

Strasbourg, 17 July 2008

Call for expressions of interest

Research seminar on health and well-being of young people in Europe

Paris, 8-11 December 2008

Institutional context

In the last ten years the Council of Europe and the European Commission have developed a close co-operation in the youth field. Since 2003 this Partnership between the two institutions focused also on youth research. In 2005 one single Partnership Agreement was created with the aim to provide a lasting framework for the joint development of a coherent strategy in the field of youth worker training, youth policy and youth research. One of the general objectives of the Partnership which the European Commission shares with the Council of Europe is better understanding and knowledge of youth and youth policy development.

This objective is addressed, among others, through youth research seminars organised by the Partnership around topics important for young people in Europe. They provide a platform for an informed dialogue between youth leaders and youth workers, resource persons and other actors in youth policy and youth research in the member states of both institutions (for information on previous seminars and their results please, consult <http://www.youth-partnership.net/youth-partnership/research/thematicseminars.html>). The Partnership Management Board decided that the research seminar in 2008 should focus on health and well-being of young people in Europe.

The same topic is one of the priorities of the recently inaugurated French Presidency of the European Union. The French Presidency will present a proposal of a Resolution on health and well being of young people in November 2008 during the Council of Ministers of Education, Youth and Culture. As part of the follow-up of the resolution, the French Presidency planned to organise a seminar on health and well-being of young people, which would involve authorities from various Member States as well as civil society stakeholders and young people.

Taking into account the convergent ideas behind both initiatives the decision was taken to join the efforts and organise one common event on health and well-being of young people in Europe.



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Theme

“Health and well-being in this age group [15-24 years of age] have rarely been addressed in EU-wide comparative studies. National health information systems such as vital statistics provide valuable information, but data on aspects of health relevant to young people are not easily available. And yet, not only childhood, but also - and to a greater extent than is generally appreciated - the transition from childhood to adulthood is a crucial period during which the foundations are laid for health in future life, within the parameters of the individual's family background and economic, social, cultural and educational circumstances. Therefore, it is essential to give consideration not only to mortality, morbidity and lifestyles, but also more generally to well-being, functional capacity and quality of life.” (*working paper of the European Commission Report on the state of young people's health in the European Union, 2000*).

Equally comprehensive and more recent overview of the state of health of this target group is not available on the European level. This lack of coherent sets of data is partly bridged by information provided on the national level, which in turn indicates huge differences among the national and regional realities.

A relatively high and increasing number of young people suffer from health problems: e.g. in the EU one child in five is overweight or obese, around 10% of deaths in young females and 25% of death in young males are related to alcohol, suicide is the second reason of youth mortality after accidents, 11, 5 % of children suffer asthma. Lower socio-economic status and levels of education are associated with a higher incidence of mental and physical health problems, drug misuse and teenage pregnancy.

How widespread are risky lifestyles of young people? What are their reasons and consequences? How to best face the challenges, which they pose? What are the good practices in conveying life skills? How can young people be empowered to lead healthy lives and make healthy choices? How well prepared are the health care and social services for this task? Are they adapted to the real needs of young people? Do they offer equal opportunities for all youth? What could be the role of the medias in informing young people on health?

And finally - how may youth policy and health policies join their efforts in the diverse conditions of various European countries? What is the role of the non-governmental sector? Can youth workers and youth leaders be prepared to deal with health issues?

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Useful links

Report on the state of young people's health in the European Union. European Commission, Directorate-General Health and Consumer Protection, Unit F3 - Health promotion, health monitoring, and injury prevention. Manuscript completed in February 2000. Available at:

http://www.youth-partnership.net/export/sites/default/youth-partnership/documents/EKCYP/Youth_Policy/docs/Health_x_young_people.pdf

Introductory paper on the adaptation of health care services to the demand for health care and health care services of people in marginal situations, Professor Jean-Daniel Rainhorn
http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/health/Rainhornreport_en.asp

DG Sanco, http://ec.europa.eu/health/index_en.htm

World Health Organisation, health topic: youth, <http://www.who.int/topics/youth/en/>

European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, <http://www.euro.who.int/observatory>

International Network Health Policy and Reform <http://www.hpm.org/index.jsp>

[Information document of the Presidency on Young people's health and well being](#)

Seminar

The seminar is jointly organised by the Youth Partnership partnership (Council of Europe and European Commission) and the French Presidency of the European Union.

Bearing in mind that a better understanding of issues relating to health and well-being of young people is needed for tailor made policy and practice responses at all levels, the seminar will enable exchange of views and discussion among the above mentioned stakeholders. By analysing research findings and good practice examples they will suggest measures that the Partnership Management Board will consider in order to improve the situation, especially for the most vulnerable groups..

While several working sessions will be organised jointly with researchers, policy and practice representatives, the seminar will also provide for a separate space where academics will have the opportunity to debate their relevant research findings within thematic panels. The themes will be inspired by the best quality proposals for papers, clustered into coherent units. The presented and discussed findings will then be shared with the other participants, enhancing informed cross sectoral debates.

The working languages of the seminar will be French and English.

Call

The Partnership is inviting researchers working on the topics of health and well-being of young people in Europe, and interested to attend the seminar, to submit abstracts (up to 500 words) of research papers they intend to present. The papers should focus on:

- analysing the current situation of youth health and well-being and identifying the needs existing in this field;
- analysing policy (governmental structures on local, regional, national and supranational level) and practice (non-governmental youth organisations and those working for and with young people) responses to those needs;
- advising various actors of the youth and health sector how to best play their role in motivating and assisting young people in living healthy lives.

Procedure

An on-line application form comprising an abstract of the proposed paper, a motivation letter and a CV shall be submitted by the interested candidates on-line at:

http://www.youth-partnership.net/youth-partnership/seminars/seminar_4.html

Papers to be presented at the seminar will be selected by the seminar team during a preparatory meeting which will take place in the end of September. The successful candidates will be informed about the decision and invited to submit their papers within a month. The Partnership secretariat will in any case keep the right to invite external experts other than those selected from the applicants to this call.

The seminar will take place in the beginning of December (8-11 December). All papers presented at the seminar will be made publicly available on the Youth Partnership website.

Also, as a follow-up of the seminar, papers will be selected to be included in a publication, whose timeline will be agreed upon at a later stage.

Timeline

DATES	ACTION
15.09.	Deadline for submitting on-line applications by potential panellists
01.10.	Announcement of the selection results
01.11.	Completed papers to be submitted
7-11.12 - by 15.12.	The seminar (three and a half working days) Selection of the papers for seminar publication
31.01.2009	Manuscript of the publication to be submitted to the Partnership secretariat

In case of questions please do not hesitate to contact the Partnership secretariat:

youth-partnership@coe.int