POLICY PAPER ON CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

1. BACKGROUND

The divide between democratic institutions, elected representatives, and political parties on the one hand and citizens on the other is growing. The disenchantment with politics, mistrust towards political parties, and the complexity of democratic decision-making processes are creating a democratic deficit[1]. Additionally, a global shift in values and the rapid pace of social, economic, and political changes are altering the relationship between individuals and their society and calling into question the very nature of citizenship.

What factors led to a decline in participation? Greater mobility, migration, cultural diversity, globalisation, and the growing influence of the European Union (EU) are just several elements that influence young people's relationship with citizenship. Further, new media and constant access to a wide range of diverse and unfiltered information, current educational systems, and a non-inclusive political culture and climate are other factors. Yes, the traditional lines of identity are blurred as young people face the challenge of creating a sense of belonging to a distinct community. But as young Europeans find new ways to participate in communities of their choosing, the traditional system sadly fails to meet their needs. Moreover, the decline in traditional social structures has led to growing societal isolation. Also, the effects of the economic crisis mean that young people may feel abandoned, with growing youth exclusion from society, employment, and politics resulting in their risk of "dropping out" from society. Young people require more tailor-made methods of building and expressing their values and beliefs. Additionally, the constantly evolving information society brings new challenges, needs, and opportunities, especially to young people[2] who possess an ability to create a virtual community[3].

This paper reinforces the need for citizenship education in order to foster a culture of active citizenship and democratic participation in Europe. Some of the aforementioned factors have created opportunities for more diverse forms of participation for the individual in multiple communities and tended to threaten the legitimacy of traditional democratic structures. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to identify competences, including skills, knowledge, and attitudes, necessary to stimulate participation in a fast-changing society; distinguish relevant learning systems and settings; and address all relevant stakeholders with recommendations and proposed actions to secure sustainable democracy and youth participation in democratic decision-making processes.

2. CONCEPTS AND APPROACHES

The debate around the term "citizenship education" is wide. This Paper, therefore, will refrain from defining the entire spectrum of citizenship education-related concepts. However, it is important to explore some aspects of citizenship in order to lay the foundations: examining, for example, the meaning of the legal term "citizenship," what European citizenship is beyond treaty-based legal rights, citizenship in a globalised world, and the roles of citizenship and citizens. The European Youth Forum therefore proposes a multifaceted definition of "citizenship."

Citizenship
Citizenship often is described as a **legal term**, usually establishing a relationship between a state/supranational community and an individual. It can be considered a status in political, legal, and social communities and defines a set of rights and responsibilities that the state grants an individual in a civic contract. Citizenship provides a set of legal rules, including legal and political rights (i.e. the right to participate and exercise power) in relation to nationality, that defines both the membership of a political community and the relationship to the country of residence.

In the same way that national citizenship affects young people, the rights and responsibilities that the EU provides adds another dimension**.** The Maastricht Treaty gave the concept of EU

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1   0057-10 Policy Paper on Democracy in Youth Organisation, adopted at the Council of Members, April 2010
2   0731-09 Policy Paper on the Youth Perspective on e-society, adopted at the Council of Members, November 2010
3   Understanding e-democracy developments in Europe, Scoping Paper, CAHDE(2006)2E, Council of Europe

citizenship a legal basis by explicitly granting civil and political rights such as freedom of movement, the right to vote in European Parliament elections, the right to diplomatic protection, and the right to petition the European Parliament. The Amsterdam and Lisbon treaties further specified these rights and granted new rights such as the European Citizen's Initiative, and further defined the responsibilities of the Union in this context. However, "European citizenship" is not merely EU citizenship. The concept goes beyond the borders of the EU. The Council of Europe (CoE) has developed a strong and well-grounded discourse on European citizenship by focusing on aspects related to **democratic citizenship**, including democratic and human rights values and principles as well as the development, promotion, and protection of democracy and the rule of law.

Global citizenship brings up the question of the relationship of citizenship to territory and nationality in a globalised world. Global citizenship as a concept comes from different identities which people have. People belong to different communities – family, school/work, local community, national community, in Europe and in the world. If people feel they belong to a community, they will have the will to participate in this community and to be active citizens.. That is why it is important to be aware of and to develop all people's identities, in that way creating national, European and global citizenship. In contrast with national and European citizenships, the concept of global citizenship does not have a direct legal element and is not connected to a set of rights. Even if the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (as well as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) defines rights as theoretically applicable to everyone, or, in other words, "rights to which all human beings are inherently entitled,"[4] the State of which that person is a citizen usually defines the relationship. However, at its basis, global citizenship is important because it aims to establish a relationship between the individual and the global community, as interconnected global challenges call for far-reaching changes in how we think and act for the dignity of fellow human beings[5].

