

Integrated Strategies for Children and Young People in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods

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Editor:

Regiestelle E&C der Stiftung SPI
Sozialpädagogisches Institut Berlin
"Walter May"

Nazarethkirchstraße 51

DE-13347 Berlin

GERMANY

Telefon: +49 (0)30. 457 986-0

Fax: +49 (0)30. 457 986-50

Internet: www.eundc.de

e-Mail: regiestelle@eundc.de

Contact person/ Editorial:

Antje Klemm

Layout:

MonteVideo Mediadesign

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Foreword

The objectives of the programme platform E&C – social integration, promoting the acquisition of competencies for the future and the promotion of individual responsibility and civic commitment – also have first priority on the European agenda. Furthermore, approaches and tools as recommended by E&C – networking and intersectoral action, local partnerships and participation – play an important role also for the approaches of the European Union. In a lot of European countries outside the EU, too, the development of new municipal and local concepts as a reaction to urban phenomena such as poverty and exclusion have first priority for the improvement of the situation of children and young people.

Although the general national, municipal and local setups are distinctly different, all European towns and communities are facing similar challenges. Therefore a Europe-wide exchange has been organised with the European Conference “Integrated Strategies for Children and Young People in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods” to exchange good practice of social integration of disadvantaged children and young people on the municipal and local level. This shall sharpen the view on innovative integrated strategies of social inclusion beyond national borders, enable learning from each other and contribute to strengthen the social dimension in Europe.

160 participants from 18 countries, mayors of European cities, Parliamentarians and elected members of municipalities, youth researchers and experts of both municipal and youth policies, NGOs, particularly youth associations, youth and social workers, civil servants of German and European municipalities and German and European institutions have come together in Berlin on 23rd to 25th November 2004 to raise their voice about the often difficult living conditions for young people in disadvantaged urban environments. The conference has been initiated and financed by the German Federal Ministry for Families, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth in cooperation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the Directorate for Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe.

Four fields of activities have been defined for this purpose, which are crucial for the sustainable improvement of the situation of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. On the one hand, concepts were addressed of school and education (formal, nonformal, informal), because the acquisition of life skills

substantially determines the future opportunities of children and young people.

Another central challenge and strategic mission for the future is the Europe-wide integration of young migrants, especially in neighbourhoods with a specific demand for development. Here, sustainable concepts of intercultural city and neighbourhood management have been discussed, and how the equal access of young migrants to offers of education and other local services can be guaranteed.

The development and actual implementation of new municipal management strategies and tools, which replace previous patterns of political and administrative solutions, constituted another core issue of the European exchange. This means new and efficient forms of Governance, new forms of cooperation, alliances and networks also with private actors as, for instance, the civic society or the economy. Briefly: strategies and approaches for action in the sense of local capacity building, enabling to combat processes of urban segregation.

The promotion of involvement, participation and civic commitment of young people and their families close to the citizens on the municipal / local level which contribute efficiently to the sustainable urban development and to foster the civil society, constituted the fourth core issue of the European Conference.

Main result of this exchange is a joint declaration the participants concluded. By this means, the organisers hope to initiate a Europe-wide process of transregional learning. This is why there is talk of the “Berlin process/The social city for children and youth”.

Marieluise Beck
Parliamentary State Secretary, German
Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior
Citizens, Women and Youth, Berlin

Opening of the conference: Strategies for improving future opportunities of children and young people in neighbourhoods with special development needs

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the European Professional Conference "Integrated Strategies for Children and Youth in Disadvantaged Urban Areas" as guests of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and those who have joined us in planning this event here in Berlin. Many of you have travelled long distances to be here today. To me, that is proof that in organising this conference we have seized on a pressing topic.

You, the international experts, have come to this conference in order to identify methods that will serve to improve the integration of children and youth in disadvantaged urban areas of Europe. Your knowledge as highly-qualified professionals will thus be included in the debate of today's social problems. The focus of this meeting is to pinpoint concrete strategies for solving poor living conditions of disadvantaged children and youth. The conference is to demonstrate the need for action on all levels of politics and society, because the exclusion of entire social groups has developed into a collective societal issue which transcends national boundaries and must be remedied.

The primary objective is to bring together and connect different approaches, strategies and experiences in Europe for the successful integration of young people and their families in disadvantaged urban areas. We hope to learn from the experience gained in European cities such as Helsinki, Bologna, Budapest, Paris, Amsterdam, Dublin, Eskisehir and Yerevan, and to make the knowledge gained accessible to the wider public. The equal distribution of opportunities and the participation in society for these young people and their families must be brought further into the focus of the public – throughout all of Europe.

Many European cities and communities are encountering the problem of social and spatial segregation processes. Poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion concentrate in so-called socially deprived areas or disadvantaged ur-

ban areas. The opportunities for employment and training are too few, there are too many problems in schools, too much violence and crime, alcohol and drug abuse. The families that can still afford to move away from these quarters do so at the latest when their children enter kindergarten or school. Those that remain are, for the most part, dependent on state support, partly as 2nd and 3rd generation support recipients. The children and youth perceive state support to be a "normal" income source while they are still young. They receive a slanted view of society. They understand early on that they have little or no opportunities to shape their future. This perspective and these examples leave imprints on their social learning patterns.

When speaking of our societies' ability to succeed in the future, we must realize that each young person is crucial. This applies in many European countries and specifically also in Germany for the growing percentage of children and adolescents who have a migrant background. In the meantime, almost one third of all children within the Federal Republic of Germany come from migrant families – in conurbations this figure even reaches up to 40 percent. In many West German cities an over-proportionate number of families with immigrant background live in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. A share of the young people has considerable integration problems. Social indicators reveal how high the deficits in integration are: statistically seen, twice as many men and women who are migrants as opposed to their fellow German citizens are unemployed, they draw on welfare funds three times as often, and considerably larger numbers of them have no career training. The education levels of many adolescents with migrant background are alarmingly poor. This situation is not, however, an ethnic problem but rather first and foremost a social one.

The key for equal opportunity is equality in the spheres of education and participation, precisely for children with immigrant backgrounds. Education opportunities in Germany, however, depend more on the social background of the child than in almost any other country. The education potential of children and adolescents, and in particular those with an immigrant background, has not been exhausted in Germany thus far. Every fifth adolescent with a foreign background drops out of school. What needs to be done is to secure the education opportunities of all young people early, that is, as early as kindergarten and by means of offering all-day day-care. Because a solid foundation is the key. In this sense, programmes are also successful which reinforce family

resources. Promoting language competence is of a particular significance in this context – and this means not only enabling students to learn German, but also their mother tongue since advancements in the second language also depend on the level of the first.

Migration research has defined the central prerequisites for integration processes to be successful: on the one hand, the individual abilities and resources of the immigrants such as language competence and education background are of great import. On the other, a willingness on the part of the host society to facilitate and promote participation opportunities – in the educational system, on the job market, etc – and the cooperation in public and cultural life – by means of providing opportunities which accommodate the concerns specific to immigrants.

Integration is something that takes place in very concrete ways, and on-site – in other words, in the communities and neighbourhoods. If we wish to realise pluralistic societies, then that demands integration concepts at the municipal and local level that safeguard that all services and social institutions are open to the various cultures, and that guarantee equal access to opportunities in terms of language training, education, career training and employment.

The implementation of concrete integration opportunities depends decisively on the commitment of the civil society. The highly integrative power of volunteer dedication should be promoted, for example, by means of giving support to the networks developing. The social environment of young people – the family, kindergarten, school, sports club, immigrant organisations, children and youth services etc. – plays a prominent role where social participation and opportunity are concerned. The main challenge is thus to qualify and network all opportunities oriented towards children and adolescents on-site. Programmes spanning all departments and social spheres can be targeted to improve the circumstances of children and families – especially in densely populated urban areas where poverty is concentrated.

It is clear to the federal government that multi-dimensional problem scenarios in disadvantaged urban areas call for new methods of approach and the collective efforts of all players in the municipality in order to stop and reverse the downwards trend. Thus they place great emphasis on activation and self-help, on linking resources, on connecting small, local networks in an urban area and on larger, city-wide networks of youth, social and job market policies.

The focus points of our ministry, “Alliance for

the Family” and the programme “Development and Opportunities for Young People in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods” (Entwicklung und Chancen junger Menschen in sozialen Brennpunkten – E & C) are defined as follows: it’s about alliances, cooperation, it’s about using the funds available to enhance their impact as to what was given previously. Accomplishing this requires the closely meshed and integrated cooperation of all authorities. This has improved considerably in the past several years – with not just a little help from our programmes such as “The Socially Integrative City” or “Development and Opportunities for Young People in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods”. It is just as important to include the population in the socially deprived areas, to get them to participate and take on active roles. After all, they know better than anyone else which problems are the most pertinent in their area. Without them and their commitment only a very few of the problems could be solved.

I want to provide an example with our programme “Local Capital for Social Purposes” in the disadvantaged urban areas. The programme is financed by funds from the European Social Fund and from our ministry. It counts on individual involvement, and on custom-made measures. It alleviates individual hardship while strengthens the collective body. The people are not merely recipients of benefits or measures, but participate pro-actively, as their own benefactors as it were.

The uniqueness of this programme is given in the combination of education, job placement, vocational qualification, business promotion while strengthening of social coherence, neighbourhoods and families. Everyone in these fields works together: politicians, officials, male and female residents, associations and clubs, large and small companies. The municipalities and counties are the parties responsible for the programme; the funding decisions are made collectively by the participants in the municipal areas concerned. However, since most of these players are more likely to be inexperienced in implementing European subsidy programmes, the municipalities have to establish local co-ordination points that assist and advise in the application procedure for subsidy funds from the European Social Fund. In addition, there is a local action plan that sees to it that smaller projects complement one another and the projects in the alliance achieve more than each individual project could do alone. The local co-ordination offices are provided with support in this context by the head office set up by the Ministry for Children and Youth Affairs. The programme comprises 75 million Euros of ESF funds; by 2006 more than 9,500 micro-projects

will be funded with this amount.

The responsible municipalities and counties have proven that even with "a few pennies" a lot can be accomplished when the funds are invested well. The investments made in humans, in their strengths, in their social coherence in the family and neighbourhood release creative energies, create alliances and partnerships and develop space for new solutions for the social situation and job market.

This is a basic sketch of the background against which a Europe-wide exchange of tried-and-tested practices for socially integrating disadvantaged children and youth on the municipal and local level is organised by means of this conference. It is our desire to hone in on innovative strategies for social inclusion which transcend national boundaries. We intend to provide a contribution to strengthen the social dimension in Europe. Desire and duty are the foundation for what we are calling the "Berlin Process / The Social City for Children and Youth".

When one regards the individual German programmes "The Socially Integrative City" and "Development and Opportunities for Young People in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods" which extend to over 330 areas, it is clear that the framework conditions in social, economic and urban development terms do not portray a unified image of "disadvantaged urban quarters" but rather are very heterogeneous both in terms of the size of the urban quarters and the problems. If we look at all of Europe, a similar picture emerges everywhere. Despite the enormous diversity or perhaps precisely because of it, an exchange of proven concepts and strategies can be an important instrument for mutual learning. I am aware that experience gained in the E & C programme is nothing but one stone besides many in this building process. Strategies and approaches always need to orient themselves to the respective problems and contexts given in each respective municipality or area in order to be effective. Because of this I am delighted that we will have the opportunity at this conference to bring together additional building blocks from many countries all over Europe.

Permit me to briefly address what we will focus on today and tomorrow: In order to structure the exchange of ideas and experiences, I believe there are four fields of actions that are the key for improving the situation of young people and their families in disadvantaged urban areas, and to ensure this is a sustained improvement.

Education Opportunities

The first field of action consists of concepts

for raising and training children and for their education. The access to educational opportunities and possibilities for participating in individually supported educational processes are decisive for the future chances that children and youth will have. The social background, or more precisely, a lack of socio-cultural assets in the home, has the gravest effect. The earlier children have access to education opportunities, the better chances they will have later in life. In this context, in addition to formal learning, the entire area of non-formal and informal learning must be positioned more centrally. We are speaking here of opportunities for early child development, education and vocational training and the transitional phases, for example from school to employment. Particular attention should be given here to the non-formal education opportunities.

Migration

The second central challenge and strategic future task for cities and communities is to integrate children and youth with an immigrant background – especially in disadvantaged urban areas. Integration takes place on-site in the municipalities and in their respective social spaces. Here we are dealing with concepts for promoting a collective intercultural cohabitation, such as, for example, an intercultural urban (area) management plan. Approaches experienced by municipalities versed in integration prove that urban integration policy must be approached from an interdisciplinary perspective. All political measures and programmes need to be regarded with an intercultural orientation and all affected people, both those with a migration background as well as the people that have always lived in the area, have to be included in the participation.

New Municipal Management Strategies and Instruments

The third field of action addresses the development and application of new municipal management strategies and instruments to replace the model of political and administrative methods of addressing problems. Here we are speaking of effective forms of governance, of new local management concepts. Examples are area-based approaches in the English-speaking world, new cooperative relationships, alliances and networks, including private players, for example the civil society or businesses. In this context, significant attention is to be awarded to processes for redesigning social services in the fields of youth, social work and health in order to better reach disadvantaged children, youth and their families.

Participation

The fourth field of action deals exclusively with strategies to promote social involvement, participation and civic engagement of young people and their families at the municipal and local level. Only with the involvement of the people that actually live there will it be possible to achieve a sustained positive urban development. The civil society can only be reinforced with the active contribution of the affected individuals. The White Paper "A New Impetus for European Youth" and the "European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life" emphasise that the participation and integration of children and young people begins at the municipal and local level. We have to succeed in answering the question: how can participation and engagement of disadvantaged young people be promoted where they are, in their municipality? With what methods and approaches can I assist these young people to feel comfortable articulating their opinion, to engage socially, to get involved? I am very much looking forward to hear your experiences and discussion contributions concerning these fields of action. Your knowledge and ideas are indispensable for improving the situation, especially that of children and youth in these urban areas.

In conclusion I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the co-planners of this event for their dedication to this conference and their great commitment. The idea of holding this event was born with the help of the Council of Europe, to be more specific: with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the Council of Europe's Directorate of Youth and Sport. With the "European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life" the Council of Europe determined the active participation of young people in their municipalities as being essential for a democratic society and with this action has laid an important cornerstone for the participation process of young people. Thanks to the involvement of the Council of Europe, which currently counts 46 nations as its members, we are able to welcome many participants from countries outside of the European Union. This enormous diversity of experiences, perspectives and ideas represents an incredible asset to us, and we should make the best possible use of it today and tomorrow.

I am also particularly pleased that the European Commission is represented here and will be involved in the discussion. The White Paper published in 2001, "A New Impetus for European Youth" defines youth-related policy as interdisciplinary policy and demands that the concerns of young people, in particular

disadvantaged individuals, be considered in all initiative and policy fields. The "Decision on Social Integration and Youth" finalised by the Council of the European Union in May of 2004 states as an essential requirement "to be accountable for the particular needs of youth from disadvantaged social areas."

An integrated children and youth policy will be a co-productive policy, the results of which will be measured against the improvement of living conditions, the ensuring of equal access for all young people to opportunities in education, employment, leisure, public life, a suitable living environment and a safe, peaceful life without fear of discrimination and violence due to any form of "being different." Thank you for energetically supporting us in this project and I look forward to exciting and enlightening discussions.

Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren,
Frauen und Jugend
Pressestelle
Alexanderplatz 6
10178 Berlin
Telefon 01888-555-1061
Telefax 01888-555-1111
E-Mail presse@bmfsfj.bund.de

Ulrich Bohner, Chief Executive of Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg

Importance of municipal and local strategies for the social inclusion of young people in Europe

Let me first say a few words on our Organisation that is a partner of this week's event. My colleague René Weingartner will say a few words on our Organisation as such, the Council of Europe, that stands since 1949 for human rights and democracy.

In our view, pluralist democracy includes democracy at local and regional level. That is why the Council of Europe has created, 10 years ago, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, representing local and regional elected politicians from our 46 members States.

Whilst congratulating the Federal Ministry for Family, Senior people, Women and Youth on the timely initiative for this Conference, and thanking our friends from the Council of Europe Youth structures for their active involvement, I want to stress that the municipalities that we represent are at the forefront of the fight for a decent future for the younger generation in socially deprived areas.

It is precisely for that reason that the Ministry has created the programme "Development and Opportunities for Young People in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods" (Entwicklung und Chancen junger Menschen in sozialen Brennpunkten – E & C) that is run with over 330 neighbourhoods in German cities, and that is the basis for the European exchange of experiences and practices that we are holding here in Berlin over the next 2 days.

In a convoy, it is always the slowest ship that determines the speed of all. The degree of freedom and wealth of a country can only be measured when you take into account not only the most advanced but also the most deprived group. This is why our topic of today, the chances of young people and children in deprived urban areas, is so important not only for these groups or areas, but for our societies as a whole.

Addressing the issue of the integration of young people in deprived urban areas and dealing with disadvantaged neighbourhoods is not an easy task. But unless we are able to develop solutions to this complex issue, our societies will suffer from major shortcomings, disruptions, conflicts, some of which can already be observed today. However, let us first have a

look at certain notions:

First of all, one needs to have a clear understanding of the meaning of the word "integrate" to the people concerned and to the audience.

The responsibility borne by each of the partners or players involved in this integration (such as national governments, local authorities, voluntary organisations, mediators, families and also the young people and children concerned) and the different approaches and decisions are an ongoing process.

The concept of partnership, giving increased responsibility to the actors and empowerment to the persons concerned is increasingly put forward as a solution to restore a more balanced relation between the people concerned (those who suffer from social and economic inequalities) and the "other" part of society

This is indeed a complex phenomenon, including the issue of urban "ghettos". Here we find dilapidated housing – often the only housing available to immigrants, many single-parent families, many unskilled or unemployed people. Some urban renewal schemes in cities have led to displacements of people who do not have a sufficient income enabling them to afford decent housing conditions.

Divisions have thus emerged between "difficult" neighbourhoods and the rest of the city: they manifest themselves through "invisible walls" of fear and distrust which frequently take the form of visual violence such as gestures, words and actions from both sides. The young people of these neighbourhoods, especially boys, are both perpetrators and victims of this "visible" form of violence.

To break down these "invisible walls" you have to assert yourself and violence is often perceived as a means of achieving this. But there are also other, less discussed forms of violence (for example sexual violence or intimidation) inflicted on girls. It exists, but it is ignored, all too often.

This phenomenon of spatial divisions is less noticeable in the so-called countries in transition, but the privatisation of housing and the widening gap between the rich and the poor are likely to lead cities of central and eastern Europe towards the same direction.

Existing urban enclaves in cities such as Sofia, Bucharest and Prague are often identified as neighbourhoods largely and sometimes exclusively inhabited by specific vulnerable groups such as Roma. Equally the phenomenon of abandoned "street children" is far from being resolved.

The facts are clear: violence is increasing,

especially among young people, in countries where the economic transition has weakened institutions and thrown whole families into poverty, leaving them disoriented and often without real prospects for the future.

As the United Nations statistics show, however, the figures are becoming equally alarming in countries of the European Union: the number of young people convicted between 1995 and 1997 in England and Wales is as high as that in Russia. Germany has the second-highest youth crime rate among the European Union countries.

However, there is still disagreement among political, institutional leaders and analysts over the relative importance of the root causes of this increasing violence.

Individual factors such as the influence of biological and psychological characteristics on innate or acquired personality traits, or relational factors, such as the influence of the family, are often given priority when developing strategies to tackle the phenomenon. Societal factors such as income inequalities, poor vocational skills, the lack of regular, decently paid employment are too often neglected in these strategies.

This is especially alarming considering the discrepancy between the promises of success offered by international marketing or advancement through education and the growing precariousness of everyday existence. Combined with the increasingly obvious inequalities of status and opportunities between neighbouring areas, this phenomenon contributes to generate feelings of anger or even hatred among young people and thus engenders outbreaks of violence in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

We should by all means avoid stigmatisation, creating stereotypes.

