

REVIEW OF STRUCTURED DIALOGUE

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Conference for all main actors in the process
Brussels, 26-27 November 2013



A review of the Structured Dialogue with Young People and Youth Organisations was announced by Commissioner Vassiliou at the EU Youth Conference in Dublin on 11.03.2013, following the full endorsement of the review process by the European Steering Committee at its meeting on 24.02.2013.

The first phase of this review was completed in Brussels during European Youth Week 2013, when representatives of National Working Groups and some International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations (INGYO) endorsed 27 Conclusions for the future conduct and development of Structured Dialogue. In the spirit of Structured Dialogue, these Conclusions served as the background document for the conference marking the second phase of the review, which was organized by the European Commission in Brussels on 26-27.11.2013.

This conference involved all the main actors of the Structured Dialogue and gathered representatives of national youth authorities, representatives of National Working Groups (including representatives of National Youth Councils), the European Youth Forum (including representatives of INGYO), the European Steering Committee and the European Commission. Following discussions in four dedicated workshops, the participants at this conference endorsed 20 Joint Recommendations for the future conduct and development of Structured Dialogue, which are listed in this document.

These Joint Recommendations are expected, as confirmed at the conference by a representative of the Greek national youth authority, to feed into a Council Resolution on Structured Dialogue to be adopted during the incoming Greek Presidency of the EU Council of Ministers. This Council Resolution will mark the third and final phase of the review process.

The Structured Dialogue should follow this architecture:

In a preparatory phase in the run-up to the start of the cycle the overall theme of the Structured Dialogue is set with the involvement of young people. The Council decides on the overall theme.

In the first phase the Structured Dialogue leads towards a common understanding among all stakeholders in the Structured Dialogue on the theme and the approaches towards the topic. The outcome of the first European Youth Conference is a guiding framework for the dialogue.

In the second phase the main consultation takes place with young people on the topics of the overall theme, following the guiding framework. The outcomes of the second European Youth Conference are possible solutions. The possible solutions should be discussed in the Council and lead to a proposal for strategic political goals.

In the third phase the main focus is on the concrete recommendations and the formulation of concrete actions on all levels, which can then be followed up. National Working Groups are consulted on the strategic political goals and those are the subject of dialogue during the third European Youth Conference. The outcome of the third European Youth Conference is the Joint Recommendations. These feed into the political outcome document that is adopted by the Council.

This structure means that EU Youth Conferences remain crucial in every phase, but their aims, format and outcomes are adapted to the respective objectives of each phase.

Structures for the implementation of Structured Dialogue

- National Working Groups together with relevant experts should develop an action plan on how to involve young people who could not yet participate in the process of structured dialogue so far.
- National Working Groups should be open to ensure involvement of young people, youth organisations, national agencies, relevant ministries, local governments and other experts related to the theme of the structured dialogue.
- The guiding questions proposed by the European Steering Committee should be clear and simple; written in a youth-friendly manner, keeping it relevant to young people in all member states.
- In order to ensure that the outcomes of the European Youth Conference are strong, more specific and have an increased political weight, active participation of all relevant ministries is desired.
- While National Youth Councils are leading and coordinating the work of the National Working Group, its other members should commit to take more responsibilities. This should be approved by member states in a written memorandum to ensure political support.

Participation in and visibility of Structured Dialogue

- Member States and NWGs should secure the implementation of SD* as a participatory and inclusive policy making process, not only consulting youth. SD is a tool for real dialogue between young people and policy makers at all levels.

*according to the renewed framework on cooperation in the field of youth and the Council resolutions of the first two cycles

- The European Commission should together with young people in a creative, participatory process develop a common European visual identity and youth friendly information materials* for SD, which countries can use complementarily with national branding.

*such as infographics, animation, video, vlogs, blogs, photos

- The European Commission and the Council of the EU should officially recognise INGYOs as formal actors of the SD and acknowledge the added value of their involvement at the EU level*. INGYOs should be involved at all steps of the process including consultations, Youth Conferences, monitoring and follow-up.

*including trans-national perspective, specific expertise and more inclusive outreach

- Youth Information Networks (EYCA, ERYICA, Eurodesk etc.) should be recognised as support structures* for the NWGs to reach out to more young people. They should be invited as observers in EU Youth Conferences.

*through their information channels and networks etc.

- The European Commission and the Council of the EU and its Presidency should invite relevant committees of the EP* to take an active part in the SD-process**. They should officially communicate the results of the SD to all MEPs and encourage them to engage the process on national level.

* such as CULT

** during EUYC, EYW, etc.

Follow-up, implementation and evaluation of Structured Dialogue

- To ensure a systematic and transparent approach in the follow up and monitoring:
 - the Presidency should report which Youth Conference conclusions have been taken into the Council Resolution.
 - the European Commission should report which conclusions are taken into EU relevant policies and include a separate chapter in the EU youth report -compiled in cooperation with the NWGs- focusing on the content implementation at national and EU level.
- In order to ensure cross-sectorial approach in follow up, each NWG should collaboratively prioritise the conclusions of the Youth Conference, distribute them to all relevant authorities and stakeholders, collect their feedback and devise national implementation plans based on this feedback to be progressed and monitored having regard to national policies.
- The European Commission should review the national implementation plans devised by NWGs and present the trends and priorities at the Youth Conference, European Youth Week and the DG meeting for discussion.
- The European Commission and the European Youth Forum should convene a meeting, involving all relevant EU institutions and stakeholders across sectors to follow up and monitor the implementation of the outcomes of the Structured Dialogue on EU level.
- NWGs and INGYOs should regularly and actively disseminate the conclusions of the Youth Conference and the progress on implementation of recommendations to young people who participated in consultations of the Structured Dialogue Process (e.g. German model – online

platform, Youth Portal).

Timing and sustainability of the process of Structured Dialogue

- The Structured Dialogue cycles should, during the 18 months, focus on one single priority relevant to the lives of the young people across the EU and lead to one political outcome, separating it from the presidency priorities, and having in mind that there are other tools for the development of the European cooperation in the youth field and for the participation of young people in this development.
- European Youth Week should be held once during each 18 month cycle of the Structured Dialogue process and provide a space and audience for follow-up and monitoring of the Structured Dialogue process outcomes. The participants should include all stakeholders in the Structured Dialogue process.
- Member States should provide sustainable support (financial, human resources, services) to NWGs, recognising the leading role of the National Youth Councils, to implement the Structured Dialogue at local, regional and national level.
- Erasmus+ should include a specific subaction for the NWGs, avoiding competition with other applicants, with deadlines matching the architecture of the Structured Dialogue process for the 18 months cycle.