Active citizenship

Citizenship defines rights and responsibilities, in turn creating a dynamic debate about the duties of citizens as members of the community. Traditionally, active citizenship has included participating in elections or referendums, standing for a political office, and actively or passively engaging as member of a political party or politically affiliated organisation. However, this strict definition has expanded. A core element of active citizenship is now seen as engagement in civil society through membership in or support of organisations, involvement in political debates and public consultation processes, participation in demonstrations or protests, volunteering, and awareness of topical issues.[6] Moreover, young people who are active, work or are engaged in activities on behalf of participatory youth organisations have access to and are often involved in the democratic decision-making processes. They have the capacity to decide on the direction and action of their organisations through their internal democracy mechanisms.[7]

Active citizenship implies several mutually dependent elements, including **sustainable decision-making**, **participation**, and **influence**. Sustainable decision-making requires collective knowledge, experiences, and perspectives, making it crucial to engaging citizens and raising awareness of the relevance of topical issues. This kind of participation is about having the right, means, information, space, opportunity, and, where necessary, support to participate in as well as influence decisions. By doing so, one can engage in actions and activities so as to contribute to building a better society[8]. Further, it is important for citizens to recognise the benefit of their influence on this decision-making process. Transparent consultation mechanisms therefore must illustrate the connection between the participation and the results. Citizens require a clear and visible impact of participation in decision-making processes.

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4 Universal Declaration of Human Rights
5 http://www.globaleducationfirst.org/220.htm (July 2013)
6 e.g."Jugend ohne Politik", Fritz Oser/ Horst Biedermann, Zuerich: Ruegger 2003, p. 175
7 0416-04 YFJ Policy Paper on Volunteering; adopted at the General Assembly November 2004
8 The Revised European Youth Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life (2008)

Citizenship – the Youth Forum approach

The Youth Forum works to support and enable young people through youth organisations and thus encourages them to participate in their communities. Our comprehension of citizenship goes beyond merely understanding it as a legal entity. It is multifaceted as well—approaching citizenship from a rights-based perspective and applying that approach towards the policies affecting young people in Europe. For this reason, the Youth Forum underlines the importance of exercising and further developing the legal and political rights attached to citizenship on different levels and in various communities.

There are numerous types of citizenship, that reflect the variety of communities that citizens belong to, all operating at different geographic levels and perhaps impacting them all. [9] For instance, the social aspect implies the interrelations between certain groups of individuals. The economic element expresses the relationship between the individual and the labour and consumer market. The cultural dimension may be described as a common awareness of individuals and groups sharing cultural heritage with others. On a geographic level, the Youth Forum is convinced about the complementarity of national, European, and global citizenships.

Active citizenship means primarily active involvement of citizens in the life of their communities and thus in democracy, in terms of activity and decision-making.[10] Activism in a community surpasses traditional democratic participation and requires empowerment of all citizens. Active European citizenship is about pursuing European collective goals and values enshrined in the treaties[11] and promoting respect for democratic and human rights principles, as outlined by the Council of Europe[12]. Moving beyond the limiting concept of territory, the Youth Forum emphasises the importance of global citizenship, placing the individual in the global community.

In order to participate in these communities, citizens must be aware and attached to their communities and have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary for active participation. Having the right to participate in these communities does not necessarily imply doing so in practice. Thus, citizenship is also a role, which demands active participation, volunteering, and other forms of involvement in community development. To function, a system of representative democracy depends on citizens' participation. The Youth Forum is convinced that active citizenship extends beyond traditional forms of participation in the democratic system. Therefore, when discussing a democratic crisis, the Youth Forum is referring to a deficit in traditional forms of active citizenship that reflects the divide between institutions and citizens. Citizens have not lost interest in their communities, but are now more active in new and different ways than before. Decision makers at all levels need to recognise that sustainable democracy depends on participation of all citizens, especially the younger generation, in civil society and civil society organisations[13] and acknowledge the changes in participation trends. Young people today have better and more equal opportunities to access information and gain knowledge about society.[14] Nonetheless, they choose other forms of active citizenship as they often do not see their needs reflected in policy or political decisions and generally do not experience the democratic decision-making process as accessible and transparent.