However, luckily not all young people in disadvantaged urban areas, and not all poor people automatically resort to violent behaviour.

What triggers violence is the breakdown of bonds of social trust, the loss of a sense of identity and dignity, of shared values and community, and the lack of prospects for the future that could help to overcome such an unsatisfactory and difficult situation.

Looking at the various national strategies to combat youth violence and promote integration, which should not be confused with assimilation, we often find ourselves torn between "targeted" integration policies and "law and order" policies, placing particular emphasis on the offences committed and sometimes tending to create confusion between delinquency, individual responsibility and social phenomena.

The social environment should not serve as

an excuse for the use of violence, but must assist political decision-makers to understand the problems of the deadlock young people are faced with in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. The future of these young people is often deprived of any realistic perspective of joining a process which could allow them to become an integral part of society.

The key issue is: first to understand before condemning outbreaks of violence and following the logic of repression. Repression will not help to fight the root causes many young people are confronted with. Repression should only be used if all other policy instruments have been used and have not been successful in deescalating violent behaviour, as a kind of "ultima ratio" of public policies.

We need a so-called "integrated approach" combining means and efforts at all levels of society. This "all inclusive approach" is the only hope towards integration of large numbers of young people in what we can hopefully still consider as "normal" society.

Two distinctive approaches have been applied so far in some European States:

- "Youth crime prevention" approaches and "urban renewal" approaches
- "Youth crime prevention" approaches.

Approaches based on "employment insertion" or "ownership" of initiatives in the private sector (to propose a way out of public space, often the only space made available to young people from deprived neighbourhoods), is sometimes badly perceived by the young people themselves, as often the public authorities impose certain structures and activities which have been elaborated and set up without direct involvement of the young people concerned by the projects.

"Urban renewal" approaches

In the UK a so-called "targeted" policy for "urban regeneration" was adopted in the early 1990s. This policy combines actions in the fields of social housing, health care and crime prevention with those of educational achievement and employment. The strategy tried to cope with the influence of "gangs", erosion of social networks, socio-economical changes, and the changing role of the family.

While showing the difficulty of building a real coherent strategy for addressing such a complex issue, the approaches illustrate a series of initiatives taken at European level to incorporate significant elements in terms of dialogue, recognition of identities and mediation of conflicts.

Although these approaches are necessary they are likely to be insufficient until a convincing solution is found to the central dilemma:

What is the place of disaffiliated, disadvantaged youth in our contemporary society?

The stakes are very high in terms of cohesion, equality and democracy:

Citizenship cannot be founded on social uselessness.

This is a fundamental social issue: it concerns the pillars by which European societies will have to be underpinned in the future.

We cannot develop a sense of belonging, when nothing belongs to us, and no democratic exercise is possible without a sense of belonging.

It is our task to offer young people a perspective allowing them to feel as part of our common society. The Conference we are organising jointly here in Berlin will offer an occasion to exchange on good practices to develop such policies.

The results of the last elections in France show, for example, that the rate of abstention in disadvantaged neighbourhoods is at least 20% higher than the average.

Responsibility goes hand in hand with ownership. Being part of a community where personal commitment and contributions are taken into account replaces the feeling of uselessness and the fear of becoming a marginal element of society, having no impact on the development of that society.

We have to review, in the light of these questions, our approaches within the educational systems that leave the individual alone to fight for self-affirmation. Without helping the persons concerned to qualify for programmes and activities, people from disadvantaged areas often perceive them as being miles away from their everyday life and completely inaccessible. These efforts must start, as early as possible, with what we call "kitas" in Germany or kindergartens in England.

To help us find our way through this complex phenomena I would like to invite you to have a closer look at a comparative analysis of integration policies carried out in six European cities: Amsterdam, Barcelona, London, Naples, Moscow and Sofia, at the initiative of the Council of Europe's General Directorate on Social Cohesion.

I hope these findings will be a source of inspiration for our future work, providing "food for thought" so that we can pool our resources and experiences together for the benefit of those vulnerable groups which are eager to find their way out of the deadlock they feel they are trapped in, and become actors, rather than spectators, who can contribute to the development of the society they live in.

I would like us to consider a few points which could be seen as a common denominator in

the fight against exclusion:

- overhaul the social action system by networking all local resources to combat exclusion;
- establish at local level, mechanisms and practices of consultation and co-ordination between the different parties in order to make best use of existing synergies and gain a better knowledge of local needs and resources available;
- develop a close interactive relationship between the social action network and the social environment from which these young people originate, in other words strengthen social bonds with and within the community whose support the project requires;
- seek to reconcile the culture and the value system of those involved in the social action network, which they are attempting to pass on, and the culture and the experience of these young people.
- opt for an area-based approach implying that social action recognises the area's development potential and accepts the specific identity, culture and habits of the area's inhabitants.

This means abandoning the idea of integration as a more or less authoritarian process aiming at a change of identity, in favour of the idea of social construction within a community by giving it the ownership of the process toward integration so that youngsters themselves may feel able to take their destiny in their own hands.

To accept that the issue of integration of young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods should be a complex, cross-sector issue calling for a questioning of theories as there are no ready-made solutions or miracle practices.

We must embark on a process of trial and error where practice fuels theory, and theory in return must help improve practice;

To attach greater importance to the handling of human resources within the social action network and encourage the provision of suitable areas for training, conflict management and psychological support for the various parties involved.

Our President, Giovanni Di Stasi, as an Italian politician, would have liked to present the experience which was successfully carried out in his country, in Naples, the so-called "Chance Project", "a second chance at school".

If time permits, I would like to refer to this case study conducted by Prof. Frédéric Lapeyre, Catholic University of Louvain, which illustrates in a very convincing way a pattern to be followed in order to implement successfully a specific project for the benefit of children and young people in disadvantaged neighbour-

hoods.

First, I will set the context of this particular initiative.

The story starts with the murder of a 14 year-old school drop-out in a Comorrist revenge killing, based on the widespread feeling in Naples that "the murder had to be done" by these young people in deprived areas who themselves were the primary victims of local violence.

This event triggered off a real willingness to pull forces together not to continue "business as usual", but try and operate a kind of breakthrough of this vicious cycle.

This new public awareness, which was extensively covered by the local and national press, was in line with the work being carried out on the ground by the one and only "street teacher" in Naples.

At the request of the Naples Department of Education, this teacher was already co-operating, in the framework of the so-called "Spanish Quarter Association", with other colleagues and the Spanish Quarter network to endeavour to make more widespread use of his practical experience.

The "Chance Project" stemmed more specifically from an initiative launched by two teachers in Naples, Marco-Rossi Doria and Angela Villani, who had years of experience with teenagers at risk.

The idea was to initiate a project aimed at rehabilitating young school drop-outs from three different highly deprived neighbourhoods with high concentrations of socio-economic problems and drop-out rates four times higher than the average rate for Naples, which is already much higher than the national average.

The plan was to combine all resources from the different institutions involved in social action and bring together all the various actors from the areas chosen, to provide a second chance to young school drop-outs from extremely deprived neighbourhoods.

The time was ripe for launching such a project. Naples had a left wing Mayor who had committed himself to combating the socio-economic degradation affecting the City, and above all, the Italian Government was in the process of adopting Law No. 285/1997, earmarking a large budget for projects concerning children and young people.

In the words of Marco Rossi-Doria: " We contacted Minister Livia Turco's team two or three months before the adoption of the Law and proposed the Chance Project as a means of operationalising the new text.

They found that the Project fitted perfectly into this piece of legislation which dealt with the rights of all children and teenagers and

therefore endeavoured to promote this type of scheme by decentralising resources to the municipal level."

The project was also among the few to be monitored at national level thanks to the agency for children's and young people's rights at the "Innocenti Institute" in Florence. Lastly, after three years of operations, this agency assessed the project, whereupon the Ministry of Social Affairs incorporated it into its Action Plan against poverty and notified the European Commission of its existence as an example of good national practice.

The Chance Project has two main organisational features:

Firstly it is designed on the basis of three territorial modules operating in three extremely deprived areas (one in the historic centre and two in the outskirts of Naples) with exceptionally high school absenteeism and drop-out rates and where families are in very difficult socio-economic situations. These are the Spanish Quarter, the San Giovanni-Barra area and the Soccavo neighbourhood;

Secondly this is a Project based on partnership between the teachers concerned, the Naples Department of Education, the Municipality, the Psychology Faculty of Federico II University, youth workers, local craft workers and the families in question. All these parties co-operate in coping with the huge and complex problem affecting teenagers involved in the Chance Project, working alongside the youngsters for the success of the educational project.

The Chance Project goes far beyond the explicit aim of helping these youngsters to obtain a certificate by means of innovative courses or merely keeping them in education until legal school-leaving age.

The great strength of this Project is that it enters into the youngsters' own specific logic, carrying out an ongoing process of cognition interpretation and comprehension.

The objective of the Chance Project is to win their confidence, to show them that people are reaching out and listening to them and looking after their interests with a view to changing their lives for the better.

In my view the success in establishing constructive dialogue with young persons depends on the ability to incorporate into the educational approach their anxieties of having to face extreme living conditions not only in their neighbourhoods but also in their family units.

Concerning the working method applied with respect to this particular project I want to underline the "inclusive approach" method used.

The Chance Project used files from the social

services as the basis for selecting teenagers eligible for "a second chance at school".

The introductory phase is one of the Project's most innovative contributions compared with the conventional school.

It is based on linking up the school, police, social workers and families, to provide the young school drop-outs with a network prompting them to freely subscribe to an original type of educational contact with a school specially tailored for this task.

One of the reasons for the success of "Chance" in securing the youngster's loyalty is precisely that it forges these essential links between students, teachers and youth workers.

This explains the low teacher-student ratio of five to one, which enables the youngsters to maintain a relationship with a more accessible, open and stable reference adult.

Some results achieved to be kept in mind when trying to promote strategies for successful local and social inclusion.

The families were able to see the practical results of the path followed by children in the Chance Project and realised that there was a genuine institutional interest in securing a better future for their children. An important dimension was to associate the families in a way that made them part of the process of developing a sense of responsibility among them. Some families still experience difficulty and demand great attention, but there are signs of a growing interest on their part in the aims of a project they can trust.

On the other hand, the youngsters participating in the project have also realised that there are adults who are prepared to spend time with them, positive reference figures on whom they can rely, who are willing to listen to them and will try to help them solve their problems.

One of the results is the favourable reports on the project which circulate by word of mouth in the quarters concerned. At the beginning nobody in the area knew about the project, but now families look for teachers to find out whether they can enrol their children in the project and pupils ask if their cousins can join.

This whole project is all about credibility, a credential that is requested more and more by our citizens. At local level, politicians still have the opportunity to have direct contact with the needs expressed by the people or young person in the streets of our cities.

But we all know that without means, good ideas and concepts cannot be put into practice.

Motivation, expertise based on good practice, backed by financial and human resources is the mixture required to make progress for the sake of the citizen as individuals, but also for society

as a whole.

Investments, even limited financial and human resources, are investments for a more cohesive society, which provides us all with more stability with respect to urban security, economic development, based on skilled human resources, which is needed to win the battle for a better future.

A review of the first few years of the Chance Project shows not only an acceptable school attendance rate, but also a significant reduction in both the frequency and the seriousness of violent acts.

Another of the project's successes is that it changes the youngsters' self-perception and the perception that their parents have of them.

They gradually realise that they are able to do things they believed they were unable of doing.

This is essential to create stronger social bonds.

Lastly, the aim of rooting the project in the local area and developing synergies between resources also seems to have been achieved.

- firstly, via its participation in an inter-institutional social action network to respond more effectively to the complexity of the social problems which arise.

But this is not always easy, and various parties involved in social action have stressed the constant effort that needs to be made to operate the network, increase co-ordination and co-operation and defuse open or latent conflicts.

One example of this is the fact that the "Chance" premises were located within a traditional school structure. This was bound to create a conflict because parents were not pleased to see these disadvantaged youngsters come into contact with their own children and the risk of violence that this might entail.

But through dialogue and mediation the situation has returned to normal and a more dispassionate climate has been created as the families realised that the project is instrumented to rescue these difficult youngsters;

- secondly, as we have already seen, through its active presence in the living environment of the youngsters participating in the Chance Project. The choice of this area-based approach is crucial because it means recognition of the potential for the development in the local area and acceptance of the specific identity, culture and rituals of a specific quarter, the so-called Spanish Quarter. It means giving up the idea of integration as an almost authoritarian process in change

of identity to favour social construction within a community giving that community greater control over its own destiny.

I am convinced that we need direct involvement and the participation of young people in "community affairs" in order to enable them to live fully rather than simply exist within their municipality or region.

Concern about decisions taken can only be secured if participation in the decision-making process is possible. It is an essential condition for young people if they really want to live together and play an active role in social change in their street, neighbourhood, municipality or region.

In the same spirit, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe has adopted, in May last year, on the basis of a common work with the Council of Europe Youth organs, and in particular the joint Youth Council, a revised European Charter on the participation of young people in local and regional life, after a first attempt, 10 years ago. A more user and youthfriendly version of this text is also being prepared. I am happy to inform you that, last week, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe's 46 member States has approved this Charter which is in your papers in the form of a Recommendation to Governments of member States. A guide on good practices on the theme of youth and participation is also being prepared.

The European Charter on Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life is not aimed to constitute an exhaustive list of measures allowing young people to live together in greater harmony.

It simply lays down some guiding principles to make it easier for young people to take part in decisions affecting them.

Thus, by discussing problems and taking action with young people – and not just for them – local and regional elected representatives and decision-makers will genuinely enable young people not only to stand back and think more clearly about their everyday life but also to become full citizens within their municipality or region.

The Congress representing the elected members of local government, we are particularly interested in fostering institutional links, structures enabling the participation of young people in local and regional life.

I would like to outline some of the principles laid down in our Charter to create the necessary conditions for such participation.

- In order to carry out these sectoral policies, local and regional authorities undertake to optimise the institutional conditions gover-

ning the participation of young people in the decisions and debates affecting them.

- The institutional conditions governing participation are embodied in structures which may take on different forms in an urban neighbourhood, a town, a village or even a region. These structures should enable young people and their representatives to be full partners in the policies affecting them.

- Partnership arrangements, which are one means whereby young people can make themselves heard and improve their role and status in the community, are an essential key to the practical application of this charter on the participation of young people in community life.

The designation of a "youth delegate" could help to create the necessary link to connect young people and decision-makers at various levels.

- If young people are actually to be represented on municipal and regional bodies, there should be a post of "youth delegate" within the local or regional authority.

- Where this practice is not institutionalised, local and regional authorities undertake to consider, within the framework of the local legislation currently in force, ways of creating such a post, which should be held by a young person appointed, for example, on a proposal from associations.

- During a fixed term of office, he or she would assist the municipal department responsible for youth affairs, see to the consistency of youth policy objectives and coordinate decisions affecting young people.

- Aware of the social and cultural changes taking place in a community, a neighbourhood or village, young people should assume direct responsibility for projects and play an active part in the related policies, in particular by the creation of a municipal youth council.

- Young people are elected to these councils on the basis of sociological realities in the municipalities concerned, including neighbourhood youth groups, youth associations and organisations, youth centres and community centres, and schools.

On the basis of a budget allocated by the local or regional authorities, these youth councils operate in four ways::

1. they monitor the needs and aspirations of young people and analyse the problems raised, such as housing, town planning, leisure activities, cultural facilities;
2. they study the feasibility of projects in conjunction with experts, local elected representatives and civil servants on sub-com-

- mittees;
3. they draw up budgets and take and implement decisions;;
 4. they monitor the results.

By giving young people the opportunity to speak on the problems affecting them, they provide training in democratic life and the management of public affairs.

I could of course go on to quote more guiding principles of the "European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life", but the purpose of this exercise is to show you that we already have valuable tools at our disposal.

Some are not as well known as others, but the purpose of our gathering here today, is to extend our knowledge about instruments to be used and to help young people to overcome the difficulties they are facing in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

We all know that tools can not replace the will of political decision-makers to use them.

Our task, here and now, is to show that the efficiency of those tools should encourage politicians at all levels to make more use of them. As the examples of "good practices" show, such tools have proven to be operational and beneficial.

We need to go from theory to practice.

Integration through increased and stronger participation is to be understood as an offer to those who would like to find their way through a complex society in which they have their place and where they are welcomed as a fully recognised part of the society they are living in.

I would like to share with you another experience of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe in respect of young people of immigrant origin in towns and regions and how to encourage them to participate at the local and regional level.

On the occasion of the Congress Session in May 2004, we adopted Resolution 181 (2004) on "A pact for the integration and participation of people of immigrant origin in Europe's towns, cities and regions".

I want to highlight a few principles to be kept in mind when defining "Integrated Strategies for Children and Young People in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods".

I think we all agree that there is a need for increased co-operation between all levels of government to define a coherent framework for legal and orderly immigration, while effectively combating illegal immigration that encourages trafficking in, and exploitation of, human beings.

I am convinced that we have to present to

the public a different vision of what migration entails and the opportunities which derive from migrations.

We have to change the negative pattern of the perception of large parts of the public and of many political decision makers.

We should make it very clear that migratory flows foster the diversity and the vitality of our cities and bring clear advantages to be identified in terms of demographic, economic and cultural spheres. These advantages go hand in hand with the capacity and the political willingness to take up challenges in terms of integrating of the individuals concerned and ensuring the harmonious co-existence of different cultural and religious groups in European societies.

We all are convinced that the integration of people of immigrant origin, often grouped in disadvantaged urban areas, is a shared responsibility that demands national and European solidarity to enable the local and regional players most affected by migration flows to perform.

I believe that integration programmes must be aimed both at the effective integration of people of immigrant origin already settled and wishing to remain in the local and regional frame as well as at putting in place specific measures for the integration of new arrivals.

I want to go one step further, I believe that equal opportunities for young people, with an immigration background, but living now in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, can only be achieved through positive discrimination measures in a series of specific areas, which demand adequate human and financial resources.

It is necessary to assign high political priority to these issues and involve all players at local level in a genuine "pact for integration", while implementing a policy of intensive communication on the matter with all residents. On the basis of these exchanges, a network of cities having established "Councils of Foreigners" has been established, and we have just issued a guide book with "good practices" on this work, drawing on the experiences from 24 European countries. It is an coincidence that this network is meeting tomorrow in Stuttgart where we have started this work 2 years ago. I am certain that those interested in the network can join in for later activities. The question of "access of migrants to social rights" should indeed remain an important topic on the agenda of the Congress's "Social Cohesion Committee".

Only if an adequate national or European legal frame is provided by the authorities, if corresponding means are made available and put

at the disposal of the competent authorities at local level or regional level, the combination of financial and human resources, good will and motivation, expertise and skills are made available, a difference can be made, only then we do have a realistic chance to make substantial progress for the benefit of the young people concerned and society as a whole.

We all have to strive towards an increased political awareness and a favourable political environment in our cities and countries. We need to pull our forces together, to combine all available resources to achieve our common goal in order to come closer to a more democratic and a more cohesive society from which all our children and all our young people will benefit.

They are our future, investing in them is the only relevant investment to secure the future of our societies.

