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Youth Peace Camp

Engaging young people and youth organisations
from conflict-stricken regions in dialogue
and conflict transformation

10 - 18 JULY 2016

EUROPEAN YOUTH CENTRE
STRASBOURG, FRANCE

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
PRELIMINARY PROJECT INFORMATION

Background

The Youth Peace Camps were initiated by the Council of Europe in 2003, in cooperation with Europa Park in Rust, Germany, to bring together young people from conflict regions and to support them in initiating dialogue and cooperation.

In the past years the peace camp project brought together young people from the Middle East, Southeast and Eastern Europe. During the camp the participants followed an experiential learning process and acquired competences in the fields of intercultural learning, dialogue and conflict transformation, within a human rights framework.

Rationale for the Youth Peace Camp

Young people growing up in regions affected by armed conflicts, being exposed to and/or enduring the consequences of physical and structural violence, are often confronted with dramatic life forming experiences, emotions and challenges. Such experiences may strongly influence their views and behaviour towards their own and other communities, their relation to conflict and peace and to their identity. Many young people choose to engage in constructive initiatives and dialogue instead of becoming themselves multipliers of hatred, violence and discrimination. When supported and recognised in their role, these young people may become peer leaders and educators and, in turn, raise awareness of and involve other young people in dialogue, mediation, conflict transformation and peace work projects.

In their role as peer leaders and in learning about conflict and peace, it is important for them to be able to relate to, and to be confronted with, the life stories, experiences and aspirations of other young people from other conflict regions. The Youth Peace Camp unique approach has been the possibility for young people to better understand conflicts and their transformation by listening to and living together with young people affected by other conflicts elsewhere.

Intercultural learning and human rights education play a central role in all these projects. Intercultural learning in youth work practice has been especially developed through long-term training courses in European youth work – for which projects it was both an objective and a quality criterion. It soon became understood as representing the essence of the Youth Department's educational approach: recognising and addressing prejudice, combating aggressive and exclusive forms of nationalism, identifying the competences necessary for youth workers active in inter/multi-cultural environments. Intercultural learning is understood to be a natural part of the educational approach towards intercultural dialogue and, together with human rights education, may provide answers to some of the dilemmas resulting from violent, structural and cultural conflicts. The adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, of the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue¹, confirmed the political relevance of these approaches, adding to their proven educational suitability.

The Youth Peace Camp builds on these experiences and applies it to its participants. It provides a safe space for the young people from different conflict stricken regions to learn together about conflict, to share their experiences in approaching them with other young people and to build their capacity to engage and/or develop future conflict transformation projects and initiatives.

The Youth Peace Camp also enables the youth sector of the Council of Europe to identify and document challenges faced by young people in conflict regions and to improve its ability to support youth projects in those regions. The project promotes and supports the role of young people in peace-building activities that contribute to living together in dignity and

¹ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf

dialogue and bring in the perspective that youth work and youth policy can bring to peace-building processes in Europe, especially through its preventive and educational nature.

To further support the work of youth organisation and formal youth groups, in promoting human dignity and dialogue in conflict stricken regions, the European Youth Foundation accepts applications for local projects that promote non-violent conflict transformation and peace-building.

In 2016, the camp will pay a particular attention to the role of hate speech in armed conflict and connect with No Hate Speech Movement campaign at European and national levels.

Aim

The Youth Peace Camp engages young people and youth organisations from conflict affected regions in dialogue and conflict transformation activities based on human rights education and intercultural learning during and after the camp.

Objectives:

The main objectives (personal, organisational and institutional) of the Youth Peace Camp are:

- To develop awareness and basic competences (knowledge, skills and attitude) of participants in human rights education, conflict transformation, intercultural learning and dialogue, including a critical understanding of personal and collective identities and their role in conflicts.
- To enable participants to share personal experiences of conflict and violence and coping strategies in a positive and safe atmosphere of living and learning together.
- To introduce and share existing youth work practices and experiences of young people working on dialogue and conflict transformation in their home communities.
- To motivate and support participants in their role as multipliers and peer leaders in peace building activities with young people encouraging them to implement follow-up initiatives.
- To present the Council of Europe, in particular its youth sector and its efforts towards strengthening youth work in the field of conflict transformation and intercultural dialogue.

Methodology

The programme of the Youth Peace Camp will give young people, coming from regions recently affected by armed conflicts, the opportunity to share, explore, and reflect upon their work in the field of dialogue, conflict transformation and peace work.