The Youth Forum is convinced that citizens need to be empowered to develop a sense of responsibility to participate in their communities and provide spaces for the participation of others. This empowerment should entail a true sense of autonomy, both in terms of financial independence and critical thinking. Equal access to education and democratic opportunities are key in providing young people with the proper conditions to engage in decision-making.

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9   The term 'community' may notably refer to a social, economic, cultural, religious or linguistic affiliation.
10 Manifesto, European Year of Citizen 2013 Alliance
11 Manifesto, European Year of Citizen 2013 Alliance
12 Council of Europe Charter on Education Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights education
13 0057-10 Policy Paper on Democracy in Youth Organisation, adopted at the Council of Members, April 2010
14 Council of Europe Documentation - Seminar „New ways of participation based on Information and Communication Technologies"

3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

3.1. RELEVANT COMPETENCES

Considering the varied aspects of citizenship outlined above, the next question is what competences empower citizens to exercise and defend these democratic rights and responsibilities? In addition, what knowledge, skills, or attitudes are necessary to play an active role in communities?

Political Literacy

All citizens require access to knowledge of explicit facts to gain a basic understanding of the concepts of democracy, democratic systems, and decision-making processes. It is important that young people are aware of their rights and duties as citizens. Both the knowledge of essential laws and political rights as well as the ability to recognise the importance of democratic institutions are essential. Furthermore, a strong understanding of the roles of political parties, interest groups, and other actors as well as the skill to influence policy developments are needed. Additionally, young people need to be given the appropriate tools and time to familiarise themselves with current political issues and stay informed of recent developments.

Critical Thinking

Citizenship is not only about understanding one's status, rights, and responsibilities in society but also about action. In order to act, citizens must be empowered to take a position based on their own critical analyses. They need to be motivated to collect information from different media sources. They must also be encouraged to analyse, interpret, and judge the information they obtain, form an opinion, and take a position. Social and communication skills with a special emphasis on non-violence are vital to arguing in a healthy and intellectual manner and expressing one's views in political discussions in which young people need space to debate. Additionally, given the importance of new media in spreading information and new ways of participation, citizens need facilities and tools to address digital illiteracy.

In order to make critical thinking possible and young people competent actors of democratic society, there are different knowledge and skills that a young person must gain: understanding the field of human rights system and his/her role in it, developing communication and social skills, understanding the economic and political systems of countries and the world, creating an intercultural thinking and introducing and accepting other cultures as well as developing awareness of the ecological problems of today. Only if citizenship education contains all of these dimensions will young people be able to take position based on their own political analysis and participate in positive changes in their communities.

Citizenship education should neither reinforce particular political opinions nor promote specific positions. It instead should provide young people with the information they need both in the present and future. It should offer young people the competences and tools to digest information with a critical attitude and understand political processes. It is thus imperative that citizenship education provides young people with an avenue to develop their critical thinking skills, develop their own opinions and make informed choices.

Media Literacy

The dynamic and fast-paced development of society, traditional and social media contribute very much to the citizens' education, awareness and activism. Media literacy in that sense does not refer only to the exposure of citizens, especially young citizens, to a variety of media content, but to their ability to access media, understand media, and develop critical thinking towards media content, as well as to create and communicate through a variety of media outlets and contexts. This experience increases the level of knowledge of citizens and encourages thinking in broader

terms and helps building a relationship between citizens and causes and developments in their emergent and broader environments. Media literacy represents an important factor for active citizenship in today's information-based society.

Democratic Attitudes and Values

Citizens, especially young ones, should be encouraged to take an active interest in social and political affairs. The learning processes should enable them to acquire a sense of responsibility and build confidence to actively participate in society. Citizens must be stimulated to develop a critical relation with democratic institutions, learn to accept and understand difference, and respect others. Demonstrating democratic attitudes and values can include taking part in community development projects, demonstrating in protests, engaging in online activism, or being a volunteer in a political party or youth organisation. Even further, fostering the awareness of identity in a European and global context and recognition of core values will enable the individual to become part of all dimensions and aspects of community.

3.2. LEARNING SYSTEMS

Education plays a crucial role when it comes to supporting and encouraging young people to engage in and contribute to society. Educational enablers should not only be responsible for providing young people with a space for practicing democracy but also equip them with the knowledge and the motivation to participate in society. Every young person in Europe is entitled to quality and impartial citizenship education from an early stage in their education.

