



The EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for education and culture

Youth, sport and relations with the citizen

**CJ/04/2006-EN**

**IMPLEMENTATION**

OF THE

**YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME**

**WORK PLAN 2007**

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## 1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME

This work plan for 2007 relates to the first year of implementation of the new Youth in Action Programme.

It is submitted to the Programme Committee, pursuant to Decision No 1719/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 creating the Youth in Action Programme for the period 2007-2013.

### *Main features of the Programme*

According to article 2 of the Decision, the general objectives of the Programme are:

- to promote young people's active citizenship in general and their European citizenship in particular;
- to develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, in particular in order to reinforce social cohesion in the European Union;
- to foster mutual understanding between young people in different countries;
- to contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field;
- to promote European cooperation in the youth field.

According to article 4 and to the Annex to the Decision, these objectives are supported by five Actions:

- Youth for Europe;
- European Voluntary Service;
- Youth in the World;
- Youth support systems;
- Support for European cooperation in the youth field.

The Programme is intended for young people aged between 15 and 28, although certain Actions are open to young people aged as young as 13 or up to the age of 30. The age brackets are defined in a modular way in the different Actions and Sub-Actions.

Accompanying measures aimed at child protection will be implemented in relevant projects.

According to article 5 of the Decision, the Programme is open to the participation of the following "participating countries":

- the Member States;
- the EFTA States that are party to the EEA Agreement;
- the candidate countries benefiting from a pre-accession strategy;
- the countries of the western Balkans;
- Switzerland, subject to the conclusion of a bilateral agreement with that country.

On this basis and on the hypothesis that Bulgaria and Romania become Member States on 1 January 2007, procedures will be implemented in 2007, in view of the full participation of Turkey as soon as

possible and of the introduction of some preparatory measures for Croatia and Switzerland if the political and legal framework allows such actions.

According to Article 9 of Decision, the Commission is assisted, for the implementation of the Programme, by a Committee comprising representatives of the Member States. Representatives of the EFTA/EEA and candidate countries also sit on the committee. In 2007, the Committee will meet at least twice, in principle in June and October. It will deliver, in particular, pursuant to article 16 of the Decision, an opinion on the activity report on the implementation of the former Youth Programme in 2006.

Depending on the Actions concerned the Programme will be implemented at national level, mainly through National Agencies, or at European level, mainly through the Executive Agency Education, Audiovisual and Culture.

Article 8 of the Decision provides for the establishment of structures at national level to achieve the objectives of the Programme (National Agencies, Resource Centres, information networks, etc.). After submission to the Programme Committee, the Commission will adopt a Decision relating to the respective responsibilities of the Member States, the Commission and the National Agencies in the implementation of the Programme. Under these provisions, the Commission, following the opinion of the Programme Committee on the amount of funding to be allocated to each country, will conclude with each National Agency an agreement based on a work Programme, in order to put at the disposal of the Agency the funds for the decentralised Actions of the Programme and for the Community participation to the operating costs of the Agency. Agreements will also be concluded with the other bodies (SALTO Resource Centres, Eurodesks, etc.) in order to cofinance the costs of their activities.

The Executive Agency set up for the management of the previous generation of Programmes in the field of Education and Culture is to be maintained for the new generation; it will be involved in the management of the Youth in Action Programme according to a Decision of the Commission delegating powers to this Agency.

### ***Main characteristics of the work plan for 2007***

2007 being the first year of implementation of the Youth in Action Programme, the work plan for this year includes not only the recurring management tasks implied by the management of such a Programme, but also some specific tasks related to the launching of the Programme.

All Actions of the Programme will be implemented as from this first year on the basis of the Programme Guide as a permanent call for proposals and in some cases by means of specific calls for proposals. The implementation of two parts of Action 4 is however planned at a later stage. For both, the Commission will explore appropriate modalities in 2007. This concerns:

- Action 4.6 - Partnerships with regional and local bodies;
- under Action 4.5 the support of European Youth Campaigns aiming at increasing the provision of quality information and the participation of young people in the preparation and dissemination of information.

In 2007, special attention will be paid to the following activities among others:

- management of launching events and communication on the new Programme;

- establishment of financial rules and procedures, forms, assessment grids and model agreements for the management of the grants; these modalities will be as simple and user-friendly as possible in the respect of the Financial Regulation;
- implementation of the control and audit provisions foreseen as regards the delegated bodies intervening in the implementation of the Programme;
- definition of a strategy regarding the monitoring and evaluation of the Programme;
- definition of a strategy regarding the dissemination of the outputs of the Programme.

