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Directorate-General for Education and Culture  
Youth, Sport And Citizenship  
**Youth policy**

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## THE NEW CONCEPT OF THE EUROPEAN STRUCTURED DIALOGUE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

### Background

- In November 2006, the Council of Youth Ministers adopted a resolution on participation and information. This document invited the Commission and Member States to develop a continuous structured dialogue with young people, "aimed at ensuring a timely and effective contribution by young people and other relevant actors in the youth field towards the formulation of policies relevant to young people's lives". The resolution also invited the Commission to organise a regular European Youth Week.
- The structured dialogue has also to be seen as a contribution of the youth field to the implementation of the **Commission's Plan D for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate**. Plan D stresses the need to give all citizens – particularly the young – the tools to actively participate in the European decision shaping process and to reinforce their sense of ownership of the European project. The structured dialogue is an instrument that contributes to achieve this objective.
- The structured dialogue between EU institutions and young people has been implemented by the European Commission in co-operation with the Member States, the European Youth Forum and the National Youth Councils since the beginning of 2007.

### Objectives

- The structured dialogue is a **means of mutual communication with young people** in order to implement the above-mentioned priorities of the open method of coordination in the youth field and in general to have a substantial working relationship between authorities and young people on all levels.
- Through the structured dialogue, the EU institutions want to make full **participation** of young people in society a reality and **strengthen the partnership between the EU institutions and young people**.

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## Implementation rules

- The **structured dialogue can and must be done with and through the youth organisations.**
- The **debate should be as large as possible.** Youth organisations should make the effort to reach out beyond their membership and to involve a large diversity of young people and a broad scope of youth organisations.
- Special attention should be given to **young people with fewer opportunities.** They must be an integral part of the dialogue, but, in parallel, receive a special treatment taking into account the specificity of their problems and concerns.
- The **Youth in Action Programme should be used as much as possible** to fund the debates and seminars at local, regional and national level through its Action 5.1 "Meetings of young people and those responsible for youth policy".
- The **Youth Political Agenda** is the basis of the structured dialogue. It is set up conjointly by the EU institutions, including the Council (Member States) and young people represented through the European Youth Forum.
- A good **valorisation and dissemination of the results** of the structured dialogue have to be ensured. The European Youth Forum, the National Youth Councils and the National Agencies play a key role in this respect. YFJ and the National agencies should provide the Commission with an overview of ongoing activities.

## Actors of the structured dialogue

- The **Commission** steers and coordinates the structured dialogue as a process and provides input and feedback where needed. The Commission launches the beginning of a new cycle of the structured dialogue and reports on its outcomes.
- The **Member States** mobilise the National Youth Councils and the National Agencies for implementing the structured dialogue in their country. They designate the participants of the Youth Presidency Events in cooperation with the National Youth Councils. They contribute to bringing back the results of the structured dialogue at national level to the European level.
- The **European Youth Forum** plays an important role as the main umbrella organisation representing young people in Europe (National Youth Councils and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations). It represents young people in the so-called "Informal Fora" between Presidencies, European Commission, European Parliament and young people.
- **National Youth Councils** play an important role organising the local, regional and national debate in the Member States.

- The **National Agencies** of the **Youth in Action** Programme play an important "supportive" role implementing action 5.1 of the Programme, giving advice and information to applicants, monitoring projects and disseminating their results.
- A **new partnership** has to be created **between the five main actors of the structured dialogue**: European Commission, Governments, European Youth Forum, National Youth Councils and National Agencies.

### **Events of the structured dialogue**

- **EU level events** are European Youth Weeks and Presidency Youth Events.
- **European Youth Weeks** are high visibility events happening every two years and involving all Member States. Themes of the European Youth Weeks are defined by the European Commission in line with the youth political agenda. Participants are designated by Member States in cooperation with National Agencies. A central event organised by the Commission is taking place in Brussels. In parallel, national events to be organised by the National Agencies are taking place in the Member States.
- **Presidency Youth Events** are political events organised by the Presidencies and focusing on specific themes chosen by the presidencies in accordance with the Commission and in line with the youth political agenda. Participants are designated by the Ministry in charge of youth affairs of the country holding the Presidency. The Presidency Youth Events take place in the countries of the Presidency.
- **Informal Fora** between Presidencies, European Commission, European Parliament and young people are taking place twice a year at the fringe of the Youth Council Meetings. The results/conclusions of the Presidency Youth Events are discussed by the EU ministers for youth in this context.