Dr. Ralf-René Weingärtner,
Director of DG of Youth and Sport, Council of Europe, Strasbourg

The Most Important Developmental Steps made by the Council of Europe in the Fields of Youth and Sport

The Youth Sector

The Roots of a European Policy for Youth-Related Topics (1960-1970)

Whenever the Council of Europe turned to the topic of youth and youth policies in the sixties, this occurred in conjunction with specific issues. From the beginning onwards, the youth of Europe were the subject of particular attention of all those parties who, during the years subsequent to the Second World War, were engaged with the establishment of a new Europe conscious of its collective history and fate and based on an ethics of human rights. Since then, governments as well as parliaments concur with the assessment that all youth policies can and must hinge on promoting youth organisations which are recognised as a privileged forum for encouraging a democratic participation of young people and, by means of their diversity and independence, create reliable conditions in order to impede any sort of governmental patronisation of youth. At the start of the sixties, the Council for Cultural Cooperation considered it necessary to set a dynamic process in motion, based on and incorporating the heart of European youth, in which, together with the youth organisations, campaigns as well as special meetings, youth exchange programs and internships were implemented focusing on the participation and initiative of young people in social and cultural life. With the support of the Council for Cultural Cooperation, the foundation for the work of an experimental youth centre was laid in the Alsatian city of Obernai. Thanks to the Council of Europe, by means of youth exchange programs and international meetings between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in youth social work, they succeeded in connecting a network of relationships between the youth of east and west Europe and creating initial approaches for a cooperation based on trust between western governmental representatives and European youth organisations. Taking up the dialogue with youth organisations was the quasi-natural path to achieving this objective.

Just a few years later the European govern-

ments were confronted with the youth-induced crisis of 1968 which shook the foundations of the social model of post-war Europe. Since 1968 two parliamentary debates have taken place parallel to one another, one in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the other in the Assembly of the European Economic Community (to which the European Parliament was the successor in 1979). The topic in both was the same: "youth in crisis". Similar terms were used to broach the topic in both assemblies: the necessity of including young people more significantly in the establishment of a democratic Europe. Doing this, as if the establishment of a democratic Europe was a legacy of the post-war generation to the following generation. The Council of Europe was concerned with defending the western idea of human rights and democracy; for the European Community it was the desire to ensure the dispersion of the idea of a united Europe and the future expansion of the Community. In the final statement of the 1969 Hague Summit, the state and governmental heads declared the following: "the establishment of a united Europe will only be able to be realised when we succeed in achieving the closer cooperation and participation of the youth in this process."

Based on the experiences in Obernai and the trusting relationships made with the youth organisations, the Council of Europe, as a logical consequence, now began to initiate its own independent European youth policy. In 1970 the European Youth Centre (EYC) was founded in Strasbourg and two years later, the European Youth Foundation (EYF).

Since this time, the EYC has been a site of congress and education, unique in all of Europe, in the context of which the youth organisations can concretely work for the establishment of a joint Europe, contribute to the work of the Council of Europe, analyse problems typical for youth and collect experiences by means of intercultural learning. For its part, the EYF provides the financial support for the multinational activities of youth which are suitable for promoting peace and international understanding in Europe and the world. Due to its special status within the Council of Europe, the European Youth Foundation plays a pioneering role in the promotion of youth exchange between the two political "blocks."

Thus, the participation of youth forms the objective and contents of the activities of the EYC and the EYF. However, the innovative approach extends beyond this by means of the system of co-management which characterises the administrations of both institutions according to which the representatives of governments and youth organisations share the au-

thority to make decisions. The reference to the system of co-management would later develop into a constant of youth policy for the Council of Europe. Even today it serves as a model for the development of youth policy approaches whose basic concern is to help young people develop into active citizens of democratic societies.

From this point onwards the Council of Europe's framework of action has continued to develop without interruption. In 1985 it was the Council of Europe that called into life the first conference of ministers responsible for youth policy and, in 1995, created a second European Youth Centre in Budapest. Today there are more than 200 organisations and European youth networks that regularly cooperate with the centres and the foundations of the Council of Europe as well as close to 10,000 youth information disseminators (with responsibilities within their respective organisation) which participate every year in events within the context of these establishments. Overall, since 1971 more than 300,000 young people have expanded their awareness of European topics and values and increased their knowledge.

Initial New Approaches for a European Youth Policy (1974-1989)

As much as the image of youth during the sixties and seventies was characterised by the concept of a generation in turmoil, objecting to society, this image changed radically from the middle of the seventies onwards in the context of the economic crisis which had been developing since the first oil price shock in 1974 and continued more or less persistently until the end of the nineties, or even, extending beyond them until today. This crisis, characterised especially by unemployment and social fractures, has gradually had a profound impact on the youth as well. New forms of protest and the mobilisation of young people continue to grow thereby altering the very fabric of youth organisations. This fracture in socialisation leads to a new way of addressing questions and problems relating to youth. The primary goal was no longer encouraging the youth to participate in society, but rather, if not to integrate then at least to include them. The national policies were reoriented to the goal of social integration and placed pressure at the European level in order to advance youth policy at this level.

At the same time as the difficulties connected to the economic crisis, the desires and goals of young people also changed, in which context two phenomena are to be observed: the so-called traditional youth organisations lost their drive and the youth became subject to strong cultural and leisure demands which

proved detrimental to their earlier engagement in politics and unions. Logically, the countries adjust their actions to these new conditions as well as to the concerns resulting from the occupational and social integration of the youth and break with the most significant tendencies of the late sixties which were characterised by striving towards an independent development of youth associations and alliances.

During this time the Council of Europe reached the decision to create an intergovernmental entity; this occurred in 1982 with the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts on Youth Questions (CAHJE, Comité ad hoc pour les questions de jeunesse). Over the course of time, the intergovernmental aspect stabilised itself with the introduction of a series of conferences of the ministers responsible for youth policies (starting in 1985) and transformed the CAHJE into the Steering Committee for Intergovernmental Co-operation in the Youth Field (CDEJ, Comité Directeur Européen pour la Coopération Intergouvernementale dans le domaine de la Jeunesse) in 1988. From this point in time the high-ranking officials acted as the initiators of far-reaching changes in youth policy of the Council of Europe: while the institutional participation of youth in the making of decisions and administration of financial resources and programs is maintained, the Council of Europe itself engages increasingly in the active political field by developing instruments to promote mobility and social integration. Included in the topics to which priority was accorded in the context of the intergovernmental exchange was the fight against youth unemployment with the aid of policies based more strongly in local reality as well as experimenting with new forms of cooperative living – in which context more focus is put on the pragmatic rather than the ideological aspect and these forms are of individual and transient nature rather than manifesting themselves in the context of organised movements.

In this connection the participation no longer restricted itself to institutional and decision-making cooperation. It is a form in which democracy can be lived out and simultaneously affects the working world, residential matters, leisure time, education and social relationships. For example, in this sense an initial reform of the co-management structures occurred in 1988 in the youth sector of the Council of Europe which was to prepare the way for the participation of new partners and youth representation “not organised in the traditional form.”

An Expanded Europe in an Increasingly Globalised World – What Guarantees the Stability and Cohesion of our Societies? (1989-2004)

The fall of the Berlin Wall in November of 1989 changed the situation of Europe in one abrupt blow. After the end of the Cold War the model represented by the Council of Europe no longer represented the alternative to a non-democratic society structure but rather formed a framework for learning and experimenting with democracy and human rights. New challenges presented themselves with the advancing integration of the nations of central and east Europe. Within a time period of hardly more than ten years, the Council grew from twenty-one to forty-five members.

At the same time these revolutions were taking place, the events of the eighties and nineties in particular upset the concept according to which economic advancements always entail social advancements which in turn lead to social justice. Young people who turned twenty in 1990 had experienced nothing other than social and political upheaval. The idea of a universal ascent of the social ladder had become a vision of the past.

When, however, young people are confronted with problems they are not all of the same sort. In addition to the diverse situations within western Europe, now the problems in the nations of central and eastern Europe were at issue. It is evident today that the collective term of "European youth" has nothing to do with the social reality. The problems of youth policy are noticeably more complex. The Council of Europe will orient its youth-related policies very clearly towards the nations of central and eastern Europe and fundamentally reform its programs and structures in the field of youth policy. The necessary development of democratic structures in central and eastern Europe, taking the desires and goals of youth in these parts of our continent into consideration, the mobility of youth and the development of political measures for youth on-site are included in the essential challenges. Subsequent to the 3rd Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth in Lisbon in September of 1990, which prepared the corresponding proposals, the Ministerial Committee decided in 1993 to establish an additional European Youth Centre in Budapest. The centre forms a considerable component of the Council of Europe's work in the youth sector and was opened officially in 1995. It follows the same rules and has the same pedagogic tasks as the centre in Strasbourg and according to the statements of the Ministerial Committee, represents "an important opportunity for the Council of Europe to contribute to the democratisation process of

the nations of central and eastern Europe."

In this context, since 1989 the youth sector has been undergoing developments with the help of special programs that are implemented within the framework of the overall program of the Council of Europe as well as by means of various training sessions and options for technical assistance which are oriented towards the development of structures and youth policy in the various nations of central and eastern Europe.

In light of these new challenges as well as the development of the European youth policies the question inevitably arises of how the structures of the Council of Europe's youth work are to be adjusted to these changes. It was not until 1999 that, in a second fundamental reform, the Council of Europe drew up the outline for the structuring of today's youth sector. The European Youth Centres no longer merely have the character of an educational establishment, instead they also make accessible a pool of knowledge and source material on the topic of youth and the policies in this area.

Naturally, in the course of time, the expansion of Europe comparably affected both the Council of Europe and the European Union, which is likewise engaged in the development of youth policy. Both institutions represent the same fundamental values, but do not have access to the same funds for their implementation. Since the beginning of the eighties the Commission has initiated a number of programs for youth (exchanges and congresses); the Council of Europe has, in turn, access to long-term experience for the training of youth leaders and professionals in youth work. A cooperative work thus went hand in hand. In 1998 the two institutions signed an initial partnership agreement which described a joint training program for youth social workers. A second joint agreement on research in the youth field as well as a third on the cooperation in the European Mediterranean area followed in 2003. Today the partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission is a model project in every aspect and the prospects for a further cooperation in this respect are very promising. Recently the European Commission has also been involved in the preparation and implementation of a project of the Council of Europe for the creation of a European portfolio for youth directors and youth social workers in the context of informal continued education, a topic in which both partners work together closely in order to promote, in particular, the recognition and validation of these continued education measures.

In the course of the nineties as well as today and especially in the course of the European

expansion, it is necessary that Europe deal with its demons – long-believed to be dead. In light of a constantly increasing intolerance, newly aroused conflicts in certain areas of Europe and the extremist and fundamentalist currents which continue to grow stronger, the principles of the Council of Europe gain more than ever in importance and are perceived by many young people as the only effective protection against risking a loss of stability and social cohesion in European societies.

In 1994, in the context of the youth campaign against racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance which was jointly organised by the cooperation partners of the youth sector, 1200 young people from all the nations of Europe, arriving in special trains whose names reflected the topics of the campaign, met together under the motto „All different, all equal“ for a European Youth Week in Strasbourg. This action, the effect of which is still felt today, was the starting point for an unprecedented mobilisation of youth and youth organisations for the protection and promotion of human rights. The campaign has been continued, especially since 2000, by means of the implementation of an ambitious program which integrates human rights education in youth work both in the context of formal as well as informal education and training measures. The pedagogic manual “Compass” serves as a foundation for conveying issues of human rights to young people. It is used by a significant number of youth group directors, educators and teachers in all European countries. Each year additional countries line up to have a translation made in their respective native language. Upon the prompting of the Council of Europe, national, European and transnational internships have been organised in order to promote continued education and for creating incentives to form networks and partnerships.

The Sport Department of the Council of Europe

The activities of the Council of Europe in the field of sports got started in 1967 with a cautionary resolution concerning doping, which formed the initial starting point for a widely-applied policy whose zenith was reached in 1989 with the European Anti-Doping Convention. Since 1970 and in line with the principle “Sport for All,” the Council of Europe has been engaged with promoting popular mass sports, the goal being that every individual can practice the sport or physical activity of his/her choice without restrictions or impediments: a charter concluded in 1975 assigned funds for the concrete implementation of this goal. In addition, since 1985 the Council of Europe has

developed concrete aid resources for dealing with violence in sports, especially as concerns riots by spectators. And finally, since 1992 the Council of Europe has also supported the promotion of ethical principles in sports and the activation of the notion of “fair play” by means of a charter and the provision of large amounts of information material.

As a partner of the sports organisations of the individual member states the Sport Department [a division of the Directorate General for Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport] of the Council of Europe promotes athletic ideals as well as fair play and works to facilitate access for all groups of the population to physical activity. At the same time it has defined numerous measures that serve to fight violence, doping and all the excesses that tarnish the image of sport. A “European Sport Charter” and the “Code of Sports Ethics”, which were adopted in 1992 and revised in 2001, set out the broad principles governing sporting activities in terms of both organisation and objectives.

The concept of “sport for all” is reflected in numerous initiatives, the most recent of which is designed to allow people living in refugee camps as a result of wars or natural disasters to practise sports. Devised in 2003, the “Red Balloons” program – whose name is a reference to the Red Cross - makes it possible to organise three-week training sessions in these camps, during which young people can learn sports with ten or so sports instructors, who then teach them to become instructors themselves. The project meets the need for exercise that is felt particularly strongly by the young, and brings educational, physical and psychological benefits. The first “Red Balloons” summer camp took place in Azerbaijan in 2004, and the aim is to organise two or three a year, not least in camps where different or even hostile communities coexist, so as to re-establish some kind of relations between them.

Sport and Democracy

The Council of Europe has long made the point that sport is a training ground for democracy, but would like to award this principle a higher profile than it has at present, just as in the case of human rights and pre-eminence of the law. In the context of the European Year of Education through Sport (EYES), which was declared in May of 2004 by the European Union, the Council of Europe organised discussions in Strasbourg on the promotion of these values in sports. It drew attention to the parallels between the law and the rules of the game, and between “political” elections and elections in sporting bodies: the point was to demonstrate

the actuality of these values and their validity in daily life in a vivid manner. Amateur and professional athletes have been asked to put this message across in their respective clubs and countries.

The recognition of values is a considerable component of “good governance” in the field of sports, a topic of the most recent Conference of European Ministers for Sports which took place in 2004 in Budapest: This meeting strove to create measures for fighting certain outgrowths such as fraud and corruption. The topic of relationships between public entities and sports organisations was likewise addressed in which context it was emphasised that the reinforcement of these organisations was inseparably connected with improving their administration and functioning methods.

Violence Prevention in Stadiums

In 1985, several months after the tragedy in the Heysel soccer stadium, which had claimed the lives of 39 victims and caused hundreds of injuries, the Council of Europe introduced the “European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in Particular at Football Matches”, which has been ratified by 39 countries to this day. This text has been subject to numerous amendments and supplements since its publication. After the increase of supervision of stadiums and spectators stood in the foreground for years, the focus now lies on the “prevention” of violence, an area in which the Council of Europe works together both with official authorities as well as with sports associations and fan clubs. The Council of Europe was especially involved with the programs for hindering riots on the occasion of the European World Cup in 2004. But, although violence in the stadiums appears to be sinking in particular thanks to the supervision of fans and the removal of the most aggressive “hooligans”, consequentially the respective encounters are that much more noticeable in the cities where the matches are held. In coordination with the local authorities, the Council of Europe has introduced a number of practical measures which are designed to keep these tendencies in check. It additionally recommends that associations and cities establish so-called “fan embassies”: these provisional establishments allow the fans of a certain team or land of origin to get together prior to or during a game and while away the time together instead of aimlessly roaming about the streets of a city getting drunk.

Doping: An Unrelenting Battle

Created after the Olympic Games of 1988, which were overshadowed by heavy doping in-

cidents, the European Anti-Doping Convention is the first international legal text in this field. Through this text awareness of the magnitude of this phenomenon has been raised throughout Europe; though doping has surely existed for years, previously it was spoken of very little or not at all. In addition, as a result of this document, the first steps were taken to effectively fight doping. The text defined the methods and instruments for uncovering deception and additionally put states under the obligation of using these. The convention also addressed the prevention of doping as well as the corresponding information and educational measures, the organisation and the sequence of monitoring as well as sanctions to be imposed. In 2002 the convention was supplemented by an additional protocol with which a reciprocal recognition of monitoring was introduced and through which the monitors of signatory states were given the ability to intervene unannounced in other countries. In other words, this means that a German athlete participating in a competition in Norway – or the other way around, a Norwegian in Germany – has to assume that at that location the regulations will be monitored with the same strictness and methods as in her/his homeland. In this manner loopholes could be closed which still existed between the individual countries in respect to doping monitoring.

In addition, the protocol promotes the adherence to the Convention and underlines its obligatory effect. Furthermore, it facilitated the cooperation between the countries and the World-Anti-Doping-Agency (WADA), which was founded in 1999 in Lausanne and for the founding of which the Council of Europe exerted its influence. The Convention plans for the establishment of a “monitoring group” which is particularly involved in the creation of a list of prohibited substances, carries out visits for evaluation purposes in the member states and formulates recommendations. And finally, the Convention is currently serving as the basis for the drawing up of an “International Anti-Doping Convention” from UNESCO. This will, in turn, facilitate spreading European rules and principles to all five continents of the earth.

The Most Significant Achievements of the Council of Europe in the Field of Youth Policy

1. The European Youth Centres (EYC)

Establishment of the EYC in Strasbourg: 1973

Establishment of the EYC in Budapest: 1995

The EYCs were founded to enable youth and their organisations to become actively involved

in the establishment of a joint Europe and to realise the goals set by the Council of Europe.

The EYCs are places of congress and education on the topic of Europe and forums for societal problems and issues that impact youth. Each year approximately 2000 representatives from NGOs (non-governmental organisations) and youth networks participate in such events and as a result have the opportunity to express their views and proposals concerning all topics relating to youth which are the subject of the Council of Europe's work.

As congress sites, the EYCs are unique in Europe, especially due to their multi-national and multi-cultural character (all activities take place under these premises).

2. Mobility of Young People (Focus on East-West)

In this context, the European Youth Foundation is to be mentioned which was founded in 1972. It provides financial support for European youth projects.

The foundation was originally established with the intention of promoting cooperation and exchange of young people at a pan-European level. In this respect, it assumed a pioneering role until 1989 (that is, during the period when Europe was divided into two political blocks). Even today it still supports the exchange of young people in all of Europe, in particular between countries of the EU and non-member states.

Since 1972 almost 300,000 young people (primarily the responsible parties of NGOs in the youth field) have participated in these multi-national projects.

Additionally, a fund exists for promoting the mobility of disadvantaged youth ("Solidarity Fund for Youth Mobility"), which was established in the context of a partnership between the Council of Europe and the International Union of Railways (UIC, Union Internationale des Chemins de Fer). From every inter-rail ticket that is sold in Europe 1 is donated to this fund in order to finance the exchange of disadvantaged youth or those young people that come from impoverished regions. Furthermore, the goal of the fund is to promote multiple forms of youth exchange in the direction of east-west (from regions with under-developed economies).

3. Informal Education

Since its birth, the youth sector has played a pioneering role within the Council of Europe, in particular through the EYC, in promoting, implementing and recognising informal education and training of young people (learning and education processes that occur outside of

formal educational systems like schools and universities).

Since 2003 the preliminary culmination of this work has been the implementation of a European portfolio project for youth group leaders and youth social workers in which all the collected professional expertise of the Council of Europe is reflected and which serves to record, assess and recognise already obtained competences.

4. The Field of Youth Policy: A Model for Youth Participation

The foundation for the actions of the Council of Europe in the field of youth and youth-policy is to promote the ability of young people to actively participate so that they are able to develop into politically mature citizens.

This is a constant within the activities of the Council of Europe in the field of youth. In the course of the past 40 years the Council of Europe has developed a guiding principle for promoting youth participation which it attempts to encourage and implement at the national and local level in its member states. This model is based on the concept that young people are citizens with equal rights who need to have the right (and the obligation) to be involved in all decisions impacting them within the context of existing democratic procedures.