Furthermore, this work plan includes certain tasks related to the closure of the former Programmes in the field of youth, in particular:

- the management of the grant agreements still open, notably with the National Agencies;
- the final evaluation of the Youth Programme (2000-2006).

## **2. POLITICAL CONTEXT AND PRIORITIES**

The following priorities resulting from the European political cooperation in the field of youth will be maintained and developed:

- Young people's active citizenship
- The European Youth Pact
- Mainstreaming of youth in other policies

Furthermore, 2007 will be the European Year of Equal Opportunities and 2008 the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. Commission and Programme Countries will engage in awareness-raising activities and mobilise the instruments of the Programme to implement activities and projects with a focus on these themes.

Having regard to the EU principle of non-discrimination - and in view of combating racism, homophobia and any other form of discrimination - the Authorities and Structures called to implement the Youth in Action Programme at national and European levels shall ensure that the access to the Programme is granted to all young people, independently from their gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability or sexual orientation. More specifically, the selection of projects worth of Community grant shall be carried out taking fully into account the principle of non-discrimination.

### **2.1. YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP**

#### *2.1.1. Bringing Europe closer to the young citizen*

In June 2005, the Heads of State and Government decided a reflection pause on the future of Europe after the ratification process of the Constitution was suspended. In 2006 they decided to extend this reflection pause. To support this reflection, the Commission proposed the Plan D to strengthen dialogue, debate and democracy in Europe. The Commission took advantage of the impetus given by Plan D and various consultations and events organised at EU level in its Communication of 20 July 2006: Follow-up to the White Paper on a New impetus for European Youth: Implementing the common objectives for participation and information for young people in view of promoting their active European citizenship (COM (2006) 417 of 20 July 2006). This Communication proposes to

set up a structured dialogue with young people in order to nurture their sense of European citizenship.

In this context, the Youth in Action Program will contribute to bring young people closer to Europe and all Actions of the Programme will be mobilized for this purpose in 2007, with Action 5 supporting specifically the implementation of the structured dialogue.

### *2 1.2. Participation and information of young people*

In the framework of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) for Youth, the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States adopted a Resolution on 25 November 2003 in which they agreed on common objectives on participation and information of young people, aiming at promoting young people's participation in democratic life.

In 2006 the Commission drafted a report on the implementation of those common objectives, on the basis of the progress reports filed by the Member States end 2005 and beginning 2006.

On the basis of this report the Commission adopted the aforementioned Communication of 20 July 2006. In this Communication the Commission confirmed the relevance and validity of the common objectives adopted for participation and information, proposed to adopt and improve the lines of action and reinforce the OMC.

The Youth in Action programme will contribute to the implementation of this priority by supporting various activities like organizing peer learning activities for participation and information, continue supporting the Eurodesk network and developing democracy projects with young people.

### *2.1.3. Voluntary activities of young people*

The Member States have agreed in the Resolution on common objectives for voluntary activities of young people of 15 November 2004 to submit reports on the national contributions to the implementation of the priority of voluntary activities to the Commission by the end of 2006. The Commission will analyse these reports and will, on this basis, propose in a Communication how to proceed further with the priority of voluntary activities of young people. This Communication can then serve as basis for another Council Resolution on this topic. The Youth in Action Programme significantly contributes to a wide range of voluntary activities, mainly through the new European Voluntary Service.

### *2.1.4 Better knowledge and understanding of young people*

The resolution of 15 November 2004 of the Council sets common objectives for better knowledge and understanding of young people.

Besides that, in 2007, the Commission plans to carry out additional activities:

- in the context of the partnership with the Council of Europe (cf. item 3.5.2);
- in other fields of collaboration or action: it will organise a second meeting of the European Network of Youth Knowledge (EuNYK) during first semester 2007 in Brussels, disseminate results of the youth Eurobarometer, continue collaboration between the 'Eurostat' Directorate-General and the Research Directorate-General.

## **2.2. THE EUROPEAN YOUTH PACT**

### *2.2.1 Employment and inclusion of young people*

The Youth Pact was adopted by the European Council in 2005 as a component of the re-launched Lisbon Strategy.

The Pact takes a multi-dimensional approach to the integration of young people into society. It aims at increasing youth employment, supports a broad approach to learning including non-formal education, and states the need for active inclusion policies on behalf of vulnerable young people and early school leavers.