We believe education plays a crucial role in providing young people with the necessary tools and knowledge to actively participate in society and express their voices.

Different learning systems have different parts to play in imparting the knowledge, skills and attitudes crucial to citizenship and exercising the rights and responsibilities with which it is accompanied. Each system has its own strength in communicating the varying competences to citizens.

The Non-Formal Education System

Non-formal education is an organised educational process that takes place alongside the formal systems of education and training. Non-formal methods provide an important complement to traditional teaching methods because an individual learns in a particular learner-centred context through personal interaction. The structure of democratic youth organisations gives young people the ability to experience and learn about the principles of participatory democracy and active citizenship first-hand[15]. Citizenship education, as experienced in youth organisations, leads to a development of skills, knowledge, and attitudes usually not acquired through the formal education system[16]. Many of the activities developed by youth organisations contribute on a daily basis to the construction of a more peaceful, democratic society in which all individuals are encouraged to develop their capacities to their full potential. Through their active participation in the organisations, young people can learn how to be committed, take initiative, and assume responsibility. They can learn how to show respect for and form solidarity with others. By learning communication and interpersonal, conflict resolution, leadership, management, planning, teamwork, and problem-solving skills, their confidence increases. Organisations provide individuals the opportunity to take responsibility for their common concerns and develop the "personality of democracy."

Therefore, non-formal education settings and methods are an essential part of a lifelong learning process, and youth organisations serve not only as spaces for them but also their main sources[17]. Beyond that, a majority of youth organisations continually implement trainings, courses, and activities on citizenship education-related topics and subjects. By doing so, they consciously equip a young learner with the space, tools, and content necessary to become an active member of the

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15 0716-05 YFJ Policy Paper on Recognition of non-formal education; adopted at Council of Members November 2005
16 0057-10 Policy Paper on Democracy in Youth Organisation, adopted at the Council of Members, April 2010
17 0057-10 Policy Paper on Democracy in Youth Organisation, adopted at the Council of Members, April 2010

community.

The Formal Education System

The formal education system includes different learning settings (pre-primary, primary, secondary school, university and vocational education and training (VET), leading to certification). The Youth Forum is convinced that introducing citizenship education, considering its blanket coverage and extensive influence on every young citizen's understanding of social norms and democratic structures, to the mandatory formal education system is of crucial importance for democracy. Doing so will allow young people to be equally informed about their rights and responsibilities. This would not only require an adaption of the curricula but also appropriate training of teaching staff and material resources[18].

Certain subject areas—including human rights education, civic education, health education, sustainable development, global awareness, gender equality, intercultural learning, and media education—are essential for any formal curriculum on citizenship education. Due to its diverse nature, citizenship education must be added to the curriculum and not limited to one course. Instead, it must be embedded in the school culture and transversally included in all relevant subjects, preferably by assigning this responsibility to a coordinating teacher that guarantees the inclusion of citizenship education in all relevant subjects and supports teachers to do so.

Citizenship education within the formal education field should include but not be limited to information, hard facts, and cognitive knowledge on democratic structures, institutions, and procedures[19]. It is necessary to move from reactive and passive learning methods to proactive and participatory approaches on formal citizenship education, allowing a student to influence his or her own learning process. As learner, the student needs to be understood as a whole person, and schools must be perceived as spaces for the development of critical, reflexive and interpretative thinking[20]. Utilisation of methods traditionally associated with non-formal education in a formal education setting is especially useful in achieving these goals.

A participatory and democratic school environment inside and outside formalised structures is a key element to learning by doing and developing ownership of relevant processes. By actively involving citizens at a young age in decision-making processes concerning their lives, we not only shape a better and more youth-friendly society but also create a future generation of responsible, active, and competent citizens. Student councils have an irreplaceable role to play in providing open spaces for active citizenship in the formal education system and this should be a compulsory part of every educational environment. By participating in school decision-making bodies, pupils experience democratic responsibility in reality and are directly affected by its functioning. This is particularly important for young people who have more limited opportunities to participate in youth organisations. Therefore, the encouragement of a stronger involvement in representative structures and youth organisations is important. An even bigger effort has to be made in assuring young people in VET systems the opportunity to be involved and represented in democratic youth-led structures.