Several illustrations of this work at the level of the Council of Europe are:

- The co-management: since 1972 in the framework of the youth sector of the Council of Europe, decisions affecting the political orientation, working priorities, programs and the use of allocated funds are made jointly by committees formed in accordance with the statutes, in which government representatives as well as the partner NGOs in the youth work are represented. In the case of program issues, the committees have an equal amount of votes (50/50). Additionally, the representatives of the NGOs and the youth networks in these committees are called on to formulate their views and proposals.
- Ministerial conferences: at intervals of three or four years the Council of Europe organises a conference of the European ministers for youth. In this context NGO partners in the youth field are not only closely included in the preparation of the conferences but are also invited to participate: each national delegation is requested to appoint one young person (as representative of the national NGO) to their staff; furthermore about twenty representatives of other NGOs, primarily European NGOs, are invited to the conference. In addition, the NGOs organise

a “youth event” prior to or simultaneously with the conference whose aim is to prepare the contributions made by the youth for the conference (the young people submit a report to the ministers, among other activities).

- **Education:** Every year the EYC offers training sessions for youth group leaders that are aimed at encouraging the participation of young people: a training session to convey knowledge about international organisations that play a role in the field of youth (Council of Europe, EU etc.) as well as about opportunities to participate in and influence them. Also offered is a special education program – created in cooperation with the European Commission – on topics such as European citizenship and participation of young people who are part of a minority, etc.. The EYCs additionally organise various activities aimed at the participation of young people in public and political life. And finally, each year, in every country which has submitted the corresponding application, training sessions in so-called 50/50 modus take place (combination of participants made up of 50 % from NGOs and 50% of governmental officials) in which topics include the partnership between the public bodies and the civil society in formulating and implementing measures of youth policy.
- **Cooperation between local authorities:** the partner NGOs in the youth area are actively involved in the preparation of measures and important documents of the Council of Europe as concerns youth policy. In 1992 and 2003 they were very involved in the development of the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life (which was enacted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe), as well as subsequently when the Charter was revised.

5. Recognised Expert Knowledge in the Area of Human Rights Education at the European Level

Kraft seiner Erfahrung im Bereich der informel-
By means of its experience in the field of informal training and participation, the youth sector of the Council of Europe has grown to become a professional entity in the area of education and training of young people on the topic of human rights. The pedagogic manual “Compass,” which was realised jointly with various players in the education field (NGOs, diverse networks and committees) is a unique resource that is available to youth group leaders, teachers and other persons or institutions that want to de-

dicare themselves to training and education in the area of human rights. On the 455 pages of the manual an impressive spectrum of practical suggestions, working methods, examples, etc. can be found. At the same time the youth sector acts as a catalyst to promote the formation of networks and education in this area.

6. Innovative Approach in the Cooperation with the European Union

The Council of Europe and the European Commission have signed on and implemented three partnership programs: the training of youth social workers; research in the arena of youth work as well as cooperative engagement in the European Mediterranean area on topics affecting youth. At hand here is an independent and effective model of cooperation: an equal financing 50/50, combination of available resources (information, contacts, networks etc.), decisions in consensus procedures, adherence to the respective rules and working procedures.

An impressive example: the (collective) establishment of a (virtual) knowledge institute on the topic of youth policy. This institute, currently still under construction, is an information and databank which will be available to the interested public, the European Union and the Council of Europe. The institute is conceived as an instrument which will assist and support the work of the Council of Europe, the European Union and its member states in the field of youth-policy.

The youth sector of the European Council will contribute essentially, in future too, to solidly anchor, defend and disseminate the fundamental values, human rights, parliamentary democracy and the rule of law in Europe. The common work with youth representatives of 48 target countries of the European Cultural Convention still remains the decisive weapon in the fight against the spread of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and discrimination. Young people still can be “vaccinated” against this “evil”, and even if they are already “infected”, there is still a chance of “healing”. The new campaign of the European Council “All different – All equal 2006” will be an important milestone in this context. The emphasis put on the positive role of the variety and the participation of our European societies will be a core-element in this sense.

I am convinced that, in this respect too, the already implemented Berlin-process will contribute to the success of the new youth campaign of the European Council, as it addresses the situation of young people in marginalised neighbourhoods, and I know that I can fully rely on the full support of all of you who are present here today.

European Strategies for the Social Inclusion of Young People

The European Commission welcomes the initiative of the German Federal Ministry for Youth Affairs to discuss integrated strategies for young people in disadvantaged areas at a European level.

The EU set itself a very ambitious goal in Lisbon, in the year 2000: To be the most competitive knowledge-based economy, offering more and better jobs, with sustainable economic growth and social cohesion. It must be emphasised that the Lisbon Strategy does not only seek to respond to the challenges of the market and economy but also to the wider needs of people, citizens and civil society. Since Lisbon, a large number of political initiatives have been launched, amongst others initiatives fighting social exclusion and ones promoting education and vocational training.

However, the main message of the report of a High Level Group advising the Commission on its preparations for the Mid-Term Review of the Lisbon-Strategy (Kok-Report), may be summarised as: although the Lisbon goals are very ambitious we have no other option than to re-double our efforts and make a full commitment to realising the ambitions, if we don't want to fail. The present situation calls for urgent action especially in the field of knowledge and the labour market. I would like to cite three examples:

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- In 2003, 19% of young people between the ages of 16 and 24 were classified as being in a high risk poverty group, which was 5% higher than for any other age group. Poverty and social exclusion take complex and multi-dimensional forms which require the mobilisation of a wide range of policies. Where young people experience social exclusion, the possibility for securing the commitment of their constructive participation in civil society is weakened or significantly diminished. Therefore, there must be greater coherence, coordination and cooperation when policies of a social nature are formulated with particular regard to young people.
- The latest Joint Employment Report shows that youth unemployment reached 15.7% (and more than 20 % in some countries) in contrast to 8.1% overall. We need to more strongly emphasise the fight against divided labour markets, with good job opportunities for those who are better qualified and precarious job opportunities or no opportunities for others. On the specific issue of young people, various aspects need to be addressed:
 - developing a labour market which favours inclusion
 - guaranteeing adequate resources and incomes for young people in difficulties, particularly members of minorities, young women in uncertain employment and young disabled people,
 - tackling inequalities in education
 - enhancing access to quality services
 - regenerating areas suffering from multiple disadvantages.

To sum it up: The revitalisation of the Lisbon-Strategy and a reinforcement of our efforts is urgently called for. The new Commission with its President Barroso largely agrees with this analysis and has therefore decided to make the objectives of Lisbon a political priority for the coming years.

Youth policy is fully part of that ambition. In 2001, the Commission adopted the White Paper 'A New Impetus for European Youth' as the follow-up of the Lisbon conclusions. The White Paper identified the main challenges for

youth policy in a European socio-demographic context characterised by a growing disequilibrium between the young and the not so young, and characterised furthermore by changing living conditions for young people, all this at a time when the European Union is expanding as never before and against the backdrop of increasing globalisation.

In the follow-up to the White Paper on Youth we made impressive progress in political co-operation at the European level. The Council adopted 14 common objectives in the priority fields of participation, information, voluntary activities and a better knowledge of youth. With regard to the horizontal policies which are crucial for a young person's life, such as employment, education and social inclusion, we also developed a series of concrete actions at the EU level.

The results are encouraging, but the first lessons to be drawn for future action are:

- we must better understand the situation of young people with regard to these policies in order to influence them;
- all actors at all levels have to be mobilised in order to have real impact.

It is important to prevent any loss of the new impetus imparted by the White Paper. New actions will be needed, given that society in general and youth in particular are evolving so fast.

The YOUTH Programme provides unique opportunities for young people in non-formal learning experiences in an intercultural context and with a strong European dimension. This is also true for initiatives of young people at the local level. We spend 100 million per year for 10,000 projects for the program's four fields of action: youth exchanges, voluntary service, local initiatives and support measures. The complementarity of the four fields is meant to make the programme as open and flexible as possible to suit the needs of young Europeans who wish to be involved.

To grant young people with fewer opportunities access to the program has been a priority for the European Commission since the start of such activities more than 10 years ago, and considerable work has already been done. The European Commission and the National Agencies for the YOUTH programme have placed considerable focus on including young people with fewer opportunities in the programme and took the necessary steps in order to fully implement this important priority. This was done for example by:

- a resource centre for inclusion
- a 'booklet' on inclusion providing essential information
- thematic, easy-to-use handbooks for training sessions (T-Kits)

ning sessions (T-Kits)

- innovative co-operation, training and information projects
- new creative approaches especially in less-favoured regions.

In July the Commission presented its proposal for a new programme entitled "YOUTH in Action" for the period 2007-2013. Its main objective is to ensure the continuity of the current YOUTH programme and to support recent developments in the area of work with young people.

The objectives of the new programme are

- promoting young people's active citizenship in general and their European citizenship in particular
- developing young people's solidarity, in particular in order to reinforce social cohesion in the European Union
- fostering mutual understanding between peoples through young people
- contributing to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the area of working with young people
- promoting European cooperation in youth policy.

The draft proposal explicitly highlights that all young people must be able to have access to the activities of the programme without discrimination, and it ensures that particular efforts are made with regard to young people who, for educational, social, physical, psychological, economic, cultural or geographical reasons, have particular difficulties in taking part in the programme.

The European integration will face new challenges in the coming years, in particular with regard to the political debate in member states on the Constitutional Treaty. It includes two new provisions concerning the promotion of the participation of young people in the democratic life of Europe and concerning the creation of a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps. We are in charge of preparing the implementation of these provisions serving to enhance the participation of young people and to develop new forms of individual and collective voluntary activities. There is a growing interest in the development of a collective European Voluntary service, which could combine a group of young volunteers to work on a single project. This should be of particular interest to young people who have fewer opportunities available.

With regard to integrated strategies for young people I see four main points which are crucial for effective and comprehensive strategies; these essential points also meet the political objectives agreed at the European level:

- the importance of the local level for participation and inclusion
- the role of the non-governmental sector, of civil society, NGO's and youth / social workers
- an ongoing and increased exchange of good practices in order to improve knowledge and information and to learn from each other
- an integrated approach of politics and stakeholders, you may call it social co-operation.

The idea for a European Pact for Youth is very much inspired by such an integrated approach. The Commission welcomes the recent initiative of the Heads of State Schröder, Chirac, Zapatero and Persson for a European Pact, since it fits very well with the political priorities of the White Paper as well as of the new Commission and in particular reflects the interest of President Barroso and the new Commissioner for Youth Affairs, Mr. Figel.

We will propose – in cooperation with the Dutch and Luxemburg Council Presidencies - appropriate action to the 2005 spring summit. It could take the form of a partnership between the EU and young people with three main pillars – social inclusion, education and citizenship, within a context of overall EU coherence and national policies regarding young people.

The initiative should aim – at all levels – at attaining a more integral approach to youth policy, from school to active citizenship and working life. One could say that the Pact should lead to integrated strategies for all young people, particularly for those who have fewer opportunities and who are growing up in disadvantaged areas.

Dr. Christian Lüders,
German Youth Institute, Munich

Momentum for and Challenges Facing Integrated Strategies for Children and Young People in Disadvantaged Neighborhoods

This symposium – as was made clear in the preceding statements and in the presentation of the projected outcomes of this conference – is oriented around a simple assumption: the problems facing disadvantaged neighborhoods can only be adequately addressed if the political and practical strategies for these areas are focused and coordinated and when they draw on the resources already available in these areas.

The central idea of this conference on “Integrated strategies for young people” is, in this sense, to be understood as a guiding concept. It refers to

- Various forms of horizontal and vertical local coordination, as for example between political and practical fields (such as employment in relation to the economy, living arrangements, transportation, schools, health, security and social work),
- The development of networks linking governmental, non-governmental and private organizations, as well as non-profit and commercial actors,
- Shared participation amongst organizations and individual citizens,
- Integration of related policies (as, for example, sexual equality and integration).

Integrated strategies stand in opposition to hierarchical, sectoral, problem-isolating approaches.

The aim of this symposium is to exchange information and experiences on a European wide level. The goal of this conference, as described in the projected outcome, is “to collect practical experiences in Germany and European-wide and ideas from local authorities and to discuss examples in an international context.” An important step in this direction will be taken in the four panel discussions scheduled for later today.

Now, comparative research in this area, as well as similar endeavours at the European level in other areas over the last decade has revealed that the consolidation of heterogeneous national and local experience and the resulting comparisons – in particular when based on concrete experience – are subject to two risks despite the fact that such comparative studies

form the foundation for mutual understanding and real learning opportunities. These two risks are:

- On the one hand, prematurely transferring these approaches, their premises, and their resulting experiences without fully understanding and taking into account their social, cultural, and institutional contexts.
- On the other hand, there exists the opposite risk: that an awareness of such local particularities fosters the conclusion that everyone cannot but go their own way. For example, it may be thought that experiences grounded in heterogeneous contexts are therefore, at their root, too irreconcilable for fruitful comparison.

It is important to see that the challenges brought into focus hereby are in no way mere abstract academic methodological concerns. Likewise, we are not just dealing with intellectually stimulating activities that customarily take place amongst civilized people in comfortable locations such as these. Instead, it must be kept in mind that the exchange of experiences and the question as to how something can be compared can very quickly lead to controversy and political maelstroms. This was the case with a very recent example directly related to today’s topic. Consider the discussion in Germany following the murder of the Dutch film director Theo van Gogh and the events that followed. These events have released a similarly irritating, although potentially fecund discussion about the apparent failure of our immigration and integration policies while also raising the problem of the so-called parallel society. In this way, some consider Van Gogh’s murder as proof of this failure and project imminent analogous developments in Germany. Others emphasize that the situation in Germany is completely different, and thus miss the opportunity to learn from the Dutch experience with intercultural conflicts.

He or she who wishes to avoid both these dangers requires comparison criteria that clarify similarities and differences amongst approaches. In my paper, I would like to propose seven such points of reference. This I would like to do on the one hand against the backdrop of this conference’s objectives, and on the other against the background of the above discussion concerning research into and discussions about the respective political strategies of local integration. Considered humbly, we are dealing with criteria that will structure the construction and discussion of the issue so as to reveal incomparable and sharable experiences from our collective ones. More ambitiously, I would not object if one or the other of the criteria were ascribed an evaluative and

guiding function. These could then function as incentives to inspecting further development of the respective strategies and their background assumptions.

Now, on to the seven comparison criteria, the first three of which I will discuss in more detail:

First criterion: who are the actors participating?

The concept 'actor' is taken in a very broad sense, thereby including individual persons in the private sphere as well as those occupying public positions. Actors can be informal, personally-organized initiatives, local grass roots organizations, clubs, associations, governmental departments and committees...etc - in short, actors can be all kinds of organizations, up to and including the state. This broad conception of actors is needed because it is a determining feature of integrated strategies that the traditional separation of state and society in political theory is blurred. It is thus characteristic of approaches guided by the notion of governance, that they do not reduce the policy-making to the national and institutional structures of the political system. Such pertinent notions as alliances, negotiation and agreement, network management, end user participation, co-production of collective goods, local governance, among others, refer to an increased integrated participation of both impacted and responsible actors with respect to:

- institutional structures (polities),
- institutional processes (politics),
- and political content (policies).

It is, of course, the case that such a comparative consideration of participating European actors will at first glance reveal differences. For example, the independent but state-approved organizations in the field of child and youth services (the so called *freien Träger der Kinder- und Jugendhilfe*) we talk of in Germany not only describes an actor the concept of which is very difficult to translate and explain, it also denotes an irreplaceable partner for integrated political strategies for youth in Germany. This partner – from a European perspective – owes its existence to a very specific cultural background and a unique tradition.

In a similar manner, Europe is marked by major differences amongst, for example, federal structures and, consequentially, the leeway granted by these structures to municipal governments, or, as the case may be, to governmental structures of city districts.

In other words, in order to be more than a mere list it is necessary that a similar examination of those actors participating in integra-

ted strategies requires a description of each of their legal constitution, resources and their allotted influence.

As an aside, it must be noted that inquiring about the participating actors does not prohibit inquiring about those who are not integrated.

Second criterion: What role do children and young people play?

Perhaps it is obvious to many of you that the children and youth living in these districts must be included in any discussion of participating actors. Many positive changes in this respect have been achieved to date by the clear emphasis on the participation of children and youth in a civil society in such publications as the 2001 White Book of the EU entitled "A New Impetus for European Youth" or the "European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life" by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities published by the Council of Europe in 2003, as well as many in additional publications by various European institutions. At the same time, however, our own observations and those of others reveal that while much is being done for children in disadvantaged districts, considerably less is being done with them. That is why it seems to me fair to ask of these integrated strategies, what roles do they allot to children and youth?

Furthermore, simply because we are dealing with disadvantaged districts does not mean we can just stop at this question. The reality of life in these districts has proved it to be too general in two respects:

- First, it is a primary characteristic of marginalization that those affected are afforded far less opportunity to participate in the design of their circumstances as others. Many studies document how precarious employment and general labour conditions, decreases in the quality of life, the destabilization of social networks, or, as the case may be, the destabilization of personal status and its oft accompanying social vulnerability are closely related to impending exclusion. And this is the exact opposite of inclusion.
- Secondly, throughout Europe these disadvantaged city districts are marked by a high percentage of families with migrant backgrounds. Allow me to formulate an impression, or more exactly, because we still lack sufficient data, a suspicion: talk of child and youth participation focuses more oft than not on the offspring of the respective majority population. In both conceptual and methodological respects one has to search long and hard for an established strategy for the participation of children and youth

with migrant backgrounds. The search is made yet more difficult when gender differences are taken into account. Such a search reveals that there are entire groups of girls to whom public participation has not been granted up to now. It must, however, be said that this lack of participation is two-sided: such exclusion is due both to a lack of opportunity and due to a culturally determined refusal to participate.

Summarizing these criteria, it is in my view crucial to pose the question of the role of children and youth in the actual praxis of integrated strategies in disadvantaged city districts. Thereby, it is particularly important to bear cultural and gender differences in mind.

Third criterion: How are, and how will, the various actors, especially children and youth be integrated and participate?

With this criterion I would like to focus attention on the methods (procedures/practices) of inclusion. The available information reveals that we are dealing with a wide spectrum:

- From purely symbolic arrangements to contractual obligations
- From unique expressions of interest to the creation of long-term working institutions
- From voluntary, primarily informal project-related action to formal distributions of responsibilities
- From spontaneous and organic engagement to actions that are conceptually grounded and methodologically implemented
- From top-down delegation to bottom-up forms of self-empowerment.

It would seem that we have not made much process in describing the various forms of integration, nor in giving them a typological context. But this is in fact indispensable as soon as we are speaking of child and youth participation. Consider how it is continuously revealed in many cases that child and youth participation is surreptitiously measured in terms of the allegedly ripest form of participation – the democratic balancing of interests amongst adult civilized people and its resulting institutional practices. Against this background, all other forms of inclusion are all too easily and quickly dismissed.

In contrast it seems to me necessary not just to think of child and youth participation in the theoretical framework of democracy. We must also consider it as a desirable educational process that must be fitted for various ages. Inclusion must be learned and is unreasonable as a demand more often than one might think. We know that inclusion is usually not to be had for

free and that it can hardly be made fun by force. Extensive introductory processes, endless discussions, nerve-fraying tests of patience, menacing immanent transfers of responsibility, sometimes curious decision making processes, unclear results, uncertain consequences and the risk of endless frustration at the end are not just characteristic of committees, but are part and parcel of all participatory processes. From my perspective, it is a simple smoke and mirrors tactic – one that is quickly exposed by children and youth – when they are supposed to be sold on inclusion as a fun process. That participation is fun may, with some luck, be the case in select and well-designed constellations, but is by no means the rule.

The understanding of inclusion as the object of a learning process does not exclude the positive experience and insights that participatory committees and democratic practices, as nerve-racking as they may be, are indispensable instances for balancing all interests in democratic pluralistic societies, that they are in no way self-evident and that they must therefore be used and understood as such: as a cultural asset. However, how this is to be achieved remains a worthwhile question.

Fourth criterion: What is the decision making process?

The understanding of inclusion as part of an educational process has led me to place particular emphasis on inclusionary practices. However, it goes without saying that the question concerning the practices of integrated strategies leads us to the issue of power, that is, to the question as to how decisions are made. In this respect one could also formulate the fourth question less elegantly: How is power distributed in the respective integrated, youth and district specific strategies?