It has three strands: a) employment and social integration; b) education, training and mobility, and c) reconciling work and family life. Its aim is to improve the education, training, mobility, employment and social inclusion of young people, while helping to achieve a work-life balance. Initiatives in these areas must be coherent and promote a sustained mobilisation of young people.

The European Council emphasised that the success of the Pact will depend on the active participation of all those involved, particularly youth organisations. The structured dialogue activities undertaken within Action 5 of the Programme will support implementation of the Pact in this respect.

The Youth in Action Programme makes an important contribution to the acquisition of competences and is therefore a key instrument in providing young people with opportunities for non-formal and informal learning in a European dimension. It also includes a strategy for the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities targeting in particular young people from a less-privileged educational, cultural, geographical or socio-economic background, or with disabilities. It therefore contributes to the fulfilment of the aims set out in the European Youth Pact.

### *2.2.2 Inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities into the Programme*

The reinforced “Inclusion Strategy for young people with fewer opportunities into the Youth in Action Programme” will be implemented. It will be the common framework for the special inclusion efforts of the Commission and the Member States, requested by the legal basis. The strategy will build on the previous YOUTH inclusion strategy and will take into account the results of the SALTO Inclusion Forum organized in October 2006. Most important, it will endeavor to strengthen the role of the Youth in Action Programme as an important youth inclusion instrument at European level in the framework of the European cooperation in the field of youth. In this context, the development of bridges towards the political cooperation process and other relevant European and national policies and programmes will be encouraged.

### *2.2.3 Recognition of youth work in non-formal education*

In order to enhance the recognition of youth work, the Commission, in the framework of the Programme, will start implementing Youthpass as of 2007. Youthpass will provide qualified certificates for participants in the Youth in Action Programme, which confirm their participation and describe the learning outcomes. In parallel, and not only related to the Programme, the Commission will intensify the reflection on how to improve the recognition of all kinds of learning results and experiences in the youth field. A new and youth-specific recognition instrument will be developed in the common Europass format for a single Community framework for the transparency of

qualifications and competences. It is envisaged that it takes the form of a new attachment to the Europass: Europass-Youth.

#### *2.2.4 Promote mobility*

The guidelines of the European Mobility Quality Charter have been taken into account when defining and assessing the quality of mobility and non-formal learning in the Youth in Action Programme. This is notably reflected through the award criteria of the different Actions and sub-Actions, the supportive approach towards the target groups of the Programme, the new EVS Charter, and, finally, the emphasis put on recognition of the non-formal learning experience.

Following up on the recommendation of the feasibility study on a mobility card, the proposed introduction of a “mobility module“ to existing mobility offers will be examined in detail. Based on the final conclusions of the feasibility study, the Commission will examine whether or not to issue an EVS specific Euro<26 Card from mid-2007 onwards, when the related financing agreement with the European Youth Card Association expires.

### **2.3. MAINSTREAMING OF YOUTH IN OTHER POLICIES**

#### *2.3.1 Promote diversity and reduce all forms of discrimination*

The Commission will aim at mainstreaming youth in the activities of the European Year of Equal Opportunities 2007 as well as in the preparations for the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008. The mainstreaming will also continue in the framework of the Commission’s campaign “For Diversity-Against Discrimination” as well as the Commission’s contribution to the Council of Europe’s campaign “All Different-All Equal” which the Commission supports in the context its Framework Partnership Agreement with the Council of Europe. The promotion of diversity will also be a priority in the calls for projects under the Youth in Action Program.

#### *2.3.2 Improving young people’s health*

Further to the Commission Communication “European policies concerning youth: addressing the concerns of young people in Europe –implementing the European Youth Pact and promoting active citizenship” of 30 May 2005 joint activities on young people and health will be developed in cooperation between the Directorate-General for Education and Culture and the Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection. Healthy lifestyles, including sport, will be a priority for projects in 2007.

### **3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIONS**

The role of the Programme as an instrument of the European political cooperation in the youth field is reinforced through the introduction of Action 1.3 (youth democracy projects) and Action 5, the latter mainly supporting the structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations through youth presidency seminars and youth seminars as well as youth-related research and cooperation with international organisations. Furthermore, the important developments in Action 2 (European Voluntary Service) make this Action an even more effective instrument to implement the common objective „voluntary activities of young people“ at European level, which will be accompanied by the possibility to encourage cooperation among different youth voluntary activities (including voluntary civic services) through Action 5.1.