Lifelong Learning

Even if informal learning can only be driven by a young person's own interest, having the access to information and open exposure to a diversity of opinions are essential, if not pre-conditional to informal learning. By centreing the whole learning process around a learner's needs as well as promoting curiosity and the will to explore through learning by doing[21], learning citizenship throughout life becomes possible.

Volunteering, family, and peer groups also provide learning environments and systems, which are conducive to citizenship education. Continuing education after school contributes to the personal

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18 0057-10 Policy Paper on Democracy in Youth Organisation, adopted at the Council of Members, April 2010
19 v.s.
20 0622-07 YFJ contribution to the consultation on "Schools for the 21st Century"
21 v.s.

development of the individual and increases self-confidence and autonomy[22]. In short, individuals become empowered to participate in the world around them. Life-wide learning is a crucial means of empowering an individual not only to cope with change but also become an active agent of change.

Today's virtual community and new media hold a great potential for citizenship education. However, the digital divide affecting some social groups of young people is a barrier to engaging in e-democracy, and it is firstly characterised by a lack of e-accessibility. Access to computers and the Internet is an important way to participate as a citizen today as they are primary sources of information and communication[23].

Message and Content
After elaborating on the importance of different learning systems and their impact on the development of civic skills, the relevance of adequate and relevant fact knowledge shall be addressed. Content of citizenship education must include a diverse range of subjects. It is relevant that young people gain knowledge and develop an understanding of the roles, functions of, and links among institutional actors at all levels. Further information on the legal framework, laws, rights, and responsibilities that regulate the interaction between all relevant entities, stakeholders, and all citizens shall be provided. This includes information about basic rights (such as the right to vote) as well as information on participatory entities (such as associations, NGOs, and other civil society actors). In equal measure, knowledge of relevant historical developments, dates, and an understanding of their interrelation and context must be communicated in an approachable manner.

As the world becomes increasingly globalised and society more multicultural, young people must learn how to deal with other cultures' perspectives, thoughts, and behaviours in order to build up an environment free of discrimination and racism. Therefore, global education, as an umbrella concept representing a link between the educational practices of intercultural learning, human rights, peace, environmental, social, sexual and development education need to be part of the content discussed.

The content of citizenship education must be multidimensional in order to prepare young learners to participate as active citizens in a multifaceted society.

4. CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION – A YOUTH FORUM PERSPECTIVE

The Youth Forum sees citizenship education as a dynamic concept. Democratic participation and active citizenship need to be understood as lifelong and life-wide learning processes. While having a clear impact on society as a whole, citizenship education is essential to providing young people with the competences that enable them to make sound decisions and assume responsibility for their own lives[24] within a democratic society. Citizenship education that imparts civic knowledge, explicit facts, and civic skills, as in implicit know-how, is a key element and precondition to democratic participation and active citizenship.[25] Education for democratic citizenship equips learners with knowledge, skills, and understanding. It develops their attitudes and behaviours and empowers them to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society as well as internalise democratic values, with a view to the promotion and protection of democracy and the rule of law.[26] The Youth Forum strives for quality education, including citizenship education, as a whole.[27]

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22 'Lifelong Learning and Lifewide Learning, Skolverket.
23 0731-09 Policy Paper on the Youth Perspective on e-society, adopted at the Council of Members, November 2010
24 0052-04 YFJ Policy Paper on Youth Autonomy; adopted by the Council of Members, April 2004
25 0057-10 Policy Paper on Democracy in Youth Organisation, adopted at the Council of Members, April 2010
26 e.g. Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the Council of Europe
     Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, May 2010
27 the reference will be made following the adoption of the Quality Education Paper

The Youth Forum is convinced that the complementary nature of the three educational systems and fields, formal education, non-formal education, and informal learning, needs to be fully recognised and that cooperation between them needs to be fostered in order to allow citizens as learners to fully participate in their societies and sustain democracy. Many non-formal education methodologies and more dynamic curricula have already been introduced to the formal system[28]. The Youth Forum encourages citizenship education to go beyond this, to carefully balance competences approached best in a formal style with those more suitable for other approaches or cooperation with other actors such as non-formal education providers. Further, formal systems must be encouraged to share the educational facilities and provide students and actors from other educational systems such as youth organisations with the possibility to use the educational resources of the formal framework. In all systems of education, a focus on quality is crucial, ensuring that education is accessible and that the focus is on the learner and his or her needs. Therefore, the Youth Forum is calling for a holistic educational approach on citizenship that considers all systems and actors and puts the learner at the centre. Similarly, in order to ensure quality, it is necessary to develop and implement instruments for evaluating the efficacy of citizenship education on individual, institutional, and societal levels.