In this field we are also familiar with many forms of power distribution. On the one hand there are the constitutionally guaranteed responsibilities distributed through various levels down to local communities and their districts. On the other hand we can observe a multiplicity of informal voluntary forms of taking on responsibility. We are familiar with various forms of negotiation and agreement amongst non-governmental actors as well as more top-down governmental structures.

Yet, with this criteria I am not only concerned with the question as to who makes legitimate decisions and is thus able to realise them, but also with the question of when and at which level decisions are taken. From this point of view, I would hold that because of their complexity, integrated strategies are fundamentally

processes of learning and educational processes. This, however, also means that the loci and manner of decision making may change in the process. For example, concepts based on established hierarchies and distributions of responsibility may, with time, transform into multi-layered decentralised systems of negotiation.

The second question just posed concerning levels leads me to the fifth criterion.

Fifth criterion: How are integrated strategies implemented?

In the discussion about area-specific governance strategies that has emerged relatively recently, more and more reference is made to the concept of "multilevel governance." The term is intended to emphasize that the problems in the city districts span more than one political level. Because this may well be the case in all European countries, it might, on comparative grounds, be very useful to determine both which decisions are made at which levels and, more importantly, how these levels are interrelated with one another. From this perspective the objective would be to determine whether and to what extent the respective strategies are implemented as isolated measures, whether they form part of a local policy, or, as the case may be, whether they are part of a national political strategy. Because experience shows that relations between these levels are not always devoid of conflict, it is of particular interest to find out how the coordination between the different levels is carried out, and to determine the location of points of mutual dependencies and those of potential conflict.

This in turn leads me to the sixth criterion.

Sixth criterion: Can we easily determine parties responsible for the range of tasks?

Integrated political strategies for youth are typically characterized by remarkable complexity. It is often the case in such strategies that multiple tasks must be coordinated in tandem. It is not uncommon, however that processes are activated, especially in successful programs that can no longer be centrally organised. The whole, relatively new discussion about governance in fact stems from the insight that the traditional understanding of policy-making on all levels has reached its limits. New forms of horizontal coordination between governmental and non-governmental actors, integration, and legitimisation are foci of interest that are replacing traditional forms of decision making without thereby simply dissolving the hierarchies.

Initiation, resource acquisition, legitimisation, implementation, activation, coordination and communication, networking, participation, co-production, integration, mediation, monitoring and evaluation all signify a general project, that must be repeatedly dealt with in these contexts. Various different responsibilities for these tasks usually develop within programs which make it interesting to know who is responsible for which task in the different contexts.

Seventh criterion: Which resources does each of the actors bring to the project?

The seventh and final criterion is closely related to the previous question as it concerns resources and who is to bring them to the collective table. Here I am thinking not only about the two indispensable resources of money and power, but also about acceptance and legitimacy, expertise and competence, social, cultural, and district specific tradition and knowledge, motivation and engagement, to name but a few. Many integrated political strategies for youth are not easily understood without taking into account their often hidden prerequisites that can be summarized as the respectively available economical, cultural and social capital.

It must be noted that there is another important aspect, one that lies close to my heart, but that I have nevertheless not discussed in detail in this paper. It concerns the question of the way in which integrated strategies for youth, on which this conference is focused, can be monitored and appropriately evaluated. The reason for my reluctance is simple: while this undoubtedly important question opens its own specific and complex field of discussion, this conference is devoted to the strategies themselves. How these could be observed and evaluated deserves its own discussion.

Allow me to close by expressing a small hope. It might well surpass the capacities of all of us participating in this symposium to discuss all the experiences collected at this conference along the seven criteria in just one afternoon. We might, however, be taking a step in the right direction if we begin in this manner this afternoon and continue to develop the criteria as needed. In this way we may achieve a conceptually well-founded basis for then exchanging experiences. This would mean that we would have achieved the goal of systematizing the exchange. This achievement would immeasurably improve our ability to learn from each other and bring us closer to achieving improved and sustainable district-specific strategies and thereby the well-being of the children, youth and their families.

Linking European Initiatives to the Conclusions made at the “Integrated Strategies” Conference in the Context of the White Paper on Youth Process ¹

Based on the presentation of several relevant European initiatives in the context of the Lisbon Strategy, this paper will try to elaborate on several possibilities for linking the conclusions made in the conference “Integrated Strategies for Children and Youth in Disadvantaged Urban Areas.” For this purpose the conclusions are summarized in several basic statements

1. Relevant European Initiatives in the Areas of Education, Social Work and Youth Work since Lisbon 2000

In spring of 2000 the European Council resolved “to make the Union the most competitive and dynamic, knowledge-based region of the world,”

- with more and better jobs
- permanent economic growth and
- enhanced social coherence.

In this context, several central benchmarks were determined that were to enable a method of monitoring and reviewing whether objectives had been met. For example, one objective was to cut in half the number of 18-24 year-olds who had only undergone the first part of a standard secondary school education (Sekundarstufe I). Open methods of coordination were defined as working methods.

With the Lisbon resolutions, it was – for the first time in the history of the European Council – not only purely economic and financial considerations of the state and governmental leaders, but rather the social dimensions and impacts on civil society that were emphasized. Education was also regarded as a key for positive future developments.

Since Lisbon a number of political initiatives have been embarked upon in which context the “integrated strategies” the education sector as well as in the areas of social work and youth are particularly relevant.

- a) In the arena of lifelong learning four main objectives of education and vocational training were identified: personal development and fulfilment, social integration, active citizenship and employment opportunities.

The education and vocational training policy should ensure that an improvement of the quality and effectiveness of educational systems is achieved, it should ensure easy access to education and vocational training for everyone and should open the systems of education and training to the world.

Various concrete implementation strategies are pursued in an integrated method of approach, for example training teachers and instructors and their continuing education, imparting the necessary basis qualifications, creating an open learning environment and attractive learning, promoting active citizenship and social integration, connecting learning to work and society. Also included in the prioritised campaigns of life-long learning is an improved assessment of formal, non-formal and informal learning, increased investments of time and money in education, effective consultation, orientation and information as well as innovative pedagogical practice methods

- b) In the social sector, combating social exclusion and poverty are of particular significance for the conference topic “integrated strategies.”

In this case we are dealing with the issue of promoting participation in the employment market and improving everyone’s access to requisite resources, rights and services, preventing the risk of exclusion, taking action for the most vulnerable members of society, mobilizing all players and fostering participation.

With a particular regard for youth, in particular adequate resources and incomes for young people in difficulties are to be striven for, equal education opportunities for everyone and equal access to quality services are to be guaranteed while urban areas suffering from multiple disadvantages are to be regenerated.

- c) In the field of youth the White Paper “A New Impetus for European Youth” is of outstanding significance for political cooperation on a European level.

Following a two-year consultation of the civil society, that is, youth and their associations, national youth administrations, youth researchers, etc, the White Paper was presented in November of 2001 by the Commission and was subsequently the object of a Council resolution of the European Youth Ministers in which the topical priorities proposed by the Commission and also the working methods were approved.

The White Paper identifies several main challenges in view of current demographic developments, changing living conditions

1) The author alone is responsible for the contents of this paper. The paper binds neither the European Commission nor the services dependent upon it.

of young people, the necessary inclusion of youth in public life, European integration and the simultaneous globalisation.

As prioritised topics in the area of youth, it identifies participation, information, voluntary service and a greater understanding of youth. Provided as policy crossover areas were in particular employment, education, social integration, autonomy and combating racism and xenophobia.

As working methods for the specific youth topics the White Paper proposed open methods of coordination while the political [crossover] areas are called upon to take youth-related concerns into account to a greater extent.

The open methods of coordination in the field of youth counts on participatory strategies oriented towards a dialogue between all involved players while particularly including young people in all phases. This process leads to objectives collectively agreed upon being set in the four priority areas, to mechanisms for reporting by the member states, to a monitoring procedure and to an analysis in relation to goal achievement.

In the political crossover areas in which youth-related concerns are to be better taken into account, a sort of intervention strategy is basically pursued that will take as its starting point the methods agreed upon in these areas in order to influence political strategies. This leads to the resolutions or announcements of the Council being prepared jointly, but in a very concrete way it also leads to a joint preparation of the respective plans for action, for example in the field of lifelong learning, employment, social integration and anti-racism.

2. Tying the Conclusions of the Conference to the Five Essential Themes and how to Link them to the White Paper on Youth.

With reference to the political focuses set as were described just now, I would like to emphasize five areas that suggest several analogies between the political processes at a European level and the conclusions drawn from this conference: a) analysis, b) consequences arising from the analysis ,c) objectives identified, d) active strategies derived therefrom, and e) the players. In addition there are of course several specific points for linkage that can be derived from the results of the panels

a) The analysis

From the conclusions drawn, one arrives at the diagnosis that the Lisbon Process offers chan-

ces and risks for youth: on the one side lies an improved access to education and more and better employment options in the framework of a prospering economy for a major portion of young people, but the flip side of this is the risk of exclusion and social discrimination, disbarment from employment options, training and educational opportunities as well as the risk of a lack of political and social participation and political abstinence of another section of the young population.

The White Paper on Youth considers the main challenges of our society to be

- the demographic development, including all concomitants concerning jobs, education, migration, generational relationships, etc.
- the altered sociological, economic and cultural framework conditions in which young people live and
- the necessity of including youth in public life or their distance to and abstinence from institutional structures, [and] European integration.

In this context, the White Paper also sees a risk of dichotomous development, in which the opportunities and chances improve for a certain portion of the youth while the other portion is threatened by permanent exclusion.

b) Ramifications from this Result

The conclusions suggest to go beyond comparisons, analyses and the exchange of positive practical experiences etc and to strive for change as well as to set the necessary processes in motion, doing this explicitly by means of the initiation of the Berlin Process.

The White Paper Process envisages going beyond mere talk without action and exchanging ideas concerning best practice and – for the first time in the history of the European Union – to reinforce the political cooperation in the field of youth-related politics and reach agreements concerning concrete objectives which are to be implemented by applying open methods of coordination in the field of youth. In this context, the adjustment of methods to the field of youth-related issues will be set as a cooperative process which targets implementing changes by means of realizing the collectively set objectives. This procedure will be assisted by a support system of control, monitoring and reporting with the highest possible participation rates of all players and a regular dialogue.

c) Objectives

The objectives stated in the conclusions read as follows: social coherence, participation, improved access, promotion of personal de-

velopment and civil society, improvement of employment qualifications.

The essential messages of the White Paper are

- an intensified inclusion of young people as active citizens in order to improve their participation in society, to create easier access to relevant services and opportunities and to strengthen civil society;
- an expansion and admission of experimental fields by means of recognizing commitment and volunteer work
- promoting the autonomy of young people by facilitating access to education and employment opportunities and by means of greater social cohesion and participation.

d) Strategies for Action and Concepts

The conclusions propose integrated strategies and co-production efforts of all levels, all players and in diverse fields of action. They refer to "good governance" for management and coordination as well as a structured dialogue, improved cooperation, strategic networking and a cooperative "policy mix" composed of learning – practice – change.

As concrete strategy for action, the White Paper introduces the principle of "good governance." This principle has five fundamental pillars, which are:

- openness, especially to be created in the context of an information and communication strategy
- participation, which primarily envisages consultation and inclusion of involved social players
- accountability, which, at the European level, particularly means a structured form of cooperation between the member states and the European Union
- effectivity, in which context young people are not seen as a problem but rather as a resource, also in cases of problem solving
- coherence, meaning strengthening the coordination of policies and the various affected levels.

As I mentioned previously, a structured dialogue, as called for in the conclusions, is an essential and integral component of open methods of coordination and the implementation of the overall White Paper Process. And last but not least, the principle of "policy mix" corresponds to the greatest extent with the strategy of increased consideration of youth-related topics in other relevant policy areas.

e) Players

The conclusions propose a dialogue between all possible players, highlighting especially those affected, that is, the young people them-

selves, but also including researchers, social workers, politicians, teachers and information disseminators.

The White Paper talks of creating networks and a structured dialogue in the framework of which all relevant players can come together. Since the beginning of the White Paper Process, consultations on all levels have played a central part; in the context of the respective Council presidencies they will be seamlessly continued and can also be seen in the proposal put forth by the Commission to, in the future, organize so-called *Etats Généraux*, a sort of general stock taking with all participating players.

Panels

Where the results of the four panels are concerned and the political priorities and activities at the European level, I just would like to briefly outline the following aspects without going into the details of the respective political initiative:

- Panel 1 (Education) discusses easier access to and participation in all education opportunities; it talks of networking education opportunities, guaranteeing second chances for those people who had interrupted or been denied educational opportunities, and increased investments specifically for disadvantaged groups. All these topics also play a prominent role in strategies for lifelong learning and in the White Paper on Youth.
- Panel 2 (Migration) considers integration as a resource and calls for a complex understanding of integration and migration as well as an anti-discrimination policy. This requires intercultural exchange and cooperative alliances. A glance at the anti-discrimination policy of the [European] Union and the conclusions of the White Paper concerning these policy arenas likewise reveal a considerable degree of overlapping.
- Panel 3 (Management Strategies) emphasizes the significance of management and monitoring by means of contracts and agreements as well as science-based decision making. Open local networks and communication strategies as well as dynamic cycles are just as indispensable as intelligent usage of various public funds, including especially EU moneys. These focus points correspond precisely with the methodical conceptions in reference to an improved cooperation in the field of youth at a European level.
- Panel 4 (Civil Society/ Participation) underlines the necessity of diverse understandings

of participation and the realization of various participation projects, especially age-related projects, these applying in particular to young people having low opportunities. In addition, participation has to be taught and practiced and in this context, financial resources also have to be made available. The strengthening of the civil society is one of the central, if not the central concern of the White Paper on Youth through which a reinforced participation of young people and voluntary engagement are of special import.

Concluding Statements

The initiation of a "Berlin Process – the Social City for Children and Youth" is part of a special tradition if compared with other processes that have been initiated in the past at the European level and receive a corresponding benchmark for its respective policy field.

- the Lisbon Strategy itself can be understood as a process, when its structure and character are considered. Over a 10-year period (2000-2010) and in numerous political areas, it is to lead to improvements in effectivity and results. The corresponding benchmarks have been established for this. The process and the achievement of the objectives is painstakingly analysed and followed by state and government leaders at their annual spring conference and, if necessary, new objectives and initiatives are set in place.
- In the context of the Bologna Process the ministers of educations made a joint declaration in which they undertook to create a European area of higher education by 2010. Objectives included improving the comparability and compatibility of higher education systems. The different national systems are to be more transparently designed by means of creating a common framework based on three phases of study (Bachelor, Master and Doctorate).
- In the context of the Bruges / Copenhagen Process, the ministers responsible for vocational education and training likewise made a pact with the Commission and Social Partners to enhance cooperation in the field of vocational education and training in order to increase the effectivity, quality and the attractiveness of vocational education and training. Key issues here are again increased comparability, compatibility and transparency.
- And finally, the White Paper on Youth Process is a further example of the impact that the initiation of political processes can have

at the European level if it leads to concrete results, the setting of goals and agreements.

The European Pact for Youth, proposed recently by the four state and government leaders, Schröder, Chirac, Persson and Zapatero, also looks in this direction and will surely lend the White Paper Process new energy at the European level, especially in the political fields identified here.

The ministers for youth in the member states of the European Union could likewise regard the pact as an occasion to take the initiative in order to facilitate a better coordination of policy areas relevant for youth-related issues. Of course, in the end this affects regional and local levels which play a prominent role in youth policy. The pact should result in an integral method of approach taking into consideration all political arenas, all levels and all players, especially the young people themselves, that is – a pact with and for the youth.

We are in motion and proceeding on the soundest foundation: in an article on youth, the new European Constitution, which is, as a matter of course, to fundamentally introduce the principle of participatory democracy, envisages promoting "the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe."

This appears to be right in line with the already initiated Berlin Process, the social co-production and the conclusions and concerns of this conference.

Panel I: Acquisition of life skills – education and learning in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Presentations

1. Annette Berg, Monheim am Rhein, Germany
2. Prof. Dr. Nazmi Oruç, Eskisehir, Turkey
3. Anikó Molitorisz, Budapest, Hungary
4. Andrea Neutsch, Stralsund, Germany

Summary of the Results of the Discussion

The projects from Hungary, Turkey and Germany presented in Panel I addressing the topic of "Acquisition of life skills – education and learning in disadvantaged neighbourhoods" focused on how poverty, social discrimination and educational discrimination are linked, and asserted that educational opportunities were of primary importance in disadvantaged urban areas for improving the opportunities children and young people have in terms of their future.

Access to education was described as the central element of social participation, equal opportunity and gender equality. The strategies and approaches introduced in the workshop particularly emphasised resource-oriented local action, local centres, local learning and the establishment of a local "prevention chain" in which all relevant players in the urban area are involved. In this context, the panel members especially emphasised the need to guarantee that networked strategies and options are available for the upbringing and education of all children, and this as early as possible. In this context, connecting the different options with one another, such as, for example, early child support, family counselling, opportunities for education, language classes, health support while the institutions in the urban area such as schools, day-care centres, community colleges, youth centres, social services, etc. formed a network, was described as a promising strategy for imparting life skills to disadvantaged children and young people.

That the qualification of relevant players, information disseminators and professionals (such as, for example, educators working as education counsellors) should be improved was a consensual demand brought forward in the discussion, with the adjustment of framework conditions for education and training and the promotion of ties between the social sphere and the economy and the charity sector

were likewise claimed. Principles of participation and involvement should be adhered to in all areas of the educational spectrum. The systems of social pedagogy and school didactics should be conceived anew and, for example, incorporated with the opportunities presented by adult pedagogy and cultural and political education.

Education systems and the conditions under which sustainability can be ensured in the educational process should be imparted to all relevant players, so assert the members of Panel I: governmental and non-governmental institutions, schools, parties responsible for assistance programmes for children and young people, families, parents and the economy, etc.

Results of the Discussion to be included in the Joint Declaration

1. Access to education is a public task and the central element of participation, equal opportunities and gender equality, and has to be made available to every child and every young person as early as possible.
2. A successful co-production process of integrated strategies for children and young people in deprived neighbourhoods presupposes indispensable investments in human capital.
3. The availability of networked strategies and schemes offered in the field of education and training has to be ensured for all children at an early point in time. The conference participants recommend setting up local, networked prevention schemes organised on a community basis.
4. Transitions between the offered education and training schemes have to be specifically framed; it should be ensured that the respective modules are in fact achievable, and the overall "building plan" of the offered schemes should be transparent for all those involved (transparency of the structure of offered schemes).
5. Principles of participation are to be implemented in all areas of the offered educational schemes.
6. Giving disadvantaged children and young people a second chance in their education and training is in the interest of the European Communities and a public task.
7. Conditions under which sustainability in the educational process can be ensured must be communicated to all relevant actors in the society: governmental and non-governmental institutions, schools, children and youth welfare agencies, families, parents, the business community etc. All education systems need to be reconceived and brought together.

Panel II: Immigration/Interculturality: strategic integration management as municipal task

Presentations

1. Khédidja Boucart, Paris, France
2. Christian Meineke, Marburg, Germany
3. Miriam Traversi, Bologna, Italy

Summary of the Results of the Discussion

Today, it is issues of integration that represent one of the greatest challenges for almost all European countries. This is also due to the fact that issues of immigrant integration are interwoven and intermeshed with today's social and economic problems. Almost all European countries, ranging from the "old" immigration countries to the "new" immigration countries, and also including former "emigrant countries" such as Spain or Italy, see themselves confronted with issues of integration. Since immigration and integration essentially are an urban phenomenon, and since specific urban areas and districts are affected within the cities, municipal strategies of integration are what this panel focused on. The title of this panel is ambitious in the scope it describes and, especially where German municipalities are concerned, it is a far cry from today's reality, but it is intended to address a task for the future. Ms. Bourcart from Paris, Mr. Meineke from Marburg and Ms. Traversi from Bologna presented the integration strategies pursued by their respective municipalities. However, it was consensus of all participants that municipal integration policies are closely tied to national policies and traditions of integration and that in many ways, national integration policies and traditions have direct repercussions on the orientation that communal strategies take. This is a fact that must be kept in mind when efforts are made to define common interests as well as possibilities for mutual learning.