A table comparing the Youth in Action Programme with the YOUTH Programme is annexed to this document.

An important new feature is the structuring elements introduced in the Programme, which aim at a greater effectiveness, impact and visibility of the Programme: Complementing traditional grant agreements for one activity, the new Programme authorises the use of multi-measure financing agreements to combine the same kind of activities and/or different activities in Actions 1, 4.3, and 4.6. Similar in Action 2: One single project grant can support a variety of different voluntary activities. The principles of visibility and dissemination are mainstreamed in all Actions and can be supported additionally through Action 4.8 (adding to the value of the Programme).

Other important features will be the supportive approach, the increased recognition of competencies acquired through participation in the Programme and child protection and safety.

In operational terms, the new Programme Guide is to be published already in 2006 and has been drafted in a way to both ensure its character as „permanent call for proposals“ and its coherence with the Financial Regulation on the one hand, and to keep its userfriendly character on the other. Corresponding grant application forms and other documents relevant for the project cycle are to be published in 2006, too. While maintaining five application deadlines at national level and three at European level, the third deadline at European level is set at 1 September (instead of 1 November before).

In addition to the Programme Guide, the following additional calls for proposals are to be published at European level:

- Action 1 – Call for proposals for thematic networking of Action 1 projects;
- Action 3 – Call for proposals for projects with „other Partner Countries of the world“;
- Action 4.1 – Call for proposals for bodies active at European level in the field of youth;
- Action 4.4 – Call for proposals for projects encouraging innovation and quality.

In the second half of 2007, the consultative group, which has been advising the Commission in preparing the operational aspects of the Programme, will be convened again to take stock of the first experiences with the new elements of the Programme, to draw lessons learned and to propose – if necessary – adaptations of the Programme Guide in view of 2008.

### **3.1. ACTION 1**

Action 1 will be implemented in coherence with the Programme Guide: Apart from Youth Exchanges, which remain the core element of Action 1, this action will also support Youth Initiatives and - as a new element - Youth Democracy Projects.

Certain measures will be implemented to structure the Action 1 projects and to improve their visibility and impact.

The mainstreaming of the general principles of visibility and dissemination will be sought throughout the programme but particularly in Action 1 at European level as well as at national, regional and local levels in close cooperation with the National Agencies.

In this context, the Commission will introduce a process where the thematic approach and the networking of projects will be coordinated by the Commission in cooperation with the Executive Agency and the National Agencies.

From 2007 on, follow-up activities building on the project experience and aiming at highlighting, disseminating and promoting project results will be granted for Youth Exchanges, Youth Initiatives and Youth Democracy Projects.

A call for pilot projects on thematic networking will be published with the following aims:

- to link the projects thematically,
- to pool experiences in a specific thematic field,
- to increase the links between Youth Exchanges, Youth Initiatives and Youth Democracy Projects,
- to disseminate project results.

As far as Youth Initiatives are concerned, the new coaching system introduced through Youth in Action will be monitored in cooperation with SALTO-BE (FR).

### **3.2. ACTION 2**

Important changes will come into effect in the new EVS, which all aim to increase the impact, effectiveness and visibility of EVS. New structuring elements will be introduced and the management approach overhauled:

There will be only one single EVS and no distinction among different strands is made. Its significance as a „learning service“ will be reinforced. The systematic possibility of group EVS activities will be introduced and will complement individual EVS. Between 1 and 100 volunteers can participate in a single activity. The management will be simplified according to the principle „one application – one award decision – one project“ for all EVS projects.

An EVS Charter will be introduced, which summarises the core quality elements and roles of EVS project partners. Accreditation will be extended to sending and coordinating organisations. This will be done in a way that recognises their previous successful participation in EVS, while giving appropriate guidance to newcomer organisations. The recent introduction of accreditation in South East Europe will continue being monitored by the Commission.

Generally, a new emphasis will be put on increased „service delivery“ for the benefit of young people and EVS sending and hosting organisations. In this context, National Agencies will be strongly invited, as from 2007, to identify and conclude partnerships with EVS Advice and Support Organisations that help NAs to strengthen the service delivery, develop EVS and help with the identification and matchmaking of project partners. The internet database of accredited organisations will be further improved and include a possibility for National Agencies to indicate available hosting places.