As a further matter, the Youth Forum is convinced that global education as described in its policy[29], which is about opening "people's eyes and minds to the realities of the world"[30], is essential. It shall aim at enabling young people to develop core competences, which allow them to actively engage with the world and help to make it a more just and sustainable place. This is about a way of thinking and behaving. It is an outlook on life, a belief that young people can make a difference. For this reason, a transversal inclusion of relevant aspects of citizenship education across subjects is important.

The Youth Forum calls for including citizenship education and global education as complementary and obligatory subjects in the guiding principle for school tasks within the formal education system and training for teaching staff in this regard as well as trainings on participatory teaching methods in general.[31]

As a representative of non-formal education providers, the Youth Forum also works towards increased recognition of the impact of youth organisations on young people's holistic development. We believe in approaching education in a holistic way, emphasising the contribution of non-formal education to young people's development both as individuals and active members of society as well as to their inclusion in social and professional environments. It is therefore important to emphasise that citizenship education as provided in participatory youth organisations not only contributes significantly to the development of responsible citizens but also requires financial and structural support for youth organisations to facilitate them in carrying out their responsibilities.

Lastly, in order to secure sustainable democracy and youth participation in democratic decision-making processes, it is essential to deepen the cooperation among all education stakeholders, explore the relevance of new ways of participation, and launch an on-going dialogue with all actors, from the local to the global level, with a part to play in the discourse on citizenship education.

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28 0622-07 YFJ contribution to the consultation on "Schools for the 21st Century"
29   0007-08 – Youth Forum Policy Paper on Global Education: a global vision on education - an education for global citizenship
30 www.coe.int/t/e/north-
    south_centre/programmes/3_global_education/h_publications/Maastricht_Congress_Report.pdf (July 2013)
31 0057-10 Policy Paper on Democracy in Youth Organisation, adopted at the Council of Members, April 2010

ANNEX I
POSITION PAPER ON CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION - ACTION PLAN

The challenges as outlined in this policy paper need a common, pan-European, cross sectorial, intercultural, intergenerational, sustainable, and democratic response. Therefore, the European Youth Forum calls upon all relevant actors to develop a close cooperation in the field of citizenship. The action that will be taken in the context of this commitment includes the following:

The European Youth Forum will
- continue its work to promote citizenship education for young people in formal and non-formal systems. It will monitor the work of the European institutions (EU and CoE) in this area and contribute to the future development of policies and programmes concerned with citizenship education.
- advocate for the recognition of non-formal learning carried out in youth organisations and for it to be given similar consideration as academic credentials gained in the formal education sector.
- encourage youth organisations to pay greater attention to how they promote and practice citizenship within their organisations and to publish the results of their work. It urges youth organisations to make membership to their organisations accessible to as many young people as possible so that they have the opportunity to learn the skills and competences necessary for active citizenship throughout their lives.
- continue promoting research projects such as "The study on the impact of non-formal education in youth organisations on young people's employability," highlighting the skills and competences relevant for responsible citizenship acquired through non-formal education.
- aim at preparing training modules on citizenship education in youth organisations for its members in 2014.
- explore cooperation with stakeholders working on citizenship education at the European level and also engage in a dialogue with national networks or centres on political, citizenship, and civic education.
- promote the Policy Agenda for Volunteering in Europe (P.A.V.E.) recommendations and support volunteering as a demonstration of European values to provide a vehicle for active citizenship and contribute to economic and social-capital growth.
- advocate for education of active citizenship as a core element of the European democracy. Further, the Youth Forum, as member of the European Year of Citizens Alliance (EYCA), an open network of European and national civil society organisations cooperating in the framework of the European Year of Citizens 2013, will advocate for Citizenship education to be a relevant legacy of the European Youth of the Citizens 2013.
- continue to be a driving force in the project "League of Young Voters," a non-partisan information platform for young and first-time voters in Europe that provides the learner with the necessary knowledge and tools to participate in debates and democratic elections as an active citizen.
- promote and advocate for online equality, dignity, human rights and diversity, the Youth Forum will reaffirm the No Hate Speech Movement.

