



DDCP-YD/AE Forum (2013) 3

Strasbourg, 19 September 2013

4<sup>th</sup> Arab-European Youth Forum  
*Together for*  
Human Rights  
Youth Participation, Dialogue

Doha, Qatar, 8-11 December 2013

**Presentation of the forum**  
Application procedure

*in cooperation with*  
European Youth Forum  
Youth Activities Department, Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage of Qatar



## BACKGROUND

The Council of Europe's youth sector has an outstanding tradition of intercultural dialogue and including the points of view of young people from across the globe in its activities, be them organised at the European youth centres or supported by the European Youth Foundation. Intercultural dialogue provides also the framework for cooperation with neighbouring regions, especially the South Mediterranean, while placing emphasis on the role of intercultural dialogue for managing diversity within our respective societies.

Euro-Arab youth cooperation was initiated more than 10 years by the Council of Europe with a series of activities of Euro-Arab Dialogue. In April 2009 the League of Arab States and the Council of Europe held their first joint training course for youth leaders on youth participation and intercultural dialogue for Euro-Arab Youth Cooperation. This was followed by other capacity-building activities, including an on-going long-term training course for trainers on democratic youth participation.

The League of Arab States Youth Forum (LASYP) has been held annually since 2007, and is attended by a number of youth leaders, officials from youth sector, and parliamentarians from Arab countries. Since the beginning, European youth and the Council of Europe have been involved in the fora, in ways which have evolved from a guest status to co-organisers.

As a continuation of the previous fora held in the past years in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Italy, the Youth Activities Department of the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage of Qatar will be the host of the forum in Doha. The forum is co-organised with the League of Arab States' Youth Sports Department, the Youth Department of the Council of Europe and the European Youth Forum.

The Arab-European Youth Forum should be held every second year, with the venue alternating between a European and an Arab countries.

## THE ARAB-EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM

The League of Arab States Youth Forum objectives are to:

- Develop the knowledge of youth issues and youth work.
- Strengthen exchange, partnership and networking between youth leaders and their institutions and organisations.
- Elucidate a regional joint vision about youth empowerment and prioritising youth issues.
- Strengthen dialogue, exchange, and networking between youth leaders in both Arab states and Europe.

The first round of the Forum was in 2007 with theme of **Youth and the Millennium Development Goals**, the 2007 round was attended by about 300 youth leaders from the Arab states, a significant number of Heads of National Councils of Youth, Arab parliamentarians, and representatives of regional and international organisations. The Forum has the result of the creation of several regional youth networks initiatives including those targeting youth organizations or youth bloggers.

The second round was on 2008 with theme of **Youth and Intercultural Dialogue** and it was the **First Euro – Arab Meeting**. The 2008 round aimed to provide an opportunity for dialogue between the Arab youth, European youth, the European Youth Forum, and with decision-makers, experts, researchers and representatives of relevant regional and international organisations. The forum, attended by about 170 of youth leaders from both the Arab and European countries, adopted a Euro – Arab declaration to activate the role of youth in Intercultural dialogue, "For a Better World through Intercultural Dialogue". The declaration urged for an understanding of changes affecting the conditions for dialogue and cooperation and stressed the common fate and importance of

cooperation for European and Arab youth to face the problems and challenges ahead of them.

Based on these experiences and on the recent and current developments in Arab and European countries, the fourth Arab-European Youth Forum will focus on the issues of *human rights*, *participation* and *dialogue between cultures* in Arab and European societies and the role of youth cooperation therein. These three issues congregate the wide scope of challenges that young people face today and also the challenges and chances for inter-regional youth cooperation, peace and development.