### **3.3. ACTION 3**

International cooperation will be achieved mainly through projects with Partner Countries in South East Europe - until these countries acquire progressively the status “Programme Countries” - and with the countries participating in the European Neighbouring Policy (Mediterranean region and Eastern Europe and Caucasus). Cooperation with these country groups is supported under Action 3.1.

### ***South-East Europe (SEE)***

In 2007, the Commission will continue giving the possibility to organisations based in South East Europe to directly submit project applications at European level in order to receive grants for projects taking place in the region.

The Commission will continue monitoring the strategy developed in cooperation with the SALTO SEE Resource Centre and aiming to enhance the visibility and awareness of the Programme among local organisations in South East Europe.

Furthermore, in 2007 the Commission will explore the possibility to increase the number of projects in the region through the establishment of a “special window for the Western Balkans” to be supported through funds from the Enlargement Directorate-General under the framework of the new Instrument of Pre Accession (IPA) covering the period 2007-2013.

### ***Mediterranean Partner Countries***

Youth in Action will continue to support those projects involving Mediterranean Partner Countries which take place in Programme Countries; however, the Directorate-General Education and Culture will no longer be delegated to manage the MEDA funds committed for the Euro-Med Youth III Programme and therefore will not be responsible for the support of Euro-Med Youth projects taking place in the Mediterranean Partner Countries.

DG EAC will nonetheless continue cooperating with the Commission’s EuropeAid Co-operation Office in order to assure coherence and reciprocity between the two initiatives/Programmes targeting the same region.

### ***Eastern Europe and Caucasus (EECA)***

It is expected that projects involving partners from the seven eligible countries of Eastern Europe and Caucasus (Belarus, Russia, Moldova, Ukraine and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) will be on the increase in 2007 as a result of the training events and study visits, which have been organised by the SALTO EECA Resource Centre in 2005 and 2006. The focus of these events was to develop new partnerships with EU counterparts and create a network of multipliers capable of promoting the Programme at local and regional level.

### ***Cooperation with other Partner Countries***

Under Action 3.2, the Commission will support, through a centralised call for proposals, exchanges of best practices in the field of youth with Partners Countries from ACP/Asia and Latin America. The 2005 call for proposals will be taken as reference document for the elaboration of the guidelines and criteria of eligible youth activities. The 2007 call for proposals will aim at:

- Exchanging experience and good practice in the field of youth and non-formal education,
- Supporting training and development of youth organisations and individuals involved in youth and non-formal education,
- Developing and strengthening of partnerships and networks amongst youth organisations.

### **3.4. ACTION 4**

Supporting the quality of youth work is an important feature of the Youth in Action Programme. In addition to the support of bodies active at European level in the field of youth (4.1), of the European Youth Forum (4.2), and of the structures of the Programme (4.7), Action 4 will address a broader scope of activities and partners.

#### ***Support to bodies active at European level in the field of Youth***

Following a call for proposals, financial support will be granted to NGOs active at European level in the field of youth in order to contribute to their operating costs. Eligible organisations are those which pursue a goal of general European interest. Their activities must contribute to young people's participation in public life and society, and the development and implementation of European cooperation activities in the field of youth in general. They should be based in one of the Programme Countries and have member branches in at least eight Programme Countries.

#### ***Support to the European Youth Forum***

Grants are awarded under this sub-Action to support the ongoing activities of the European Youth Forum. The 2007 workplan of the European Youth Forum will be submitted to the opinion of the programme committee in due time.

#### ***Training and Networking of those active in youth work and youth organisations***

The support for training and networking will include projects targeting the development of Programme activities, but also projects aiming at fostering European cooperation in the field of youth in general.

The Training and Cooperation Plans (TCPs) will continue to be implemented and financed under Action 4.3 in order to allow different actors within the European field of youth to participate in training, partnerships and networks. For 2007, training and information on the new Programme will be the main priority. Naturally, training and cooperation will also focus on the general priorities of the Programme and on some significant topics like "European Citizenship" and "Risk prevention and youth protection".

#### ***Projects encouraging innovation and quality***

Following a call for proposals, projects will be supported that target the introduction, implementation and promotion of innovative and qualitative elements in non-formal education and youth work. These innovative aspects may relate:

- to the content and objectives, in line with the development of the framework of the European cooperation in the youth field and the priorities of the Youth in Action Programme; and/or
- to the methodology applied, bringing new ideas and approaches to the field of non-formal education and youth.

