



Resolution on key issues concerning European youth, especially marginalised youth

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Europe has been struggling with several key issues in recent years, including the increased displacement of people, the rise of xenophobia and intolerance in society as well as a lack of possibilities and motivation of youth to participate. In the current uncertain political and social context that affects young people, they can be powerful catalysts for positive change and contributors of innovative solutions to Europe's problems. Marginalised youth - refers to socially excluded youth, who are relegated to the fringes of society due to a lack of access to rights, resources and opportunities - are affected the most by hate-speech, racism and religious hate. They are seen as creators of problems rather than those who are suffering and often most strongly affected. Therefore, we are striving to understand and offer solutions for the problems young people are facing, with the final aim to empower youth with a specific focus on ensuring marginalised youth are able to participate actively in society, build stronger youth organisations and contribute to building a multicultural, multilingual and inclusive Europe.

Considering the existing impacts of social exclusion and recent developments in Europe, notably:

- Increasing obstacles to social inclusion, particularly for minorities, and marginalised and vulnerable groups in Europe can be observed. This is largely due to increasing polarisation and fear of the 'other', lack of representation and participation in society, especially in the political, institutional and legal structures.
- The rights of vulnerable people and marginalised youth, particularly refugees and the Roma community as the largest minority in Europe are not being sufficiently upheld or prioritised in current social structures and legal frameworks. They are often facing limited access to distinct parts of society, such as the education system and the labour market.
- A lack of awareness and understanding of diverse groups in society is partly caused by inequalities, education systems that are not meeting the needs of the youth to find their way in society, and irresponsible media.
- Lack of transparency and unapproachable decision-making processes are described by youth as problematic. Thus, there has been an increasing lack of trust in politicians, creating a gap and disconnection between youth and decision-makers. Often the rights and needs of marginalised youth are neglected even through decisions of political institutions and legal structures.
- Changes in society and promoting active participation are not sufficiently considered in the current formal education system. Non-formal education and the expertise of NGOs are often not recognised enough as important tools for learning. Marginalised youth can profit a lot from non-formal education tools as they often experience challenges in accessing and succeeding in various formal educational systems. If non-formal education is not sufficiently recognised, again it creates obstacles for active participation and self-development of youth.

- Due to ineffective communication methods by stakeholders, a lack of awareness of the meaning and benefits of active citizenship and participation can be monitored. Often marginalised youth are the first ones to be demotivated because they have a limited access to different parts of society already.
- Minority languages and languages of marginalised groups are often being considered as invaluable and unnecessary tools of communication. Hence, many minorities have difficulties with preserving their identity, language and culture.
- Increased polarisation in society and a negative effect on the participation of young people in their communities has been caused by the regular use of social media as a channel of hate speech against marginalised young people, populism and sharing false information.

Therefore, soliciting all national, regional and international institutions in Europe, the European Youth Forum:

Calls for an accurate, equitable and increased self-representation of all social groups in the media, political system and official institutions.

Demands the promotion of diversity and equity through increasing awareness, encouraging collaboration, sharing best practices and concrete actions on the rights of youth.

Highlights the need to support minorities and vulnerable and marginalised groups, especially refugees and the Roma population, to reduce obstacles, increase access and respect of their rights to facilitate inclusion in society. The adaptation of current social structures and legal frameworks, as well as implementing representative policies are recommended.

Urges equal access to education for marginalised and vulnerable groups and minorities, as well as desegregation of schools, where the practice persists. This will also require the increase of research and improvement of teacher education regarding minorities and vulnerable and marginalised groups.

Calls for the promotion of societal-oriented education and empowerment within the education system with the implementation of subjects regarding decision-making processes and active citizenship in the education system.

Appeals for more transparency in decision-making processes using user-friendly tools, with accurate language aiming at reaching the most excluded young people.

Highlights the importance of active citizenship and participation, especially volunteering, within society through formal and non-formal education and within official institutions and the media.

Urges for official recognition and adequate representation of minority languages and history within society, particularly in all levels of the education system, the public

sphere, in state institutions and the media, with the provision of platforms to promote and preserve minority languages and culture.

Appeals for the involvement of all stakeholders in the promotion of responsible media and social media usage, through formal and non-formal education, an example being the No Hate Speech Campaign of the Council of Europe. This should counter irresponsible, incomplete and exclusive media reporting.

Encourages further research into effects of gender in marginalised groups in assessing vulnerability and the assessment of specific needs which may help to alleviate the effects of gender-based violence and other gender-specific risks which contribute to the marginalisation and isolation in both the social and the economic sphere.

Emphasises the need for increased research and implementation of programmes in the field of mental health regarding marginalised youth in order to ensure adequate protection from the psychological effects of discrimination and harassment.

Strongly condemns the use of speech that incites hatred, isolation and/or negative stereotyping of marginalised youth, especially during electoral campaigns, used by politicians and public officials.

Reminds that the effects of marginalisation on the increased risk of poverty and the strong need for labour market integration of marginalised youth groups.

The implementation of the points should be worked on equally with the European Youth Forum, its Member Organisations, and any other relevant actor at the local, regional, national, European and international level.