The European Youth Forum calls upon National Governments
- to include citizenship education and global education as complementary and obligatory subjects within the formal education system.
- to develop a training for teaching staff in citizenship education, as well as trainings on participatory teaching methods in general.
- to support and recognise participatory youth organisations as main providers of citizenship education in the non-formal education system. The development of national, regional, and local youth councils as important supporting structures for youth organisations, especially, is encouraged.

- to support cooperation between formal education institutions and participatory youth organisations or other relevant civil society organisations within the citizenship education programmes.
- to oblige formal education institutions to include pupils in the democratic decision-making structures and processes within their schools.
- to encourage work experience in youth organisations for secondary school pupils. Greater links should be created between formal and non-formal education, between schools and their local communities.
- to recognise National Youth Councils as formal structures representing young people in their states and encourage citizenship education using non-formal education through these important structures.
- not to threaten existing citizenship education programmes. Further, the Youth Forum will advocate in member states in which citizenship education is being threatened.
- to initiate a participatory education reform, promoting decentralised structures that encourage the active participation of the learner in the education process.
- to provide the necessary financial and structural support for schools to carry out and continuously develop citizenship education in everyday school life.

The European Youth Forum calls upon the European Union
- to provide the necessary financial and structural support of youth organisations as main providers of non-formal education. This will allow youth organisations to implement their important role in citizenship education.
- to add a strong youth dimension to its external actions as well as promote and financially support youth partnerships among the EU and other regions of the world, in order to give means to youth organisations to be actors of global education.
- to fully recognise the competences and skills gained through non–formal education within youth organisations.
- to ensure information offices of the European Parliament and the European Commission establish closer relations with the member states with National Youth Councils as well as with local, national, and regional youth organisations. This is to ensure that young people understand the role that the institutions play in their daily lives.
- to promote the implementation of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) in order to ensure the possibility of having an intercultural learning experience for young citizens in the VET system.

The European Youth Forum calls upon the Council of Europe
- to continue the promotion of the Education for Democratic Citizenship project and especially the implementation of the recommendations as outlined in the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.
- to reinforce policies, partnerships, and networking of key stakeholders in the field of global education as outlined in the Joint Management Agreement between the European Commission and the North South Centre of the Council of Europe.
- to continue facilitation of exchange in each of its member states between governmental and non-governmental bodies on their experiences in education for democratic citizenship and human rights.
- to give higher priority to its Education for Democratic Citizenship projects.
- to use its Pool of Trainers in the field of youth to organise training seminars for civic teachers.
- to continue to provide and increase the number of language courses for youth leaders. Youth leaders need to be able to speak several languages in order to incorporate the European dimension better into their work and help promote greater mobility at the European level and, by so doing, European citizenship.
- to build on initiatives coordinated by the North South Centre such as the University on Youth and Development and its involvement in the Network of Universities on Youth and Global Citizenship. It is important that networks that promote the cooperation between non-

governmental and intergovernmental partners in the youth field as a contribution to democracy, human rights, peace, solidarity, and development; and this, by building the capacity of young people and youth organisations to become responsible global civil society actors/promoting mechanisms that enable them to undertake this role, are supported.[32]

The European Youth Forum calls upon the United Nations
- to develop further its activities in civic education. The Youth Forum urges United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to continue its work in this field and build on the successes of past citizenship projects.
- to continue promoting, investing in, and further developing the "Global education first initiative" that includes fostering global citizenship as one of its three priorities.
- to support the development of UN Youth Delegate programmes in the European region to increase understanding, cooperation and active global citizenship in youth.

Cooperation with all relevant stakeholders:
- Further, the Youth Forum urges schools, higher education institutions, trade unions, and businesses to value and recognise the educational content of the activities of youth organisations and the skills and competences that young people gain by participating in them.
- The Youth Forum calls for a critical and pluralistic media, transparency, and openness of political parties and institutions, along with availability and accessibility of ICT tools, being the primary source of information in Europe today.
- The Youth Forum encourages face-to-face and one-on-one as well as cyber-, peer and group mentoring programs and projects that aim to empower young citizens and allow a different approach on equipping the learner with the necessary competences to actively involve in society and participate in decision-making processes.

The Youth Forum invites institutional and civil society partners at the European level to join a common dialogue on improving citizenship education in the follow-up of the European Year of the Citizen 2013. Therefore, the Youth Forum will provide all relevant Institutional actors from the EU, CoE, and UN with this position paper. Further, it will present its position to civil society partners and discuss possible cooperation.

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32 Networks of Universities on Youth and Global Citizenship, Concept note, 11/2012