The Paris integration strategies were introduced in the first presentation. They were described against two aspects that form the backdrop for them: in Paris there is no authority at the local level that is responsible for integration policy. Additionally, though "foreigners" are registered in statistics, there are no such statistics capturing those young people who are migrants. Programmes and measures are therefore designed such that they focus on the

local area and are directed to all young people in the neighbourhoods. There are many types of location-oriented support measures, but they do not address any specific target groups. This approach, which reflects the national state integration policy, avoids stigmatising people as "foreigners." However, the consequence is that neighbourhoods populated primarily with socially disadvantaged ethnic minorities are stigmatised. An essential factor for the Paris integration policy was to consider the integration issues under different aspects that young people deal with, to involve their parents and their social environment and to combat every form of discrimination made on the basis of ethnic background.

The second presentation dealt with the Marburg integration policies, which are primarily oriented towards the district of Richtsberg, a high-rise development in the city in which immigrants make up the vast majority of the population. Not only does this urban quarter absorb the largest number of immigrants of the most diverse ethnicities, but also assumes an important municipal bridge function for immigrants who have just arrived. In contrast to other German metropolitan areas, Richtsberg cannot be described as a segregated urban quarter. In the context of its integration policies, the city of Marburg acts in an important supporting capacity by promoting processes of self-organisation and providing funds, among other things, for this purpose. An important focus is on district-oriented strategies of integration and on the establishment of an intercultural community project that stresses the promotion of processes of understanding between the various ethnic groups and focuses on furthering a culture of communication between the various relevant players in the neighbourhoods.

Strategies pursued in Bologna were the subject of the third presentation. In recent years Bologna has developed into a city whose population is made up of an increasing share of immigrants. Since the Italian tradition actually is that "guest workers" emigrate to northern Europe in the context of labour being recruited there, the city is undergoing an entirely new communal experience. Bologna has a tradition of authorities, the NGOs and relevant players of the civil society cooperating with one another. In addition to this, the city areas and their areas of activity were "decentralised" in the context of a territorial plan. These two factors are considered a prerequisite for initiating a district-oriented integration policy. Currently, in the context of a strategy of "intercultural education", great value is being placed particularly on intercultural approaches in education and

especially in schools. The concept is realised by implementing intercultural training, by revising school didactics and by developing new teaching concepts.

Transcending the situation of the individual municipalities, the discussion addressed the concepts of integration and integration management and how they are comprehended. The scope of the discussion was reduced by establishing that integration policy is not primarily a part of a municipality's responsibility, but rather is something the government or, respectively, the provinces or states of a country should be responsible for. As a result, the municipalities presented here only have access to limited options. The following conclusions were drawn at the close of the session:

Results of the Discussion to be included the Joint Declaration

1. As far as integration is concerned, it is important not to simply look at the supposed deficits of immigrants. Integration has to be valued as a resource in society, and these resources should also be appreciated.

2. When discussing the integration of foreign children and young people, this should not be done in an isolated or reduced manner. Instead, the parents, the social origin and the life of immigrants should also be looked at as an entity, because only a complex understanding of integration will indeed allow for integration.

3. Looking at children and young people with a migration background must not lead to the perception of these children and young people as one homogeneous group with similar needs. On the contrary, children and young people have to be regarded in the first place as distinct individuals with their own and different lives and life situations.

4. It is important to initiate intercultural exchange. This exchange may above all focus on the recognition of difference and the establishment of (ethnic) diversity, but it may also develop approaches uniting the recognition of difference with the search for what people have in common.

5. In order to resolve the issues of integration in the community, cooperative alliances between administrations, NGOs and actors of the civil society are needed.

6. Integration policies require a reframing of mindsets. The actors involved must review their attitudes and perspectives as these have repercussions on concepts and their practical implementation. Integration strategies call for a critical reflection of the tasks to be managed.

7. To ensure that integration policies, rather than just being implemented FOR immigrants, can define themselves as within an intercultural

quality, negotiation processes have to be organised between various actors, especially at neighbourhood level.

8. Within the framework of the kicked-off process – an exchange between administrations, regions, neighbourhoods and municipalities on issues of integration is necessary, and the initiated "Berlin process" should support such an exchange.

Panel III: Management strategies and local social development concepts in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Presentations

1. Lykke Leonardsen, Copenhagen, Denmark
2. Hermann Dorenburg, Offenbach, Germany
3. Mieke Vergeer / Michèle Hering
Amsterdam, Netherlands
4. Ursula Schenck, Mannheim, Germany
5. Dr. Siegfried Haller, Leipzig, Germany

The development and reinforcement of administrative action at a local level, the local management and supervision of processes directed towards concentrated and integrated solutions for urgent basic tasks in disadvantaged urban areas, is a problem faced by all European nations alike. Questions need to be addressed such as:

- How are the decision-making structures at the municipal and supra-regional political levels included in local development concepts or, respectively, which political structures appear particularly suited to support strategic actions at the local level?
- How can the political and administrative levels effectively coordinate, and how can this coordination include the responsible authorities?
- What are the officially assigned or voluntary responsibilities for the development and implementation of local activities?
- How are the resources of various players and institutions pooled and deployed to collectively solve problems?
- in which way are integrated strategies and local plans for actions supported and assessed by means of monitoring and evaluation programmes?

In the workshop, the experience gained in local management and control strategies in three European countries was presented, and general key principles of an interdivisional municipal and federal policy of developing urban quarters were discussed. Furthermore, methods were addressed of managing, in terms of public administration, the cooperation serving the improvement of young people's opportunities for the future.

Summary of the Results of the Discussion

After undergoing a phase in which it teetered dangerously on the brink of social self-destruction, Copenhagen developed new perspectives

in a programme called "Kvarterløft" which included concentrating and combining efforts and resources in those urban areas in which the most difficult development issues appeared. Development plans with a 7-year term were put into effect in the urban areas, and urban neighbourhood secretariats were established in the quarters which assumed the coordination, implementation and evaluation of these plans. The municipality concluded agreements with the urban areas where the funding was concerned. The funds thus allocated (which were provided by the former departmental budgets of various authorities) are tied to the implementation of a local development plan. Young people and their unique local, ethnic and cultural strategies for coping, but also the areas in which they need greater support, thus increasingly became the centre of attention of local activities, which meant that work groups acting in various problem areas could directly address them as their subject. The processes on-site are managed by a steering committee made up of representatives of governmental institutions and local players and citizens alike.

With the programme "Ctc – Communities that care", Amsterdam has implemented preventative procedures that were based consistently on scholarly insight. The basis for determining the factors that make an urban area a disadvantaged one was created from the results of a comprehensive survey of all school children in the area. The needs thus established were then narrowed down and several important developmental objectives for the urban quarter were isolated. Within the neighbourhood, criteria for determining the degree to which goals were attained were then defined (effectivity criteria) and projects were accordingly selected for implementation. The results of the projects are regularly evaluated using these criteria.

In those neighbourhoods of Mannheim in which the programme "Die soziale Stadt" (The Social City) was implemented, it was possible to initiate sustainable development processes in the societal sphere using systematic coordination and reconciliation (sequencing) of locally based projects. The prerequisite for this was that selected objectives were concentrated on (development of tolerance and democracy, promoting vocational training and qualification), that various departments joined forces to implement activities, which were geared to the specific urban quarter, and that the local players and citizens fully committed themselves to the project. Thus, it was possible to establish projects for diverse groups in the urban area that extended beyond the project term and that anchored the positive experience with

the management of social co-operation in the neighbourhood. Strategically, this process was controlled through a network of authorities; its design was prepared as part of a participative local development concept and the operative implementation and management occurred by means of networked project groups.

The Leipzig Jugendamt (Office for Youth Affairs) has made it its objective to promote active participation and integrated neighbourhood development concepts by means of restructuring neighbourhood youth offices in terms of their administration. The first task of the neighbourhood youth offices was to secure the active participation of young people living in the urban area in developing the neighbourhood and to furthermore involve them in the decision-making process as to how the measures would be designed. For this purpose, the Office for Youth Affairs is integrated into open networks or, respectively, initiates and coordinates the same. Interfaces between divisions were focused on in order to involve basic resources in the neighbourhood and to cooperatively implement local action projects.

In the municipal region "Östliche Innenstadt" (Eastern Inner City) in Offenbach, the educational infrastructure, job market policy, sensitive location factors and the integration efforts for citizens with immigrant background all needed to be developed. For this scenario a guiding principle entitled "Entwicklung einer Bildungsregion" (Development of an Education Region) was found. The Office for Youth Affairs founded a coordination office in the area to implement the programme and assumed the overall responsibility for the development tasks. The starting point in this context was the ESF (European Social Fund) programme "Local Capital for Social Purposes – LOS." A support committee and steering group were founded to manage the programme. These jointly decide where the financing of on-site micro-projects is concerned. By means of continuing projects or implementing consecutive projects in two funding periods, efforts are being made to establish projects that are sustainable. Important criteria for sustainability: to re-use resources and to involve citizens in the work.

Results of the Discussion to be included the Joint Declaration

1. Local management of social neighbourhood development processes is a task for the municipalities' administrative reforms which can only be resolved on a long-term basis. The basis for medium- and long-term reliable work in disadvantaged neighbourhoods should be formed by contracts on funding of local development projects between the municipality and

state institutions (government). Only binding agreements will be appropriate as a secure basis for long-term projects.

2. Scientific findings and statistical surveys on impact research are the basis of decisions on strategies and programmes. Examples of good practice meet the criteria of effectiveness and economically efficient use of resources.

3. Local networks must be structured in a way that opens them to all actors and their suggestions.

4. A dynamic strategic management cycle will allow for a permanent adjustment of neighbourhood work to the changed social environment.

5. Management and co-ordination should be enhanced by active and open communication strategies, involving the media and the internet.

6. In future, neighbourhood projects have to be oriented towards a change of direction in EU funding, going from structural funds towards integrated strategies as a mainstream of European promotion of social and youth work.

Panel IV: Strengthening the civil society and participation

Presentations

1. Lasse Siurala, Helsinki, Finland
2. Vera Bethge / Claudia Krause, Berlin Neukölln, Germany
3. Bernd Kammerer, Nuremberg, Germany
4. Hans-Joachim Schild, European Commission, DG Education and Culture, Brussels, Belgium

Summary of the Results of the Discussion

On the one hand this panel dealt with various European strategies that focus on strengthening civil society and enhancing civic participation, while on the other the topic is regarded from the perspective of local, communal and European strategies.

Lasse Siurala from the Finnish capital of Helsinki and Bernd Kammerer from the German city of Nuremberg presented strategies of reinforcing the civil society that are being pursued on the municipal level. Vera Bethge and Claudia Krause described two local projects that were carried out in the Berlin district of Neukölln (Federal Republic of Germany). Hans-Joachim Schild from the European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture, provided an overview of the European Union strategies, focusing particularly on the participation opportunities for youth.

In the discussion it became clear that dovetailing local, communal and European structures will be required to give children, adolescents and their families an opportunity to comprehensively participate in democratic structures. In this context the local level is the most crucial point of contact for disadvantaged children and young people. In order to reach them, in order for them to understand what their opportunities are, innovative ideas and chances must be developed so that they can be addressed directly and can be involved in the democratic process.

In this context, participation must make use of various strategies. Thus, to cite an example, both "top-down" as well as "bottom-up" strategies are to be implemented, so that participatory processes can develop comprehensively and can establish themselves in a sustainable way, and so that the requirements for an active citizenship are given.

The local level has a special significance when the objective is to reach out to disadvantaged children and young people. What is necessary in this regard is that youth counsel-

lors and social workers continuously work in these areas so that a climate of trust can develop. To activate these young people within the sphere of their residential and living environments is the first step towards participation. The examples from Berlin-Neukölln – a "young people's street" in which various opportunities are available to children and adolescents and a neighbourhood café that got started as a result of a summer action programme and whose operations now revolve around the precise needs of the population – are excellent examples of a local activation which leads to sustainable opportunities for participation. In order to continually be able to support and attend to these processes, full-time employees are required that have expertise in these areas.

The urban strategies pursued in Helsinki and Nuremberg were able to connect to structures that were already in existence. In Helsinki the work is performed in close cooperation with schools and youth centres. As an expansion to these structures, for example, regional youth councils were established that are incorporated in the political decision making process. When the group of disadvantaged children and adolescents was studied later, it became apparent that this option in schools succeeded in reintegrating into daily school life precisely that target group: school drop-outs. Where such work in Nuremberg is concerned, an alliance for families was presented in addition to the participative opportunities for children and young people – children assemblies, participation in public children and youth work and participation in planning youth aid programmes. It became clear in the process that including the families in such processes is an important resource for promoting children and youth.

The internet provides a good opportunity on all levels (local, communal, national and Europe-wide) for children, adolescents and their families to participate. However, in this case and especially at the local level, internet access must be provided and the participants must be familiar or made familiar with the usage of this medium. The options have to be correspondingly designed and attended to by qualified workers and the participatory character must be taken seriously.

On the level of the European Union, improved options for disadvantaged children and young people are being created in the context of the YOUTH programme. This target group is to be integrated in all measures. The European Council has declared 2005 as the "European Year of Citizenship through Education." With this measure, it is intended to emphasize the relevance of education for civil society and for the quality of social participation of citizens in

a democratic society. It must be kept in mind that European policy currently does not (yet) have a mandate for family politics. It should be considered how the political levels can truly interlock their work in order to achieve an integrated policy.

In addition, a broad spectrum of topics was discussed that is briefly outlined below:

- Permanent structures for participation must be established.
- Children and young people need to be entrusted with power and responsibility.
- Decisions must be taken as partners and in cooperation.
- Along with activation and participation, opportunities must be created to also incorporate disadvantaged (young) people in the processes of a representative democracy.
- In addition to educational resources, financial resources also need to be made available to disadvantaged young people so that active cooperation can occur (for example, transportation costs, communication costs).
- Learning the art of participation does not mean that just children and young people need options in this area. It is also adults, the professionals from youth and social work, schools and politics and also parents who need to learn how participation can be made a success.
- The internet needs to be used more strongly for democratic processes. Internet portals from public institutions have to realise their social responsibility and must offer participation opportunities while also consistently taking part in this dialogue. The options need to address children and young people. Additionally, it must be guaranteed that there is a multitude of internet portals available to children, young people and their families.
- Information must be easily accessible both for children and young people as well as for information disseminators.
- Participation must also use creative methods so that more children and young people can be reached.
- Win-win situations must be created.
- Participation must be understood as a whole.
- Adults must meet the children and young people at their own emotional level.
- The openness and transparency of democratic processes need to be constantly reviewed.
- NGOs need to be strengthened in this process and there must be permanent structures in place for this purpose.
- Opportunities need to relate to both gen-

ders. In this case as well, it needs to be sensitively observed how participative structures can be created which provide equal opportunities for both genders.

- All of these processes require time and cannot be established in their full scope in the short term.

Results of the Discussion to be included the Joint Declaration

1. Diverse offers for participation are necessary to allow for full democratic participation.
2. The participation of disadvantaged children and young people requires new forms of participation.
3. To enable children and young people from deprived neighbourhoods to participate in representative democratic processes, they may need – besides adequate education schemes – some basic financial resources permitting communication (telephone, internet) and mobility.
4. Participation is a learning process not only for children and young people, but also for professionals active in social youth work, and for politicians.
5. Children have to be enabled to participate in society from pre-school age onwards.

Conclusions of the conference

Central aspects of the discussions:

This document pinpoints central issues presented during the plenary sessions of the conference. In addition to that, the reports of the four working groups and the final conference report will describe the essential topics of the debate in detail, taking also into account the opinions brought up in the working groups and plenary sessions.

The conference encourages a Europe-wide exchange about the issue of cross-regional learning to be organised by rotation between the countries involved. The initiative for this exchange has its origin at local level. The participants consider the local level as central to all their efforts. The proposed exchange shall, therefore, be entitled: "Berlin-process / The social city for children and young people".

1. 160 participants of the European conference "Integrated strategies for children and young people in disadvantaged urban areas", mayors of German and European cities, Parliamentarians and elected members of municipalities, youth researchers and experts of both municipal and youth policies, NGOs, particularly youth associations, youth and social workers, civil servants of German and European municipalities and German and European institutions have come together in Berlin on 23rd to 25th November 2004 to raise their voice about the often difficult living conditions for young people of the under 25 age range in disadvantaged urban environments. The conference is an initiative of the German Federal Ministry for Families, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth in co-operation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the Directorate for Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe.

2. This conference unites different practical experience and ideas as developed in German and European municipalities and discusses different models of good-practice. The conference adds a new quality to the Europe-wide exchange on integrated local policies, as it involves European municipalities directly as part of the project. It is thus an incentive for cross-regional learning in Europe with various centres of initiative according to the proposed principle of rotation between municipalities.

3. The participants of the conference are researchers, practitioners, teachers and trainers,

diversity and neighbourhood managers, civil society stakeholders, NGO representatives and politicians. Fully aware of their specific responsibility, they contribute through their special skills and experience to the debate and count on the contents discussed during the conference to become part of an enlarged dialogue with the competent political bodies and institutions at local, regional and European level.

4. With regard to young people the European Union offers exciting perspectives:

The Lisbon strategy sets as an objective that by the year 2010 the European Union should be the most performant knowledge based economy of the world. Fundamental investments will be made in education from early childhood through general education, secondary education, higher education, vocational training into Life Long Learning. New member countries of the EU in Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe will contribute to this process and increase the space for mobility of young people in Europe. Four heads of state and government, namely Jacques Chirac, Gerhard Schroeder, Jose R. Zapatero and Goeran Persson, have, in their letter of 29 October 2004 to the Dutch Presidency of the European Union, called for a "Pact on Youth". They say, in their letter, that substantial efforts are needed in education and training to reach the Lisbon objectives, but they also underline the vulnerability of youth and the risk of marginalisation. Referring to the demographic trend of ever decreasing birthrates they also call for an integrated childhood, youth and family policy.

Seen from the local level of children and youth policy, what are the main items in this context?

5. Items could be:

- The limitation of access to quality education and vocational training for disadvantaged young people continues to produce social exclusion.
- Violent patterns of behaviour in school, the work place and in families as well as discriminations of all kind (related to socio-economic status, gender, social and ethnical origin, religion and faith, disability, age or sexual orientation) continue to harm the conditions of everyday life.
- Social discrimination and the lack of involvement result in a society where competition, social exclusion and individualisation dominate. There are winners and losers; and these are produced at the expense of solidarity and public responsibility.
- Opportunities for access to learning and professional advancement are often mainly determined by the parents' status, as this is underlined once again in the recent PISA

study especially with regard to Germany.

- Politics fails increasingly to reach young people in disadvantaged urban areas (and not only there).

6. In particular in Europe's disadvantaged urban areas, the ambition of offering equal development opportunities to all young people has become largely jeopardised. Therefore, it is high time to do something about it and make local policies for children and young people a priority on the European policy agenda.

7. The participants of the conference are dealing with the reality of life of disadvantaged young people and refer explicitly to European level youth policy documents such as the "European Charta on the Participation of Young People at Local and Regional Level" (Council of Europe; Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe) and the White Paper of the European Commission "A new impetus for the youth of Europe". They are acquainted with the European search for best practices; which is, indeed, a remarkable and efficient tool of social learning. However, this time they want more. They encourage commitment and change. This is why there is talk of a process, the "Berlin process/The social city for children and youth", which means in the end of the day that several social actors, stakeholders and players have to move, get together and discuss the conditions and possibilities of change.