The programme will be based on mutual learning situations among participants, making use of a variety of working methods. The participants will be able to share personal experiences with conflict and violence and share the coping strategies they developed. The programme will also allow time for participants to explore the relation between identity and the conflict in their region for young people and themselves. Personal reflections and sharing within national/ethnic groups will be alternated with sharing, learning and reflecting between youth from the different conflict regions.

Towards the end of the camp, participants are expected to develop initiatives as peer leaders and multipliers with other young people in the field of dialogue and conflict transformation, in their home communities.

Central to the concept of the Youth Peace Camp is the motivation and the possibility for living, learning and discussing together with other young people with whom otherwise it may be very difficult to have contacts or cooperation.

A team of experienced trainers and facilitators (one per each community or region from where the camp participants come) will develop and facilitate the programme.

The participants are invited to implement their initiatives for peace building, with the support and guidance of the facilitators, to share their experience with their peers and promote the values and approaches of the Youth Peace Camp.

The Youth Peace Camp started as a *camp* with participants living in tents and doing also outdoor activities. Nowadays the activity is mostly held indoors at the European Youth Centre, where the participants are also accommodated in single or double bedrooms. The spirit of a camp remains present in the activity though the extensive usage of non-formal education methods, the experience of living and learning together and, to the extent of the possible, the usage of outdoor activities.

Working language

The working language of the programme will be English. Participants must have sufficient understanding of English in order to comprehend and complete the application form without assistance from another person.

Educational team

The educational team consists of eight facilitators and two trainers, including an educational advisor of the European Youth Centre. Altogether, trainers and facilitators are experienced in running similar activities, have direct experience of the regions from where participants come and will be able to communicate with participants in their mother tongue.

Participants' Profile

The 2016 Youth Peace Camp will bring together young people from the following conflict affected communities :

- Kosovo*, participants coming from Albanian, Serbian and other backgrounds
- Ukraine, especially from border regions and from Luhansk and Donetsk
- The Russian Federation, especially young people directly affected by conflicts in Georgia and Ukraine
- South Caucasus, in particular from border regions and ethnic minorities.

All participants must:

- be aged between 18 and 25 years;
- be able to work in English;
- be available and fully committed to take part in the Youth Peace Camp;
- be curious, open-minded, appreciate diversity and learn about each other's realities.
- be motivated to learn and to apply the values and approaches of the Youth Peace Camp, notably human rights, democracy and intercultural dialogue;

- be involved in youth or community projects in their community and be motivated to implement youth initiatives for peace-building following the residential meeting;
- possess a sense of responsibility for one's own actions, a commitment to personal and community development and continue the engagement with other participants;
- preferably be involved in an organisation or network, institution, formal and/or informal group that is ready to support them throughout the project duration and afterwards when implementing youth initiatives for peace building.

A specific priority will be given to applicants who are or have been displaced as a result of armed conflict (refugees, internally displaced people, migrants, asylum-seekers...).

There will be a facilitator affiliated to each of the communities listed above. The group of participants should be balanced in relation to sex and reflect the diversity of their communities. The total number of participants and facilitators expected will be 58.

Application procedure and selection of participants

All candidates must apply on-line, completing the application form under this link: <http://youthapplications.coe.int/> .

Applications must be submitted by **20 April 2016**. A letter of support from their sending organisation or institution can be uploaded on the platform or sent separately by e-mail, fax or post, to express support offered throughout the project to the participant and his/her initiatives. Participants who are member of an informal network or youth group can supply a letter of support from their fellow members in the informal network or group expressing their support for the participants' application.

Financial and practical conditions of participation

Travel expenses

Travel expenses will be reimbursed upon presentation of the relevant receipts, according to the rules of the Council of Europe. Only the participants who attend the entire Youth Peace Camp may be reimbursed. The payment will be made either by bank transfer after the meeting, or at the end of the meeting in cash (in Euros).

Visa expenses

The Council of Europe will issue invitation letter for the purpose of gaining visa's to all participants. Costs related to the acquiring a visa, after being approved by the Council of Europe, will be reimbursed upon presentation of the relevant receipts.

Accommodation

Board and lodging at the seminar will be provided and paid for by the Council of Europe at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg.

Deadline for applications

The application form must be submitted on-line, with the support letters by **Wednesday 20 April 2016**.

Further information

For more information about the Youth Peace Camp, the application procedure and financial and practical conditions of participants please email: eyc.programme@coe.int

Other training courses of the Youth Department

If you are interested in a training course in international youth work, but your profile does not fully correspond to the requirements of this course, please note that the Youth Department of the Council of Europe organises other training courses. For details please consult our webpage www.coe.int/youth or contact one of the European youth centres.

For more information about the Youth Campaign for Human Rights Online and how to join please visit www.nohatespeechmovement.org.



* All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.