The 4th Arab-European forum is launched as an initiative for cooperation and dialogue in the context of the challenges to peace and human rights in the Middle East region and its neighbours, a scene marked by strong and deep aspiration expressed the youth and popular awareness of the social and economic rights based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### **MAIN GOAL**

The forum aims at fostering mutual cooperation and raising awareness among young Arab and European leaders, representatives of associations and decision-makers, to the related cases to youth issues in human rights, participation and intercultural dialogue.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE FORUM**

- To contribute to the development of shared knowledge and to increase the awareness about human rights, participation and intercultural dialogue in youth work and their impact on youth development in Arab and European communities
- To discuss and present projects to improve the situation of young people in the Euro - Arab, dealing with human rights violations at the social, economic, political, and how to address their negative effects
- To exchange on realities and challenges to youth participation in the countries and organisations represented and the role of youth policy to extend the sphere of youth participation
- To develop ideas and projects dealing with the consequences of prejudice, discrimination and racism and working to ensure the application of the principles of human rights and providing opportunities for a stable and secure life, free from persecution and discrimination for young Arabs and Europeans
- Develop proposals which aim to involve young people in the issues on the Arab-European dialogue agenda (social, economic, spiritual, cultural, political) based on their ability to change the stereotypical images.
- To initiate partnerships for sustainable development under the leadership of young men and women
- To support the participation of young people and activate their roles and the roles of their organisations in intercultural dialogue.
- To promote dialogue among civilizations and understanding among young people and respect for the cultural particularities and deal with them in a spirit of equality and mutual respect

### **OUTCOMES**

The most visible outcome of the forum will be an appeal for human rights, youth participation and intercultural dialogue. This document, provisionally named the Doha Youth Declaration, will contain the conclusions issues by the working groups of the forum and

indicate pathways for future Arab-European youth cooperation by the co-organisers and partners until the next edition of the forum.

Other outcomes include:

- Direct cooperation projects between the participants and their organisations
- An internet site documenting the forum and its follow-up will be secured by the Qatari partners
- A video report will also be produced.
- Strengthening youth participations opportunities Euro-Arab cooperation n between the youth organisations represented
- A reinforcement of the cooperation between the League of Arab States and the Council of Europe, including the European Youth Forum and the Youth Activities' Department of Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage of Qatar in the context of Euro-Arab and Euro-Mediterranean region
- A prioritization of future areas of cooperation between the youth sectors of the League of Arab States and of the Council of Europe.

#### **PROGRAMME AND METHODOLOGY**

The programme will be structured on the thematic focus of the forum: Human Rights, Youth Participation and Intercultural Dialogue. Each of the 3 days will be dedicated to one of the themes. A specific attention will be devoted to hate speech and human rights online so as to connect with the No Hate Speech Movement youth campaign.

Each thematic day will be introduced by a speaker for Europe and another from an Arab country, followed by short statements by participants. In mixed working groups the participants will deepen the issues and close the day with conclusions.

#### ***Human rights***

Universal human rights establish the ground for intercultural dialogue, youth participation and youth work; developing the youth's skills is pursuant to meet their rights which are associated with their humanity that imposes respecting, meeting and protecting their rights.

#### ***Youth participation***

The youth protest and rebellion movements that have characterised the so-called Arab Spring and the "occupy" movements reflect a dual state of despair and hope; despair in getting their voices heard and to take part in improving their communities, and at the same time a state of hope that youth are no longer an absent party, on the contrary they're able to influence and pressure. Youth participation remains a central issue, value and priority for youth policy everywhere and an indicator of the ability of a society to take into account the voices and aspirations of the young generation.

#### ***Intercultural dialogue***

Youth work is no longer limited to countries borders or national countries, the trials of isolating youth from the exchanged cultural influence is close to imaginary than real. At the same time, the world is in great need for a dialogue between its different cultures in a way that builds mutual respect not strife and competition. Youth has a fundamental role in motivating and improving such a dialogue and, especially, to overcome prevailing prejudice and ethnocentrism in Arab-European relations.