#### ***Information activities for young people and those active in youth work and youth organisations***

The access of young people to relevant information and communication will be supported through further developments of the European Youth Portal.

New features will focus on young people's interests and inputs and favour interactivity, as well as networking of information services.

### ***The structures of the Programme (National Agencies, etc.)***

#### *National Agencies*

The management system devised for the new Programme – based on a Community contribution to NA operating costs in the form of flat rate amount – will result in a simplified and more output-oriented contractual framework. A single, annual (1.1.2007 - 31.12.2007) agreement will be established with each NA to fund and govern both decentralised actions and NA operations. SALTO and Eurodesk activities will be supported through separate agreements. Criteria and methodology to share out the total budget amongst NAs are to be simplified. At the same time, the new budgetary allocation system is aimed at ensuring that all Programme's structures get adequate funding and continuity of activities is secured.

With regard to ensuring an efficient and secure launching of the Youth in Action Programme, the ex-ante declarations of insurance will be assessed. Monitoring and corrective actions will, when needed, be demanded to the National Agencies or authorities, and their implementation checked by the Commission.

The full implementation of the agreed action plans following the system audit cycle completed in 2006 should be achieved by the end of the first semester 2007. In order to ensure this outcome, the monitoring visits to National Agencies will continue to take place. This measure is to be complemented by control measures carried out by the national authorities according to the new approach governing the delegation of tasks to NAs.

#### *The SALTO Resource Centres*

Largest possible continuity of the SALTO Resource Centres will be ensured in 2007 and the existing ones will be maintained, without prejudice to kicking-off a reflection on the future structure and functioning of the Resource Centres. The SALTOs will contribute to the priorities in their competence area. SALTO Youth initiatives (Belgium FR) will be renamed into "SALTO Participation" and help promoting political and societal youth participation. SALTO Information (HU/SE) will start developing a partner-finding database for the main Actions of the Programme.

#### *EURODESK network*

The Eurodesk network will contribute to the structured dialogue and the up-dating of data on the European Youth Portal and enhance its promotion and further development. Eurodesk will continue to co-operate with other relevant youth information networks, in particular with the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA) and the European Youth Card Association (EYCA). The Commission will continue to financially support national Eurodesks. Part of this support will be transferred by each national Eurodesk to the Eurodesk European Office in Brussels in order to allow the latter to develop the necessary training and coordination activities and represent the Eurodesk network at European level.

### *Structures of former EVS volunteers*

The new Programme considers organisations of former EVS volunteers as structures of the Programme. They are vital to maximise and share the EVS experience, increase its impact and visibility and enable national and European networking among former volunteers. Based on the positive experiences with the centralised support to activities of structures of former EVS volunteers under the Call for proposals EAC 15/05, operating support to one national structure of former EVS volunteers in each Programme Country will be granted upon its designation by the respective national authority.

### *Euromed-Youth Platform*

The Commission will support the Euromed-Youth Platform in concertation between DG Education and Culture, the EuropeAid Cooperation Office and the Directorate-General for External Relations, while taking into consideration the new management modalities of the Euro-Med Youth Programme and the main objectives of the EuroMed Platform, which consist in promoting the development of youth work and youth policies in the Mediterranean Partner Countries.

### *Adding to the value of the Programme*

Beyond the valorisation foreseen in each Action, the Commission will make a significant step towards valorisation of the Programme in general. At European level, the Commission together with the Executive Agency will organise seminars, colloquia or meetings to facilitate the implementation of the Programme and undertake appropriate information, publication and dissemination measures.

## **3.5. ACTION 5**

### *Structured dialogue, youth seminars and youth presidency seminars*

The structured dialogue is a tool to actively involve young people in policy shaping debates with policy makers on issues that concern them and contribute to the implementation of Plan D. The Commission will develop further concrete proposals on how to organise the structured dialogue and achieve concrete results. The main theme of the structured dialogue in 2007 will be “social inclusion and diversity of young people”. In this context the intention is to:

- Support youth seminars at the local, regional or national level that prepare Presidency youth events;
- Support the German and Portuguese Presidency youth events;
- Support some events to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Rome;
- Organize an informal forum composed of representatives of young people, presidencies, the European Parliament and the Commission;
- Organize the European youth week 2007;
- Mobilize the European information networks Eurodesk, ERYICA and EYCA to support the structured dialogue.

