



Minorities of Europe

Migration and Youth in Europe - New Realities and Challenges

Study Session

European Youth Centre Budapest
November 28 – December 5, 2010

Supported By:



Background information

Minorities of Europe (MoE) is a pan-European minority youth platform which seeks to support and assist the co-operation, solidarity and exchange between different minority communities and young people in Europe.

MoE's main international activities are: training courses, study sessions, seminars, youth exchanges and other activities in which young people are involved, especially those ones from minority background.

At European level, Minorities of Europe is particularly concerned by the following issues, as identified by the Council of Europe's consultation on minority youth participation and other relevant European consultations specific to minority Rights in Europe:

- Active participation and involvement of minority groups and communities across Europe, in particular of young people and those communities that are at a greater disadvantage or have lesser possibilities of access to their rights
- Understanding and respect of cultural and religious diversity as the basis for intercultural exchange and cooperation across Europe, including its spiritual dimension and inter-religious dialogue.
- Responsibility and solidarity among minority communities and among minorities and 'majorities' as the basis for further social cohesion and addressing multiple forms of discrimination.
- Awareness and empowerment of groups and individuals as a way to promote and safeguard the human rights of everyone.

Since May 2005, Minorities of Europe are building a structured network of minority youth organisations consisting of members and regional MoE Centres (consulates) across Europe and one of the priority areas of MoE are Balkan region and the Caucasus.

MoE prepared and organised several training activities concerning migration of young people. In April 2008 MoE in partnership with EU and Balkan partner organisations implemented a training course 'Migration, Integration, Inclusion - Promoting Minority Youth Empowerment in Europe' that took place in Stip, Macedonia, the main focus of which was the study of two different social cohesion models - UK and Macedonia. Evaluation of this event lead to the conclusion that more events of similar kind should be developed to provide space for reflection and skills development in the field of migration and its consequences for young people. As a consequence, MoE implemented further minority-related events in Albania, Armenia and Macedonia in 2008 and 2009.

The issue of migration (with particular focus on 'old and 'new' migration and the consequences of European policies in the area of youth mobility, freedom of movement and co-operation in the youth field) remains amongst key challenges in European youth work. This is why MoE decided to organise this Study Session with the help of an experienced international team and contributions from participating youth organisations from across Europe.



Aim of the Study Session

Discourse on migration involves many perspectives. Previous training experience of MoE in this area showed that the problem of migration of young people is full of challenging and unexplored areas requiring further work. This refers to issues such as: legal and illegal migrants, returning migrants, immigrants, refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and persons of immigrant background and/or members of ethnic minority populations that have been created through immigration.

Migration became one of the key global issues of the early twenty-first century. According to the data of International Organisation for Migration, there are about 192 million people living outside their place of birth today - about three per cent of the world's population. This means that roughly one of every thirty-five persons in the world is a migrant and young people constitute a significant number of a total migrant population. Europe experienced two big waves of migration recently - 1960s and early 2000s and is still a destination for many international migrants. At the same time, many European countries are sources of migratory trends. Moreover, new issues appear on the agenda as the result of border opening and free movement. According to the research conducted by the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union, there are about 8 million of irregular immigrants in the European Union, unequally distributed among Member States. Irregular immigrants are largely invisible to public authorities and their presence is contested by many social actors and groups.

In modern Europe, migrant and minority issues are constantly debated and acted upon by majority populations, minorities and by European organizations. Immigration, integration, nationalism, and minority rights are centrally placed in the public, political, and intellectual debate, and influence the decision making of world leaders. Today's Europe closes its borders to most immigrants from third world countries, vows to defend human rights and provides collective rights for minority groups with a long history of forced assimilation in Europe. Immigrants are expected to integrate into majority culture, to develop new cultural identities, and to rethink the concepts of homeland and diaspora. Majorities, minorities and migrants are at the center of this study session. European national, ethnic, and religious minorities have for the past two hundred years been of fundamental importance for the ideologies and decision making processes of European states, and for the attitudes and actions of dominant majority populations.

Youth mobility and cross-border co-operation are on the agenda of both CoE and EU for a number of years now, and yet many barriers and obstacles make it a challenging objective. Visa regulations and financial constraints rank among the top obstacles for young people's mobility and participation in today's Europe. Positive developments are on the horizon in South-East Europe and the post-Soviet countries. Three ex-Yugoslav republics: Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia have been placed on the Schengen White List in 2009, allowing their citizens visa-free travel to all Schengen states. Further South-East European countries are on a waiting list. The European Union's recent Eastern Partnership proposes similar provisions for ex-Soviet republics in the future.

Several migration waves already took place and changed the social landscape in Europe. New are about to start, but the crucial factor that becomes unchangeable and every society should be aware of it – the problem of integration of migrants and especially of young people who belong to the migrant community. Youth work and youth organisations should become important contributors in integration and intercultural dialogue work in order to create favourable conditions for cultural diversity. Migration is changing social structures of European countries it is a crucial issue that youth and non-governmental organizations working with minorities have to face in their daily work in order to create cohesive societies based on mutual tolerance and respect.