8. The objective is to put flesh on the bones of the concept of the 'social city for children and youth' and the instrument to achieve this should be an overarching policy for children and young people, aiming at increasing their opportunities in life and their personal development. Experience with such "integrated strategies" exists. One example is the German Federal-Länder Programme "Districts with Special Development Needs – The Socially Integrative City" and its partner programme "Development and Opportunities for Young People in Deprived Neighbourhoods" (Entwicklung und Chancen junger Menschen in sozialen Brennpunkten – E&C). Within these programmes, integrated strategies of pooling resources through a cross-sectoral, cross-departmental approach have been developed: These programmes encourage and support the active participation of citizens and they belong to and have been initiated within the field of urban development and youth welfare / social work.

9. The aim is political and societal co-production to increase the range of future options and opportunities for young people. This co-production needs to include municipal and regional actors, national/federal actors, the business community, civil society, European instituti-

ons and the people, especially young people themselves. The co-production needs to follow strands of formal and non-formal education, social action, community based experience, political participation and articulation, media involvement, research, urban planning, immigration policies, gender policies and Human Rights Education.

The objective is to create synergies, advance social cohesion, assure access and inclusion and aim at one commonly shared condition: that all childhood and youth policy includes an employment, a personal development and a civil society element to make sure, that there is both an individual and a community based strategy towards overcoming disadvantages in neighbourhoods.

10. The 'social city for children and youth' concept thus insists on active participation of all social actors involved, looks for synergies and added value and aims at co-production and co-management of city affairs. This concept, to be successful, requires good governance and steering and efficient co-ordination. Whether one looks, in Europe, into the many examples where such a concept has been strived for, but failed or whether one looks into success stories – the key for success and failure has always been the steering and co-ordination aspect of the integrated policy. The item touches on delegation, transversal and non-territorial attitudes to work, budgetary flexibility, personal commitment beyond defined work objectives, transparency, critical evaluation and validation and the involvement of a maximum of social actors. Steering and co-ordination of integrated youth policies have to be learned, encouraged and practiced. However, improvement in this area produces synergy effects and has directly tangible results for the benefit of young people in deprived neighbourhoods.

11. The job of steering and co-ordination is to come up with a co-produced and co-managed youth policy operating with a well-structured dialogue, coming out of strategic institutional and operative social networks. These will deal equally with family, childhood and youth policies, because the condition of disadvantaged neighbourhoods do not allow for separate policies: there is a very strong interdependence between these three layers of horizontal policy. The result will be a co-operative mix dealing with:

- urban and neighbourhood development, rural areas
- empowerment, participation and citizenship of inhabitants
- local alliances, networks and partnerships
- social affairs
- local employment opportunities

- education and training
- sports and leisure
- cultural production
- cooperation with the local economy and miscellaneous sectors
- public security
- public health

Integrated childhood and youth policies will be co-operative and co-productive policies; their results will be measured in the improvement of living conditions, the creation of access and inclusion for all young people with regard to education, employment, leisure, public life, decent housing and a safe life without fear of aggression against any form of 'otherness'.

12. The 'social city for children and youth' will be a city of citizens. It is not yet, it is constantly becoming. There cannot be active participation in public life for citizens struck by poverty and marginalisation with all its well-known effects such as poor education, low status and low self-confidence. The ideal of full citizenship describes a feeling of belonging to a community and the capacity to analyse social situations and to take part in finding solutions to problems posed. This cannot be achieved without critical capacities and without an accepted interaction between civil society and public authority. Both have different roles and produce creative and shared forms of togetherness and community, even if the process may be controversial at times.

This approach is all inclusive, i.e. it is not restricted to the majority part culture of the population. It includes migrants, refugees, foreigners. In this respect the important work of migrant and foreign citizens' councils deserves mention and respect and the practice of setting up and supporting such councils is recommended throughout Europe. In this respect, the Council of Europe Convention on the participation of foreigners in public life at local level should be given increased attention.

Another observation in respect of citizenship is, that in disadvantaged areas, and not only there, we face a disturbingly low turnout at elections; a problem which endangers the very fabric of democracy. Participation and citizenship are pillars of the 'social city for children and youth'; what this is all about has to be learnt and this learning needs to be intercultural, employment focussed and stabilising to individuals and communities. We submit a recommendation in this context to the "European Year of Citizenship through Education" of the Council of Europe in 2005; non-formal education and intercultural learning have a great potential to promote the 'social city for children and youth'.

13. To enable the democratic learning pro-

cess described above, many actors in municipal policy making have to change their attitude. This cannot work without the closest possible co-operation between formal and informal (non-formal) actors in education, vocational training and employment, it requires a youth competent criminal justice and law enforcement system and it is built on trust in institutions. This trust, it seems, is largely gone, in many communities. It has to be rebuilt, time and again, based on a new code of conduct locally, regionally, nationally and in Europe. The objective of social cohesion itself is in danger, if deprived urban areas continue by their very existence to produce doubts about the concept of a socially united Europe.

14. Social policies for children and young people need to be designed on a long term basis. Short-term reductions of public funding have a negative impact on prevention, public health, education reform, social integration programmes and measures to assure transition to the labour market. Conditions need to be established which guarantee sustainability. Whilst the quest for adequate public funding is uncontested, it is also obvious that much of added value can be created through efficient mainstreaming of the children and youth policy agenda, through integrated policies and through a combined use of local, national and European funding as in the E&C project.

To promote the 'social city for children and youth', the conference recommends:

Panel I: Acquisition of life skills – education and learning (formal, informal, non-formal) in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

1. Access to education is a public task and the central element of participation, equal opportunities and gender equality, and has to be made available to every child and every young person as early as possible.

2. A successful co-production process of integrated strategies for children and young people in deprived neighbourhoods presupposes indispensable investments in human capital.

3. The availability of networked strategies and schemes offered in the field of education and training has to be ensured for all children at an early point in time. The conference participants recommend setting up local, networked prevention schemes organised on a community basis.

4. Transitions between the offered education and training schemes have to be specifically framed; it should be ensured that the respective modules are in fact achievable, and the overall "building plan" of the offered schemes should be transparent for all those involved

(transparency of the structure of offered schemes).

5. Principles of participation are to be implemented in all areas of the offered educational schemes.

6. Giving disadvantaged children and young people a second chance in their education and training is in the interest of the European Communities and a public task.

7. Conditions under which sustainability in the educational process can be ensured must be communicated to all relevant actors in the society: governmental and non-governmental institutions, schools, children and youth welfare agencies, families, parents, the business community etc. All education systems need to be reconceived and brought together.

Panel II: Immigration/interculturality: Strategic integration management as a municipal task

1. As far as integration is concerned, it is important not to simply look at the supposed deficits of immigrants. Integration has to be valued as a resource in society, and these resources should also be appreciated.

2. When discussing the integration of foreign children and young people, this should not be done in an isolated or reduced manner. Instead, the parents, the social origin and the life of immigrants should also be looked at as an entity, because only a complex understanding of integration will indeed allow for integration.

3. Looking at children and young people with a migration background must not lead to the perception of these children and young people as one homogeneous group with similar needs. On the contrary, children and young people have to be regarded in the first place as distinct individuals with their own and different lives and life situations.

4. It is important to initiate intercultural exchange. This exchange may above all focus on the recognition of difference and the establishment of (ethnic) diversity, but it may also develop approaches uniting the recognition of difference with the search for what people have in common.

5. In order to resolve the issues of integration in the community, cooperative alliances between administrations, NGOs and actors of the civil society are needed.

6. Integration policies require a reframing of mindsets. The actors involved must review their attitudes and perspectives as these have repercussions on concepts and their practical implementation. Integration strategies call for a critical reflection of the tasks to be managed.

7. To ensure that integration policies, rather than just being implemented FOR immigrants, can define themselves as within an intercultural

quality, negotiation processes have to be organised between various actors, especially at neighbourhood level.

8. Within the framework of the kicked-off process – an exchange between administrations, regions, neighbourhoods and municipalities on issues of integration is necessary, and the initiated “Berlin process” should support such an exchange.

Panel III: Management strategies and local social development concepts in disadvantaged neighbourhoods

1. Local management of social neighbourhood development processes is a task for the municipalities’ administrative reforms which can only be resolved on a long-term basis. The basis for medium- and long-term reliable work in disadvantaged neighbourhoods should be formed by contracts on funding of local development projects between the municipality and state institutions (government). Only binding agreements will be appropriate as a secure basis for long-term projects.

2. Scientific findings and statistical surveys on impact research are the basis of decisions on strategies and programmes. Examples of good practice meet the criteria of effectiveness and economically efficient use of resources.

3. Local networks must be structured in a way that opens them to all actors and their suggestions.

4. A dynamic strategic management cycle will allow for a permanent adjustment of neighbourhood work to the changed social environment.

5. Management and coordination should be enhanced by active and open communication strategies, involving the media and the internet.

6. In future, neighbourhood projects have to be oriented towards a change of direction in EU funding, going from structural funds towards integrated strategies as a mainstream of European promotion of social and youth work.

Panel IV: Strengthening the civil society and participation

1. Diverse offers for participation are necessary to allow for full democratic participation.

2. The participation of disadvantaged children and young people requires new forms of participation.

3. To enable children and young people from deprived neighbourhoods to participate in representative democratic processes, they may need – besides adequate education schemes – some basic financial resources permitting communication (telephone, internet) and mobility.

4. Participation is a learning process not only for children and young people, but also for professionals active in social youth work, and for politicians.

5. Children have to be enabled to participate in society from pre-school age onwards.

**Programme of the European Conference:
“Integrated Strategies for Children and Young People in Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods”**

- Organisers:** German Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ)
in co-operation with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe and the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe
- Date/Place:** November 23-25, 2004, Federal Foreign Office, Berlin
- Working languages:** German, English, French

Tuesday, 23rd of November

- 15.00** **Presentation of the draft conclusions and discussion with the participants of the European conference**
- 19.30** **Reception and joint dinner at the hotel**

Wednesday, 24th of November

- 09.30** **Opening of the conference:
Strategies for improving future opportunities of children and young people in neighbourhoods with special development needs**
Marieluise Beck, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Berlin, Germany
- 10.15** **Importance of municipal and local strategies for the social inclusion of young people in Europe**
Ulrich Bohner, Chief Executive, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France
- 10.45** **Activities of the Council of Europe with regard to minorities and disadvantaged young people**
Dr. Ralf-René Weingärtner, Council of Europe, Director, DG of Youth and Sport, Strasbourg, France
- 11.15** **Greeting of the European Commission: European initiatives for the social inclusion of young people**
Pierre Mairesse, European Commission, Director, DG Education and Culture, Brussels, Belgium
- 11.45** **Impetus and challenges of integrated strategies for children and young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods -**
Dr. Christian Lüders, German Youth Institute, Munich, Germany

- 12.45 Lunch
- 14.00 Panel Session:
Impetus and challenges of integrated strategies for children and young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods**
- Panel 1 Acquisition of life skills – education and learning (formal, informal, non-formal) in disadvantaged neighbourhoods**
Annette Berg, City of Monheim am Rhein, Germany
Anikó Molitorisz, City of Budapest, Hungary
Prof. Dr. Nazmi Oruc, City of Eskisehir, Turkey
Andrea Neutsch, City of Stralsund, Germany
Facilitator: Dr. Heike Riesling-Schärfe, Regiestelle E&C, Berlin, Germany
- Panel 2 Immigration / Interculturality: strategic integration management as municipal task**
Khédidja Bourcart, City of Paris, France
Christian Meineke, City of Marburg, Germany
Miriam Traversi, City of Bologna, Italy
Facilitator: Dr. Dorit Meyer, Regiestelle E&C, Berlin, Germany
- Panel 3 Management strategies and local social development concepts in disadvantaged neighbourhoods**
Lykke Leonardsen, City of Copenhagen, Denmark
Mieke Vergeer / Michèle Hering City of Amsterdam, Netherlands
Ursula Schenck City of Mannheim, Germany
Hermann Dorenburg, City of Offenbach, Germany
Dr. Siegfried Haller, City of Leipzig, Germany
Facilitator: Rainer Schwarz, Regiestelle E&C, Berlin, Germany
- Panel 4 Strengthening the civil society and participation**
Lasse Siurala, City of Helsinki, Finland
Vera Bethge / Claudia Krause, City of Berlin Neukölln, Germany
Bernd Kammerer, City of Nuremberg, Germany
Hans-Joachim Schild, European Commission, DG Education and Culture, Brussels, Belgium
Facilitator: Sabine Meyer, Regiestelle E&C, Berlin, Germany
- 17.00 Coffee break
- 17.30 Panel Session II**
- 19.30 Dinner

Thursday, 25th of November

- 09.00** **Presentation of the panel results in the plenary**
- European initiatives in the youth sector with regard to conclusions of the conference**
 Hans-Joachim Schild, European Commission, DG Education and Culture,
 Brussels, Belgium
- 11.00** **Implications for the conclusions**
 Peter Lauritzen, Council of Europe, Directorate for Youth and Sports,
 Strasbourg, France
 Hartmut Brocke, Foundation SPI, Berlin, Germany
- 11.30** **Adoption of the conclusions**
- 12.30** Buffet
- 13.30** **End of conference**

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
Arusyak Aleksanyan	Open Space Society NGO	Lepsius 6/6 ARMENIA ARM - Yerevan	003741526869 / 003741526297	sepuh_2000@yahoo.com
Torsten Anton	Deutsches Rotes Kreuz (DRK) Generalsekretariat T 41	Carstennstr. 58 12205 Berlin	03085404319 / 03085404468	anton@drk.de
Lilit Asatryan	Ministry of Culture and Youth Affairs Deputy Minister	Lepsius AMENIA ARM - YEREVAN	003741526869 / 003741526297	sepuh_2000@yahoo.com
Ulf Bächle	Stadt Saarbrücken Amt für Kinder und Jugendliche Amtsleiter	66104 Saarbrücken	06819054264 / 06819054239	ulf.baechle@saarbruecken.de
Alexander Bartling	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities - Council of Europe Private Office of the Secretary General	BP 431, R6 FRANCE F - 67006 Strasbourg	0033388412970 / 0033388412751	alexander.bartling@coe.int
Marieluise Beck	Parlamentarische Staatssekretärin und Beauftragte d. Bundesregierung für Migration, Flüchtlinge und Integration - Büro Berlin	Alexanderplatz 6 11018 Berlin	030206551835 / 030206554512	as@bmfsfj.bund.de
Manfred Beck	Vorstand für Kultur, Bildung, Jugend und Sport	Forastr. 26/28 45875 Gelsenkirchen	02091699148	vb4@gelsenkirchen.net
Annette Berg	Stadt Monheim Fachbereich 2 - Jugend und Familie Jugendamt - Amtsleiterin	Rathausplatz 10a 40789 Monheim	021739515550 / 02173951519	fb2@monheim.de
Dr. Claudia Berthel	Stadt Chemnitz Amt für Jugend und Familie	Bahnhofstr. 53 9106 Chemnitz	03714885131 / 03714885192	claudia.berthel@stadt-chemnitz.de
Vera Bethge	Bezirksamt Neukölln Abt. Jugend / Jugendförderung Jug 1 A 1	Blaschkoallee 32 12359 Berlin	03068093100 / 03068093738	Vera.Bethge@BA-NKN.verwalt-berlin.de

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
Annemarie Bittorf	Stadt Erfurt Jugendamt	Steinplatz 1 99085 Erfurt	03616554706 / 03616554709	jugendamt@erfurt.de
Dr. Jürgen Boeckh	IISS - Institut für Sozialarbeit und Sozialpädagogik	Zeilweg 42 60439 Frankfurt/a. M.	06995789138	juergen.boeckh@iss-ffm.de
Cornelius Boensmann	Stadt Dortmund Jugendamt 51/4	Ostwall 64 44122 Dortmund	02315029860	cboensmann@stadtdo.de
Ulrich Bohner	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe Chief Executive of the Congress	FRANCE F - 67075 Strasbourg	0033388412248 / 0033388412751	ulrich.bohner@coe.int
Khédidja Bourcart	Adjointe au maire de Paris chargée d l'intégration et des étrangers non communautaires	Hotel de Ville FRANCE F - 75196 Paris	0033142764188 / 0033142764188	khedidja.bourcart@mairie-paris.fr
Jutta Braun				
Katharina Brederlow	Stadt Halle Fachbereich Kinder, Jugend und Familie	Schopenhauerstr. 4 6114 Halle	03452215720	katharina.brederlow@halle.de
Katrin Brinkhoff	ISS - Institut für Sozialarbeit und Sozialpädagogik Projektbüro Berlin	Michaelkirchstr. 17-18 10179 Berlin	03060980621	k.brinkhoff@deutscher-verein.de
Matthias Bruckdorfer	Diakonisches Werk der EKD SoFJA-Projektbüro Projektleiter	Staffenbergstr. 76 70184 Stuttgart	07112159325 / 07112159288	bruckdorfer@diakonie.de
Giorgos Christoulas	Programming & Development Consultant - Municipality of Karditsa	1, Artesianou Str. GREECE GR - Karditsa 43100	00302441079582 / 00302441077105	christoulas@karditsa-city.gr
Hansgeorg Cibis	Stadt Mannheim Fachbereich Wohnen und Stadterneuerung	E2, 15 68159 Mannheim	06212937900 / 06212937800	hansgeorg.cibis@mannheim.de

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
Prof. Dr. Serdar Degirmencioglu	Istanbul Bilgi University Department of Psychology	Inonu Cad. 28, Kustepe TURKEY TR - 34387 Istanbul	00902123116382 / 00902122168477	serdard@bilgi.edu.tr
Hermann Dorenburg	Stadt Offenbach Jugendamt, Amt 51 Amtsleiter	Berliner Str. 100 63065 Offenbach	06980653163 / 06980653187	hermann.dorenburg@offenbach.de
Marie-Luise Dreber	Internationaler Jugendaustausch- und Besucherdienst (IJAB) e. V. Geschäftsführerin	Heussallee 30 53113 Bonn	02289506207 / 02289506199	dreber@ijab.de
Rainer Dworog	Stadt Salzgitter Stadtverwaltung - Dez. IV, Jugendamt Stadtrat für Kultur und Soziales	Joachim-Campe-Str. 6-8 38226 Salzgitter	053418394517 / 053418394904	rainer.dworog@stadt.salzgitter.de
Thomas Ehlert	Stadt Leipzig Jugendamt - Planungskoordination/ Statistik - Sachgebietsleiter	Naumburger Str. 26 4229 Leipzig	03411234319	tehlert@leipzig.de
Simon El-Zainab	Center of Family Service West Aarhus	Gudrunsvej 78 DENMARK DK - 8229 Brabrand	004589405700	gkr@fa.aarhus.dk
Angelika Emrich	Online-Portal Soziales Berlin	Potsdamer Straße 12205 Berlin	03069599454	a.emrich@soziales-berlin.de
Francesca Fabi	Intercultural Education Laboratory and Archive, Education Dept. Municipality of Bologna	Via Ca 'Selvatica 7 ITALY I - 40123 Bologna		bid7274@iperbole.bologna.it
Peter Fialka	Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband e. V. Referent für Jugendsozialarbeit Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr	Heinrich-Hoffmann-Str. 3 60528 Frankfurt/a. M.	0696706258 / 0696706288	peter.fialka@paritaet.org
Klára Filipová	Verband Tschechischer Städte und Gemeinden	Pacouska 31 TCHEQUE CZ - 14000 Praha	00420241733589 / 00420241733585	jirova@smocr.cz