### *Partnership between the Commission and the Council of Europe*

A new Framework Partnership Agreement will be concluded between the Council of Europe and the European Commission for the period 2007-2009. In 2007, the Partnership will focus on the following priority areas:

- *Recognition of youth work and quality of training:* the study on the economic value of youth work will be finalized and the Partnership will initiate new activities underpinning the recognition of youth work; European Citizenship training courses will be further decentralized towards National Agencies (the Partnership will develop innovative approaches in the training for trainers and youth workers (tools and methods) in coordination with the training plans of NAs.
- *Knowledge provision and production:* the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCYP) will be further developed, based on the 2006 evaluation; a research network meeting and research seminars will contribute to increase knowledge in the field of youth as well as synergies in the field of youth research at European level; the Commission will seek co-operation with the Council of Europe on its country files.
- *European Neighbourhood Policy and regional approach:* the Partnership will continue to hold trainings and seminars with a strong regional focus e.g. on EuroMed, South-East Europe or Eastern Europe and the Caucasus.

In addition to these priority areas, the Commission will contribute to the campaign “All different – all equal”; two symposia on “Participation and active citizenship” and “Intercultural and inter-religious dialogue”, a training course and an event are planned in this context.

#### ***Partnership with the United Nations Volunteers***

A Framework Partnership Agreement with the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) will provide the context of a continuous and multi-annual cooperation with UNV supported through an equal contribution by UNV and the Commission. In 2007, the following activities are planned in this context:

- joint advocacy efforts to promote volunteering;
- a seminar to enhance the information exchange and cooperation among organisations arranging voluntary activities, including civic services;
- a joint EVS project, coordinated by UNV, in relation with neighbouring Partner Countries and/or other Partner Countries of the world;
- technical cooperation in order to improve the partner-finding and matchmaking services within EVS.

## **4. TRAINING, INFORMATION AND DISSEMINATION**

### **4.1. THE TRAINING STRATEGY**

The Commission continues attaching great importance to the Training Strategy and its different strands:

- Action 4.3-Training and networking of those active in youth work and youth organisations (see chapter 3.4);
- the Training and Cooperation Plans (TCPs) of the National Agencies. These plans are an integrated part of the NA Work Plans, and are developed to a large degree in cooperation between the whole network. The TCPs take into consideration the needs defined in the Programme countries as well as the political priorities that are defined by the Commission. They are financed under Action 4.3;

- National Agency staff training: A series of information and training sessions for staff of National Agencies is envisaged, in close cooperation with National Agencies, in order to familiarise both directors and project officers with the new Programme and its most important Actions and features. A seminar on child protection and safety will be organised in cooperation with the French National Agency;
- the SALTO Resource Centres will continue to play a crucial role within the topics and areas where they have peak competencies; covering both needs of the NAs and some of the priorities of the Commission (see point 3.4.7);
- the Partnership between the Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of training will continue (see point 3.5.2).

Furthermore, the Commission, together with the regional SALTO Resource Centres, will develop and implement a more coherent, coordinated and efficient strategy of training and information on international cooperation matters.

## **4.2. INFORMATION ACTIVITIES**

The Commission will inform relevant stakeholders about its activities related to the European framework of co-operation in the field of youth and the implementation of the Youth in Action Programme. To this end information and communication activities via the relevant information relays will be undertaken. A particular focus will be on informing about the Youth in Action Programme, in close cooperation with National Agencies, the Eurodesk network and other youth information networks.

The National Agencies are important information relays for the Programme. The Eurodesk network is the most suitable network at EU level to inform young people and those who work with them. The National Agencies and the Eurodesks have set up their own information strategies for 2007 in agreement with the Commission. Most of the Eurodesks have their own network of local relays for information to young people. "SALTO Information" will continue the development of YouthNet (virtual cooperation network between agencies) and provide support to information in general.

The European Youth Portal (EYP) will continue to play an important role to inform particularly young people and youth organisations about the Commission's activities in the field of youth. It has been a genuine success since its launch in 2004. Further developments of the EYP are envisaged in 2007, and efforts will be undertaken to promote the new domain name of the EYP in 2007 in close cooperation with the Eurodesk network and the European Youth Forum.

## **4.3. THE EUROPEAN YOUTH WEEK**

As a visible contribution to the Commission's Plan D, and as an integral part of the structured dialogue with young people, a third European Youth Week will be organised in 2007 in cooperation with the National Agencies/SALTO, Eurodesk and the European Youth Forum. Its thematic focus will be on "social inclusion and diversity of young people in the EU". It will further serve to promote and raise awareness of the Youth in Action Programme.