Youth workers and NGO representatives from both European Union member states as well as their colleagues from South-East Europe (as new beneficiaries of visa-free regime) and Member States of the Council of Europe (whose countries became either involved in the problem of integration and re-integration of migrant young people or will face this problem in the nearest future) will be brought together to present, discuss and analyse their experience and their country experience and strategies elaborated for successful inclusion of young people done by young people and official bodies.

The definition of term “integration” used during the study session will be based on CoE’s working definition as a “two-sided process and as the capacity of people to live together with full respect for the dignity of each individual, the common good, pluralism and diversity, non-violence and solidarity, as well as their ability to participate in social, cultural, economic and political life. It encompasses all aspects of social development and all policies. It requires the protection of the weak, as well as the right to differ, to create and to innovate”¹.

This study session also aims to contribute to the raising awareness of different aspects of migration among young people and to develop strategies for the youth organizations in Europe for integration and inclusion of young immigrants into new societies and to help young people to re-integrate into their home societies.

Study session will seek to look into different issues related to migration and especially on migration and integration of young people and of strategies and approaches young people can use while working on these issues in their home countries after the study session.

Study Session objectives:

- To exchange and analyse practice and experience, methodologies and approaches of youth work in the field of migration
- To review the opportunities provided by Council of Europe, European Youth Centres and European Youth Foundation in the field of migration and youth work
- To improve youth workers’ skills in tackling migration and integration with young people
- To develop an understanding of different aspects of migration and the relations in the context of class, race, north-south, east – west and EU/non-EU relations
- To develop new projects related to integration of young people from immigrant background
- To build new partnerships between participating organisations
- To develop a European work programme of youth projects dedicated to migration

Methodology of the study session

The experiences and realities of participants, as youth workers and youth leaders, will be the starting point of the programme and of the learning process. A range of working methods will be used which will facilitate learning and exchanging experiences about migration and work with migrants.

¹ Council of Europe “White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue “Living together as equals in dignity” (2008) Available at: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/default_en.asp



The study session will also be supported with the thematic inputs provided by the team and external experts to support the learning process, information sessions, workshops and group dynamic activities all aimed at ensuring the maximum learning output for, and involvement of, the participants. Active participation and contribution of participants will be ensured by using interactive way of presenting information and knowledge about specific topics.

Contributions from experts in the field of migration, integration, minority youth empowerment are foreseen as essential element of the event. External experts involve representatives of Council of Europe's Committee on Migration and the International Organisation for Migration as well as academics researching in the field of migration.

Active participation, focus on group work and team work, learning by doing approach, exercises made through simulation, and role-play and other, as well as theoretical inputs will form the basis of the study session.

A range of working methods will be combined in order to encourage every participant to participate actively in the sessions and to approach the issues of the study session in an interdisciplinary way.

Profile of participants

The study session seeks to bring together youth workers and youth leaders directly interested or concerned by the themes of the event (migration and youth work).

All participants must:

- have experience in the topics of the study session
- be highly motivated to participate and contribute to the event and to implementation of its results
- be ready and able to work as multipliers
- be aged between 20 and 30
- be able to attend the full duration of the training course
- be able to work in English
- reside in a Council of Europe Member State

Dates, venue and working language

Dates: Sunday 28th November 2010 (arrival day) - Sunday 5th December (departure day), 2010

Venue: European Youth Centre, Budapest

Working language: English

Accommodation and meals are paid for by EYCB

Travel reimbursement & Enrolment fee

Travel and visa expenses will be fully reimbursed. An enrolment fee of 50 Euros is payable by each participant. This amount will be deducted from the amount to be reimbursed for travel expenses. For participants with travel costs lower than 50 Euros, the difference needs to be paid at EYCB during the study session. Please note that an individual limit set up by CoE for travel reimbursement is 350 EUR. You can only buy tickets after receiving a formal request to do that from the Study Session team (to be sent in October).



Application procedure and selection of participants

All those interested in attending must submit application by e-mail by **September 17, 2009** (extended deadline) to migrationandyouth@gmail.com

The preparatory team will select 35 participants on the basis of the profile outlined above and ensuring a balanced group (gender, geographical regions, experience, cultural backgrounds and organisations).

The team will notify successful applicants by October 4, 2010. Please note that due to the usually high number of applicants we will only be able to inform selected participants.

Preparatory team

Max Fras, UK, Course Director
Jaroslaw Wisniewski, Poland
Irina Vasiljeva, Latvia
Luca Frongia, Italy
Ana Dervishi, Albania

Questions and comments

Should you have any questions or comments related to the study session, please contact the Study Session team at migrationandyouth@gmail.com