#### **DRAFT DAILY PROGRAMME**

##### **Sunday, 8 November**

09:30 Official opening session; introductions to the forum's participants, programme and working methods

- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Human Rights
  - Human Rights** in the Arab and in the European region – introduction by two speakers
  - Discussion and organisation of the working groups
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Working groups
- 18:00 Plenary to share the conclusions of the workshop
- 20:00 Dinner
- 21:00 Evening programme and Projects' fair

### **Monday, 9 December**

- 09:30: Welcome and programme of the day
- 09:40 **Youth participation** and the role of youth organisations - Myths and facts on participation, youth policy and democracy.
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Working groups on youth participation
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Working groups continued
- 16:00 Break
- 16:30 Plenary: conclusions of the groups on participation
- 17:00 Introduction to the evening programme
- 17:30 Social and cultural discovery of Doha and its youth

### **Tuesday, 10 December**

- 09:30: Welcome and programme of the day
- 09:40 Introduction to **intercultural dialogue**: why, what and the challenges of intercultural dialogue
- 11:00 Break
- 11:30 Working groups on intercultural dialogue
- 13:00 Lunch
- 14:30 Working groups continued
- 16:00 Break
- 16:30 Plenary: Priorities for the future
- 18:00 Closing of the future session
  - Introduction of the final draft of the Doha Youth Declaration
- 19:30 Adoption of the Doha Youth Declaration
  - Evaluation
  - Closing ceremony

### **Wednesday, 11 December**

Cultural and Touristic discovery of Qatar (optional)

### **Thursday, 12 December**

Departure of the participants

## Outline of the Working Groups

Human Rights		
<b>Group 1: Human rights and young people's life</b>	<b>Group 2: Human rights and youth Rights</b>	<b>Group 3: Human rights, education and youth work</b>
<p>Human rights are the base which we can depends on to evaluate the reality of the youths lives, as human rights are the minimum that ensures a decent life for every young man and woman.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Which challenges do young people face to access their human rights?</li> <li>- Which rights are most challenged?</li> <li>- How to secure the universality and indivisibility of human rights?</li> <li>- The role of youth in implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)</li> <li>- What role should human rights play in future Euro-Arab cooperation?</li> </ul>	<p>The rights of young people are protected both the CRC and by the UDHR (and all other human rights instruments). Some argue that this is not enough to protect the specific rights of young people in transition to adulthood and autonomy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do we need specific instruments for youth rights? Do young people have rights of their own?</li> <li>- What is specific to youth rights and how to promote them in Arab and European countries?</li> <li>- How should youth policy measures take into account the obstacles faced by young people in accessing their rights?</li> </ul>	<p>Human rights belong to everyone and need to be cared for by everyone. Knowing human rights is essential to claim them and campaigning for them. Such is the role of human rights education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How can youth work influence human rights?</li> <li>- What can the human rights can do for youth work?</li> <li>- (How) Are human rights present in citizenship and human rights education in the participants' countries?</li> <li>- What should be the role of human rights education in future Euro-Arab cooperation?§</li> </ul>
Youth Participation		
<b>Group 1: Youth participation in youth policy</b>	<b>Group 2: Youth participation in public policies</b>	<b>Group 3: Political participation of young people</b>
<p>Youth participation should be part of every youth policy. But this often means little for the majority of young and is also practised very differently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are the main achievements and challenges about youth participation in youth policies in the participants' countries?</li> <li>- How is it organised?</li> <li>- What is needed strengthen real youth participation in youth policy?</li> <li>- What can Euro-Arab youth cooperation do for youth participation?</li> </ul>	<p>The participation of the youth in general polices in their countries is something indisputable, in addition to being a right for them, which enhances the effectiveness of these policies in response to the expectations and aspirations of young people. Youth matters by definition should be mainstreamed across other areas of governance areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How are young people involved in the implementation of public policies that concern them (e.g. Education, Health, Justice, Sport...)?</li> <li>- How are young people organised for this purpose?</li> <li>- What can Euro-Arab youth cooperation do for youth participation?</li> </ul>	<p>Young people are often looked at as advocates and catalysts for social and democratic reforms. But this of course implies the possibility, the motivation and the means to participate in political processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How can young people take part in local, regional and national political processes?</li> <li>- What are the possibilities and the barriers for political youth participation?</li> <li>- Are there real differences between Arab and European countries?</li> <li>- Can political youth participation support Arab-European youth cooperation?</li> </ul>
Intercultural Dialogue		
<b>Group1: The role of social media for intercultural dialogue</b>	<b>Group 2: Youth mobility and exchanges</b>	<b>Group 3: Overcoming prejudice</b>
<p>Community and social media formalise the gateway which the youth can communicate with each other through it passing all the natural and cultural borders . There are doubts about its capacity to live to the expectations placed on it.</p>	<p>Traveling and what it is consist from freedom in movement is the most important effective way of learning and discovering oneself and the others. But youth mobility is a mirage for most young people in Arab countries and for many in Europe.</p>	<p>Mutual perceptions between Arab and European youth are deeply influenced by prejudice and ethnocentrism, often coupled with superficial and stereotypical views of each other. Intercultural dialogue can only thrive if these matters are addressed and dealt</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are social media useful in promoting intercultural dialogue? If so, how?</li> <li>- Are Arab and European young people closer due to social media?</li> <li>- Is there a common culture being developed?</li> <li>- Which challenges do young people face in relation to social media?</li> <li>- How can young people better shape the way the Internet and social media are run?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Which possibilities for youth mobility exist and which young people can participate?</li> <li>- How can youth mobility support intercultural dialogue and cooperation?</li> <li>- What should be pursued, in the European and in the Arab regions and between them, to increase opportunities for Arab-European youth mobility?</li> </ul>	<p>with.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How is prejudice influencing our mutual perceptions and conditioning our cooperation?</li> <li>- What can youth organisations do , through informal and non-formal education, to undo the negative impact of prejudice and ethnocentrism?</li> <li>- What support do they need for that?</li> <li>- What should be the role of Arab-European youth cooperation for this purpose?</li> </ul>
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## PARTICIPANTS

