemes.org/

□ WEB RESOURCES

The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

OSCE is the largest regional security organization in the world with 55 participating States from Europe, Central Asia and North America. It is active in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. The Office of the OSCE **High Commissioner on National Minorities** was established in 1992 to identify and seek early resolution of ethnic tensions that might endanger peace, stability or friendly relations between OSCE participating States. www.osce.org/hcnm/

The EU's - Rights of Minorities

The protection of persons belonging to minorities is an inherent part of the EU policy on human rights. Particular attention is paid to minorities within the context of the current EU enlargement process to countries of **Central and Eastern Europe**. In this context, particular attention is paid to the situation of the **Roma** communities as these populations (around 6 million people in Central and Eastern European countries) suffer from widespread prejudice and discrimination.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/echo/index_en.htm and http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/index.htm

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - Working Group on Minorities

This site provides up-to-date information on the activities of the **Working Group on Minorities**, along with information particularly on legal standards and procedures available for the protection and promotion of minority rights, especially at the international level. Further references on how to use such procedures is also available in the UN Guide for Minorities.

www.unhcr.ch/minorities/index.html

The Youth of European Nationalities

YEN is a union of European youth organisations (27 member organisations representing linguistic, cultural and national minorities of Europe) working for the **preservation and development of minorities** culture, language and rights in the European youth sector in particular. www.yeni.org

European Centre for Minority Issues

This institution founded in 1996 deals with research, information and documentation concerning **minority-majority relations in Europe**. Publication and newsletters available on line www.ecmi.de

Eurominority

Creative website on national, regional, cultural and linguistic **European minorities**, native peoples, ethnic groups, specific areas with strong identity and federalist tendencies in Europe www.eurominority.org/version/en/index.asp