#### **4.4. DISSEMINATION**

In 2007, the Commission will start implementing a valorisation strategy aiming at the systematic dissemination and exploitation of project outcomes. This will be done at European level, but also at national, regional and local level in cooperation with National Agencies.

### **5. TECHNICAL ASPECTS**

#### **5.1. YOUTHLINK AND SYMMETRY**

The information system YouthLink II will be maintained and used by the National Agencies as the main tool for the management of the decentralised Actions. Consequently, besides normal corrective maintenance, this system will also require evolutive maintenance imposed by changing user requirements under the Youth in Action Programme.

Symmetry is the new information system that aims to replace the existing transitory systems for the management of the Programmes of Directorate-General for Education and Culture. This system should be put into production in the course of 2007 for the centralised part of the Programme if the current technical problems are solved.

#### **5.2. INSURANCE**

In view of 2007, the Commission will ensure continuity in terms of insurance cover and services provided under the group insurance plan for participants in European Voluntary Service and assess the need for maintaining an optional insurance plan for participants in youth exchanges.

#### **5.3. EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH PROGRAMME**

In accordance with the YOUTH legal basis (article 13), Member States are requested to submit national reports on the implementation and the impact of the Programme by 30 June 2007. Furthermore, the Commission will carry out an external final evaluation at European level and communicate the evaluation results to the other European institutions by 31 December 2007. The Commission, in consultation with Programme Countries, has elaborated guidelines addressed to the national authorities in all Programme Countries, which shall guide them in carrying out the final evaluation and in drafting the national reports.

#### **5.4. MONITORING OF THE YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME**

The Commission will define, in cooperation with National Agencies, a comprehensive monitoring system, which will build on existing tools and processes and refine them where necessary. A corresponding document will be submitted to the committee.

## 6. ANNEX 1: Comparison of the structure of the two Programmes

|                 | <b>YOUTH 2000-2006</b>   | <b>Youth in Action 2007-2013</b>  |
|-----------------|--|---|
| <b>Action 1</b> | <i>Youth for Europe</i><br>1.1 - Youth for Europe – youth exchanges with Programme Countries<br>1.2 – Youth for Europe – youth exchanges with Partner Countries                            | <i>Youth for Europe</i><br>1.1. Youth for Europe – youth exchanges (former Action 1.1)<br>1.2. Youth initiatives (former Action 3)<br>1.3. Youth democracy projects (new)   |
| <b>Action 2</b> | <i>European Voluntary Service</i><br>2.1 – European Voluntary Service with Programme Countries<br>2.2 – European Voluntary Service with Partner Countries                                  | <i>European Voluntary Service</i> (former Action 2)   |
| <b>Action 3</b> | <i>Youth initiatives</i><br>3.1 – Group initiatives and networking projects<br>3.2 – Future Capital  | <i>Youth in the World</i><br>3.1 Cooperation with the neighbouring countries of the EU (former Actions 1.2 and 5.1.2)<br>3.2 Cooperation with „other Partner Countries of the world“ (new)  |
| <b>Action 4</b> | <i>Joint Actions</i>   | <i>Youth support systems</i><br>4.1 Support for bodies active at European level in the field of youth (new)<br>4.2 support to the European Youth Forum (new)<br>4.3 Training and Networking of those active in youth work and youth organisations, including the Training and Cooperation Plans (former Action 5 – support measures)<br>4.4 Projects encouraging innovation and quality (former Action 5 innovative projects)<br>4.5 Information activities<br>4.6 Partnerships with regional and local authorities (new)<br>4.7 Support for the structures of the Programme (National Agencies, SALTO Resource Centres, Eurodesk, structures of former EVS volunteers)<br>4.8 Adding to the value of the Programme (new) |
| <b>Action 5</b> | <i>Support Measures</i><br>5.1.1. Support Measures with Programme Countries<br>5.1.2. Support Measures with Partner Countries<br>5.1.3. NAs own activities (Training and Cooperation Plan) | <i>Support for youth policy cooperation (new)</i><br>5.1 Meetings of young people and those responsible for youth policy (i.e. Youth presidency seminars and youth seminars)<br>5.2 Support for activities to bring about better understanding and knowledge of the field of youth<br>5.3 Cooperation with international organisations  |

## 7. ANNEX 2: BUDGETARY ASPECTS