

To all members of the Youth Working Party

08.01.2010

MESSAGE FROM THE SPANISH PRESIDENCY

On the implementation of the structured dialogue in the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field

Dear colleagues,

As the first youth working group meeting has been delayed to the 26th of January, we find it important to keep you duly informed of the advances on the implementation of the structured dialogue by the common work of the Trio Presidencies (ES-BE-HU), the Commission and the European Youth Forum.

As it is well known, last November, 27th the Council of Ministers approved the Resolution on the renewed framework for the European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018). Among the guiding principles of the European youth policy cooperation, the Resolution highlights the importance of *“upholding the right of young people to participate in the development of policies affecting them by means of a continuous structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations”*.

For this purpose, it sets up the principles on which the implementation of the structured dialogue must be based:

- ✓ *“The structured dialogue should be based on work-cycles of 18 months with an overall theme corresponding to the overall priorities for European cooperation for the 18 months in question. Each Presidency may also choose a specific priority theme, linked to the overall theme, for its term of office”*.

Regarding this point, *“Youth employment”* will be the general topic during the following 18 months, whilst the specific priorities of the Trio presidencies will be:

- ES: *“social inclusion”*, for the first semester of 2010
- BE: *“youth work”*, for the second half of the year
- HU: *“participation”*, for the first six months of 2011.

- ✓ *“The structured dialogue should involve consultations with young people and youth organisations at all levels in the Member States, and at EU Youth Conferences organised by Presidency countries and during the European Youth Week. The European Commission is invited to convene a European Steering Committee for each 18-month period consisting of inter alia representatives of the Trio Presidency countries’ Ministries for Youth Affairs, National Youth Councils and National Agencies for the Youth in Action Programme, as well as representatives of the European Commission and the European Youth Forum” (...)* The

European Steering Committee is responsible for the overall coordination of the structured dialogue (...)

It is foreseen that the Commission shall have convened the constitution of the European Steering Committee by the end of January, before the first meeting of the youth working party in 2010. This Steering Committee will be set for a period of 18 months, until the end of June of 2011, and its work will be ruled by the document forwarded by the former Swedish Presidency on behalf of the Trio Presidency (ES-BE-HU), the Commission and the European Youth Forum. Further information on the constitution of the Committee will be part of the agenda of the first youth working party.

- *“Member States are invited to support the establishment of a small National Working Group. These groups can, where applicable, utilise existing structures and be composed of inter alia representatives of Ministries for Youth Affairs, National Youth councils, local and regional youth councils, those actives in youth work, diverse young people and youth researchers. Member States are encourage to, whenever possible, give National Youth Councils a leading role in these groups. The National Working Group would have the task of securing the participatory process in the Member States”.*

Each Member State must hold a national consultation to provide an overview of young people's expectations on youth employment in view of the EU Youth Conferences. These national consultations will be run by the National Working Groups. Whenever possible, the National Youth Councils will be key actors in this participatory process.

The Youth Conferences, milestones of this process, will be an opportunity to further discuss the results of the national consultations and use them as inputs for the European policy on youth employment.

In order to make the voice of young people from your country heard at European level, and to ensure proper input to the EU Youth Conference (13th-15th April), all National Working Groups should be starting their work by the end of January. The national consultation itself should take place from now to 15th of March 2010, **when the results need to be communicated to the European Steering Committee** in order to be included in the preparation of the Spanish Presidency EU Youth Conference. Taking especially into account this relatively tight deadline, consultations on line could also be envisaged.

In accordance to the principle of using existing funds, Member States must also be informed that National Agencies of the Youth in Action Program may financially support Youth Councils involved in the participatory process in different ways: First of all, through the possibility of using Action 5.1 of the Youth in Action programme. Secondly, National Agencies could launch a TCP activity in relation with the national consultation above mentioned, in partnership with the Youth Councils. In fact, and regarding the first national consultation, due to the relatively tight deadline (15th of March) to get the results, a TCP activity would be the best solution.

Lastly, the cooperation among National Agencies and National Youth Councils could also be fruitful not only from a financial point of view but also as a way to ensure the participation

either of organised and non organised young people into the national consultation, especially of those coming from disadvantaged backgrounds and with fewer opportunities. In this regard, it is also important to remember that the implementation of the structured dialogue will be launched in 2010, the European Year for combating poverty and social exclusion.

Finally, you will find below the **“guiding questions”** which should be followed in the national consultation, in order to efficiently input the preparation of the Spanish EU Youth Conference and hence set the basis for the structured dialogue discussions towards the adoption of concrete measures on youth employment at European level.

1. DIAGNOSIS OF THE SITUATION: Which are the challenges that young people face in the field of employment? Please consider the following key dimensions:
 - Youth employment and its impact on youth autonomy. Access to labour market.
 - Entrepreneurship and self-employment of young people.
 - Working conditions and equal treatment. Conciliation of private and working life.
 - Training and education, life long learning and mobility. Innovation, creativity and the use of new IT.
 - Social dialogue, participation and rights of workers
 - Social cohesion and inclusion.

2. IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITIES: Which are the main issues among those to be tackled at European level? How should they be prioritized?

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy New Year 2010, full of fruitful cooperation!!

Best regards,

The Spanish Presidency Team