The forum is prepared for youth leaders and youth workers resident in member states of the League of Arab States or the Council of Europe. All participants must also meet the following criteria:

- Be aged between 18 and 30 years
- Have a demonstrated experience in civil society and youth work
- Be actively interested in the forum axes as well as the issues to be discussed and in following up of the forum within their organisations.
- Ability to communicate and communicate in English.

The organisers aim to select and invite:

- 40 participants from member states of the League
- 30 participants from the Council of Europe
- 10 participants from Qatar.

The selection will respect an equal number of male and female participants from each country (where appropriate, for the European countries)

## RECRUITMENT OF EUROPEAN PARTICIPANTS

The Council of Europe's Youth Department contributes to the forum in various ways, including input in the preparatory process and recruitment of European participants.

Part of the Council of Europe's role is also to invite - in cooperation with the European Youth Forum - and support the participation of 25-30 youth leaders and youth workers from Council of Europe member states.

This call concerns the recruitment and selection of these participants *only*. The selection of the final group of European participants will be done by the Council of Europe in consultation with the European Youth Forum.

## PRACTICAL DETAILS

**Dates:** 8-11 December 2013 (arrival recommended for 7 and departure for 12 December)

**Place:** Doha, Qatar

### Visa and Travel considerations

Participants selected by the Council of Europe (directly or via the European Youth Forum) will receive an invitation letter and instructions concerning possible visa requirements for Qatar. The visa delivery will be facilitated by the Qatari authorities for the participants of the forum.

## FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

Accommodation and meals will be provided, for the duration of the forum, by the Youth Activities Department, Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage of Qatar

Travel expenses for participants from Europe, invited by the European Youth Forum **or** the Council of Europe, will be reimbursed by the Council of Europe according to the Council of Europe rules. To the extent of the possible, the Council of Europe will provide pre-paid tickets to the participants.

## PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATIONS

All those interested in attending the forum should register and fill in an on-line application form at **<http://youthapplications.coe.int/>** according to the instructions provided on the site. The application should be accompanied by a supporting letter of the sending organisation or institution which states the reasons why the participation of the applicant is important for the organisation.

Applicants will be informed about the decision concerning their application by 10 October.

The deadline for submitting applications is **3 October 2013**.

Further information: [eyc.programme@coe.int](mailto:eyc.programme@coe.int)