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
Dr. Heike Förster	Deutsches Jugendinstitut e. V. Regionale Arbeitsstelle Halle Franckesche Stiftungen	Franckeplatz 1, Haus 12/13 6110 Halle	03456817822 / 03415665447	foerster@dji.de
Dr. Peter Fricke	Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (BMFSFJ) Abt. 5 - Abteilungsleiter	Alexanderplatz 6 10178 Berlin	030206551900 / 030206554190	peter.fricke@bmfsfj.bund.de
Andreas Georgiou	Municipality of Karditsa 1, Artesianou Str.	GR - 43100 Karditsa GREECE	00302441079582 / 00302441077105	christoulas@karditsa-city.gr
Mkhitar Gevorgyan	Ministry of Science and Education 3,rd Governmental Building	ARM - Yerevan ARMENIA	003741526869 / 003741526297	sepuh_2000@yahoo.com
Jeanette Goddar	Tagesspiegel	Prinzessinnenstr. 19-20 10969 Berlin	03061403039 / 03061402980	jago@taz.de
Klaus Gohlke	Stadt Oberhausen Büro des Oberbürgermeisters Bereich Soziale Stadt	Schwartzstr. 72 46045 Oberhausen	02088252349	klaus.gohlke@oberhausen.de
Margo Gorman	Combined European Bureau for Social Development Trummon West	Laghey Co. - Donegal IRELAND IRL - Dublin	00353749723129	margogorman@cicrom.net
Frederick Groeder- Roth	BAG Soziale Stadtentwicklung GWA	Stift Str. 15 30159 Hannover	05117000526	bagsozialestadtentwicklung@t-online.de
Terje Grytten	Council of Children and Youth Oslo Mollergata 3	N - 0179 Oslo NORWAY	004724149830	terje@unginfo.oslo.no
Dr. Siegfried Haller	Stadt Leipzig Jugendamt Amtsleiter	4092 Leipzig	03411234494 / 03411234484	jugendamt@leipzig.de
Dr. Wolfgang Hammer	Behörde für Soziales und Familie Hamburg Amt für Familie, Jugend und Sozialordnung Abteilung Kinder- und Familienhilfe	Hamburger Straße 37 22083 Hamburg	040428632440 / 040428632346	wolfgang.hammer@bsf.hamburg.de

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
John Hanley	Dublin City Council Wood Quay	IRL - Dublin IRELAND	0035312223379	johnpaul.hanley@dublincity.ie
Mary Hanlon	Dublin City Council Wood Quay	IRL - Dublin IRELAND	0035312223327	mary.hanlon@dublincity.ie
Paul Hardiman	Grupo Alba International 81 Avenue des Archiducs	B - 1170 Bruxelles BELGIUM	003226752055 / 003741526297	desarollo@grupoalba.net
Volker Hausdorf	Stadt München Jugendamt, S-II-L/S	Orleansplatz 11 81667 München	08923327607 / 08923327489	volker.hausdorf@muenchen.de
Michèle Hering	Projectleider Regio-RAAK Beleidsadviseur Jeugd & Onderwijs Sector Welzijn en Onderwijs	Staddeel Amsterdam-Noord NETHERLAND NL - Amsterdam	00206349295	m.hering@noord.amsterdam.nl
Hermann Hillmann	Stadt Neu-Ulm Stadtverwaltung	Augsburgerstr. 15 89231 Neu-Ulm	07317050122	egugler@stadt.neu-ulm.de
Martin Hückeler	Stadt Solingen Stadtdienst Jugend Leiter	Grünwalder Str. 29-31 42657 Solingen	02122494350 / 02122494422	m.hueckeler@solingen.de
Hans Iblher	Vicelinschule Schulleiter Quartiersmanagement Vicelinviertel	Vicelinstr. 51 24534 Neumünster	043219422284 / 04321952235	quartiermanagement@awo-neumuenster.de
Cornelia Israel	Bezirksamt Mitte Abt. Jugend und Finanzen	Karl-Marx-Allee 31 10178 Berlin	030200923410	rainer.pede@ba-mitte.verwalt-berlin.de
Manvel Javadyan	Centre of organizing of Youth programmes	Khaniyan 13 ARMENIA ARM - Yerevan	00374526869 / 003741526297	sepuh_2000@yahoo.com
Petra Jung	Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung	Hannoversche Str. 28-30 10115 Berlin	01888575349	petra.jung@bmbf.bund.de
Bernd Kammerer	Stadt Nürnberg Jugendamt	Dietzstr. 4 90443 Nürnberg	09112313208	bernd.kammerer@stadt.nuernberg.de

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
Andreas Kapphan	Bundesministerium für Familien, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (BMFSFJ) Referat AS 2	11018 Berlin	018885551816 / 030206551816	andreas.kapphan@bmfsfj.bund.de
Carola Kirsch	Stadt Wolfsburg Geschäftsbereich Jugend Leiterin	Porschestra. 47 38440 Wolfsburg	05361282879 / 05361281808	Geschäftsbereich.Jugend@stadt.wolfsburg.de
Sabine Klemp	Stadt Dortmund Jugendamt Respekt-Büro	Geschwister-Scholl-Str. 33-37 44135 Dortmund	02315029943	sklemp@stadtdo.de
Hans Klump	Stadt Mannheim Fachbereich Wohnen/ Stadterneuerung	E 2, 15 68159 Mannheim	06212937903	hans.klump@mannheim.de
Christiane Kochner	Deutsches Jugendinstitut e. V. Regionale Arbeitsstelle Halle Franckesche Stiftungen	Franckeplatz 1, Haus 12/13 6100 Halle	03456817815	kochner@dji.de
Jan Köhler	Institut für regionale Innivation und Sozialforschung - IRIS e. V.	Uhlandstr. 39 1069 Dresden	035146768930	koehler@iris-ev.de
Sonja Koller	Stadt München Sozialreferat Jugendsozialarbeit	Orleansplatz 11 81667 München	08923327435	stephanie.kralik@muenchen.de
Claudia Krause	Bezirksamt Neukölln Abt. Jugend / Modellprojekt "Auf- wachsen in der Köllnischen Heide"	Karl-Marx-Str. 83 12040 Berlin	03068083715 / 0306835992	Claudia.Krause@neukoelln-jugend.de
Robert Kredig	Bundesverband Deutscher West-Ost-Gesellschaften - BDWO		02083016629	r.kredig@t-online.de
Gitte Krogh	Center of Family Service West Aarhus	Gudrunsvvej 78 DENMARK DK - 8220 Brabrand	004589405700	gkr@fa.aarhus.dk

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
Maarit Kuikka	Central Union for Child Welfare	Armfeltintie 1 FINLAND FIN - 00150 Helsinki	00358932960204 / 00358932960299	maarit.kuikka@lskl.fi
Peter Kupferschmid	Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (BMFSFJ) Ref. 502 - Referatsleiter	Rochusstr. 8-10 53107 Bonn	030206552883 / 030206554807	Peter.Kupferschmid@bmfsfj.bund.de
Peter Lauritzen	Directorate of Youth and Sport Council of Europe	30, rue Pierre de Coubertin FRANCE F - 67000 Strasbourg	0033388412293 / 0033388412777	peter.lauritzen@coe.int
William Lay	COFACE Rue de Londres 17	B - 1050 Bruessels BELGIUM	003225114179	coface@brutele.be
Martin Lenz	Stadt Karlsruhe Sozial- und Jugendbehörde	Kaiserallee 4 76133 Karlsruhe	07211335028 / 07211335009	martin.lenz@sjb.karlsruhe.de
Lykke Leonardsen	City of Copenhagen Department of Finance International co-ordinator	City Hall 3, room 58 DENMARK DK - 15599 Copenhagen V	004533662289	lyl@okf.kk.dk
Sue Lewis	Deputy Director Sure Start Unit Caxton House 6-12 Tothill Street	U.K. - London SW 1H 9NA UNITED KINGDOM	00442072735725 / 00442072735124	sue.lewis@dfes.gsi.gov.uk
Mats Lindström	Urkraft Box 55	SW - 93121 Skelleftec SWEDEN	0046706258844 / 004691057900	mats-l@urkraft.se
Claus Lippmann	Landeshauptstadt Dresden Geschäftsbereich Soziales - Jugendamt Amtsleiter	PF 120020 1001 Dresden	03514884741 / 03514884603	jugendamt@dresden.de
Amanda Litschkovskij	Jugendmigrationsdienst Reutlingen Bruderhaus Diakonie	Hindenburgstr. 33 72762 Reutlingen	0712129171 / 07121239334	elke.frueh@bruderhausdiakonie.de
Beate Lubitz	Bezirksamt Tempelhof/Schöneberg Jugendamt / JugFöSport V Rathaus Friedenau	Breslauer Platz 10820 Berlin	03075603497 / 03075606105	lubitz@ba-temp.verwalt-berlin.de

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
Dr. Christian Lüders	Deutsches Jugendinstitut e.V. Abteilungsleiter	Nockherstr. 2 81541 München	08962306210 / 08962306162	lueders@dji.de
Pierre Mairesse	European Commission, Head of Unit DG Education and Culture, Directorate D Youth, Civil Society, Communication	Office: VM 2 - 05/52 BELGIEN B-1049 Brüssel	003222962009 / 003222965664	Pierre.Mairesse@cec.eu.int
Eddie Manning	City of Dublin VEC Youthreach CDU, Sundrive Rd - Crumlin, D 12	IRL - Dublin IRELAND	0035314535487	bernie.reilly@cdu-cdvec.de
Ursula Mathieu	Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (BMFSFJ)	Rochusstr. 8-10 53123 Bonn	030206552273 / 030206554807	ursula.mathieu@bmfsfj.bund.de
Steve McAdam	Fluid & London Metropolitan University 148 Curtain Road	U.K. - 2434 London UNITED KINGDOM	00442077290770	steve@f-l-u-i-d.co.uk
Mary McGuane	Dublin City Council 13 St. Agnes Road	IRL - Dublin IRELAND	0035312225520	mary.mcguane@dublincity.de
Christian Meineke	Stadt Marburg Jugendamt / 51.9 FB Familie, Jugend und Soziales	Friedrichstr. 36 35035 Marburg	06421201126 / 06421201595	christian.meineke@marburg-stadt.de
Jonas Mickus	The Association of Local Authorities in Lithuania T. Vrublevskio g.6	LT - 01100 Vilnius LITHUANIA	0037052791353	jonas.mickus@lsa.lt
Paloma Miersch	BBJ e. V. (SERVIS gGmbH) Zentrale Beratungsstelle für Träger der Jugendhilfe	Herzbergstr. 84 10365 Berlin	03055051324 / 03055051313	miersch@bbj.de
Anikó Molitorisz	Mayor's Office Budapest Department of Education	Városház z, 9-11 HUNGARY Hu - 1052 Budapest	003613271000 / 1110 / 003613271835	molitorisza@budapest.hu

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
Antonia Muhler	Ständige Vertretung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland bei der Europäischen Union EU-Vertretung	Rue J. de Lalaing, 19-21 1040 Brüssel	[32] 22381822	antonia.muhler@diplo.de
Vicenta Mur Sanchez	Federation Espanola de Municipios y Provincias Tecla Sala 11	E - 08901 L'Hospitalet de Llobregat SPAIN	0034934029908 / 0034934039913	ds.bsocialfamilia@l-h.es
Andrea Neutsch	Stadt Stralsund Amt für Jugend, Familie und Soziales Abt. Jugendförderung/komm. Sozialdienst	Postfach 2145 18408 Stralsund	03831254455 / 03831254469	aneutsch@stralsund.de
Steffen Nielsen	City of Aarhus, Ungdomscentret,	Soender Allé 33 DENMARK DK - 8000 Aarhus	004589403194	ssn@fa.aarhus.dk
Manfred Niewöhner	Stadt Stuttgart Jugendamt	Wilhelmstr. 3 70182 Stuttgart	07112167084	manfred.niewoehner@stuttgart.de
Prof. Dr. Nazmi Oruc	Greater Eskisehir Municipality	Iki Eylül Cad. TURKEY Eskisehir	00902222311090 / 00902222204235	nazmioruc@yahoo.com
Susanne Overhage	Stadt Köln Jugendamt	Kalker Hauptstraße 247-273 Köln	022122198260	susanne.overhage@stadt-koeln.de
Hans-Werner Pabst	Stadt Magdeburg Jugendamt	Lübecker Str. 32 39124 Magdeburg	03915406091	hans-werner.pabst@jga.magdeburg.de
Rainer Pede	Bezirksamt Berlin-Mitte Jugendamt, Abt. Jugend/Finanzen Jugendförderung	Karl-Marx-Allee 31 19178 Berlin	030200923119 / 030200923113	jugendfoerderungmitte@t-online.de
Günther Poggel	Senat für Bildung, Jugend und Sport	Beuthstr. 6-8 10117 Berlin	03090265565 / 03090265008	guenther.poggel@senbjs.verwalt-berlin.de

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
Niels Sandemann	Center of Family Service West Aarhus	Gudrunsvvej 78 DENMARK DK - 8220 Brabrand	004589405700	gkr@fa.aarhus.dk
Ursula Schenck	Stadt Mannheim Fachbereich für Kinder, Jugend und Familie (FB 51) - Kompetenzagentur	K1, 7-13 68159 Mannheim	06212932163 / 06212932158	ursula.schenck@mannheim.de
Hans-Joachim Schild	European Commission DG Education and Culture EAC D 1. Unite Jeunesse	Rue Belliard 7 - 2/029 BELGIEN B - 1047 Brüssel	003222998397 / 003222994038	Hans-Joachim.Schild@cec.eu.int
Corsula Schlichte	LAG Soziale Brennpunkte Hessen e. V.	Moselstr. 25 60329 Frankfurt/a. M.	0692578280	jbw@lagsbh.de
Rudolf Schmidt	Deutsche Sportjugend (dsj)	Theodor-Heuss-Str. 16 63150 Heusenstamm	061042797	schmidt.rudolf@gmx.de
Nora Schmidt	Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge	Michaelkirchstr. 17/18 10179 Berlin	03062980218	n.schmidt@deutscher-verein.de
Dr. Lutz Schmidt	Stadt Leipzig Jugendamt	Naumburgerstr. 26 4229 Leipzig	03411234350	lschmidt@leipzig.de
Martina Schmied	Magistrat der Stadt Wien MA 17 Kernbereich Kinder-Jugend-Schule	Auerspergstr. 15 AUSTRIA A - 1080 Wien	00431400081543 / 00431400081540	martina.schmied@m17.magwien.gv.at
Dr. Martina Schmied	Magistrat der Stadt Wien - MA 17 Kernbereich Kinder-Jugend-Schule	Auerspergstr. 15 AUSTRIA A - 1082 Wien	00431400081543 / 0043140009981540	martina.schmied@m17.magwien.gv.at
Roland Schneider	Stadt Krefeld Stadtverwaltung Dez. Soziales, Jugend und Kultur	47792 Krefeld	02151861050	roland.schneider@krefeld.de
Kerstin Schöbe	Stadt Brandenburg	14767 Brandenburg	03381585000	

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
Winfried Schulz	Hansestadt Rostock Jugendamt Abt. Planung/Finanzen	Neuer Markt 3 18055 Rostock	03813812531 / 03813812609	winfried.schulz@rostock.de
Martin Schumacher	Stadt Oldenburg Dez. für Kultur, Schule, Sport und Gesundheit	Peterstr. 3 26121 Oldenburg	04412353679	kulturdez@stadt-oldenburg.de
Barbara Schünke	Stadtteilbüro und Jugendförderung Marzahn-Nord	Märkische Allee 414 12689 Berlin	03093492748	stab1@web.de
Pierre Serne	Directeur du Cabinet de Mme Khédidja Boucart, Adjointe au maire de Paris, char- gée de l'intégration et des étrangers	non communautaires - Hotel de Ville FRANCE F - 75196 Paris RP	033142764188 / 033142764165	pierre.serne@paris.fr
Lasse Siurala	Head of the Helsinki City Youth Department Helsingin Nuorisokeskus	FINLAND FI - PB 5000 Helsinki	003580931089045	lasse.siurala@nk.hel.fi
Vahram Soghomonyan		ARMENIA		aarusik@freenet.am
Gabriele Sparka	Stadt Dortmund Jugendamt Amtsleiterin	Oostwall 64 44122 Dortmund	02315027708 / 02315026514	gabriele.sparka@stadtdo.de
Michael Sprünken	Stadt Bochum Rathaus Stabsstelle Sozialplanung	44777 Bochum	0234910663 / 02349103992	mspruenken@bochum.de
Claudia Stagen	Stadt Wittenberg Stadtverwaltung Bereich Kinder und Jugend	Lutherstr. 56 6886 Wittenberg	03491421472	claudia.stagen@stadtverwaltung.wittenberg.de
Peter Stieglbauer	Stadt Karlsruhe Rathaus West Sozial- und Jugendbereich	76133 Karlsruhe	07211335410 / 07211335009	peter.stieglbauer@sjb.karlsruhe.de

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
Wolf-Christian Strauss	Deutsches Institut für Urbanistik	Straße des 17. Juni 112 10623 Berlin	030390012960 / 03039001100	strauss@difu.de
Christos Tegos	Municipality of Karditsa 1, Artesianou Str.	GR - 43100 Karditsa GREECE	00302441079582 / 00302441077105	christoulas@karditsa-dity.gr
Christian Thomas	Stadt Cottbus Dezernat für Jugend, Kultur und Soziales	Neumarkt 5 3046 Cottbus	03556122401 / 03556122403	bildungsdezernat.stadt@cottbus.de
Riem Tisini	Projekt INAS	Oranienstr. 25 10999 Berlin		riem@tisini.net
Tamara Torosyan	Ministry of Culture and Youth Affairs	ARM - Yerevan ARMENIA	003741526869 / 003741526297	sepuh_2000@yahoo.com
Miriam Traversi	Intercultural Education Laboratory and Archive, Education Dept. Municipality of Bologna	Via Ca' Selvatica 7 ITALY IT - 40123 Bologna	0039051300812 / 0039051397306	Mirian.Traversi@commune.bologna.it
Lusine Tunyan				lusinet@yahoo.com
Renaldas Vaisbrodas	European Youth Forum 120 Rue Joseph II	B - 1000 Bruessels BELGIUM	003222869427	renaldas@lijot.lt
Alexander Vecellio	Stadt Stuttgart Jugendamt Jugendhilfeplanung	Wilhelmstr. 3 70182 Stuttgart	07112167468 / 071121644753	alexander.vecellio@stuttgart.de
Mieke Vergeer	NIZW Jeugd Communities that Care	Postbus 19152 NETHERLAND NL - 3501 DD Utrecht	0081302306492	m.vergeer@nizw.nl
Sotiris Vlahos	Parelion Municipality Corfou Greece	GR - 49100 Kokkini Greece GREECE	00302661095122	parelion@otenet.gr
Heike Völger	Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Jugendhilfe e. V. (AGJ)	Mühlendamm 3 10178 Berlin	03040040213	agj@agj.de
Thomas Vollmer	Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Ewangelische Jugendsozialarbeit (BAG EJSA)	Wagenburgstr. 26-28 70184 Stuttgart	7111648927	thomas.vollmer@yes-forum.org

Name	Institution	Adresse	Fon / Fax	e-Mail
Dr. Ralf-René Weingärtner	Directorate of Youth and Sport Council of Europe	30, rue Pierre de Coubertin FRANCE F - 67075 Strasbourg Cedex	0033390214973 / 033388412778	rene.weingaertner@coe.int
Christel Weiter	SOS Kinderdorf Kinder- und Familienzentrum Moabit	Waldstr. 55 10551 Berlin	03039879585 / 03039879586	christel.weiter@sos-kinderdorf.de
Ilona Weiter-Schulz	KTH Bremen	Koblenzer Str. 12 28325 Bremen	04213613236	ilona.weiter-schulz@kth.bremen.de
Elif Yildrim	Council of Children and Youth	Mollergata 3 NORWAY N - 0179 Oslo	004724149832	elif@unginfo.oslo.no
Dr. Elisabeth Ziemer	Bezirksamt Tempelhof-Schöneberg	Berlin		
Heinz Zohren	Stadt Aachen Stadtjugendamt	Adalbertsteinweg 59 52058 Aachen	02414325132	heinz.zohren@mail.aachen.de