

ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

ACP-EU/100.504/09/fin.

RESOLUTION¹

on social and cultural integration and participation of young people

The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly,

- meeting in Luanda (Angola) from 30 November to 3 December 2009,
- having regard to Article 17(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000 and revised in Luxembourg on 25 June 2005, hereinafter referred to as the Cotonou Agreement, and in particular Articles 9, 13, 26 and 27 thereof,
- having regard to Articles 149-150 and Articles 177-181 of the Treaty establishing the European Community,
- having regard to Article 13 of the EC Treaty on combating discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation,
- having regard to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on 7 November 1995,
- having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, adopted at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 13 December 2006,
- having regard to the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, adopted at the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth, held in Lisbon from 8 to 12 August 1998,
- having regard to the Braga Youth Action Plan, adopted at the third UN World Youth Forum from 2 to 7 August 1998 in Braga (Portugal),
- having regard to the Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe on 21 May 2003,
- having regard to the Agenda 21 for Culture approved by the Fourth Forum of Local Authorities for Social Inclusion of Porto Alegre, held in Barcelona (Spain) on 8 May 2004,

¹ Adopted by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly on 3 December 2009 in Luanda (Angola).

- having regard to the Dakar Declaration on the promotion of ACP cultures and cultural industries and its action plan, adopted by the ACP Ministers of Culture at their first meeting, held in Dakar (Senegal) in 2004,
- having regard to the Santo Domingo resolution, adopted by the ACP Ministers of Culture at their second meeting, held in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) in October 2006,
- having regard to the resolution concerning youth employment, adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 93rd Session in Geneva in June 2005,
- having regard to the African Youth Charter, adopted by the African Union in Banjul, The Gambia, in July 2006,
- having regard to the Pacific Youth Strategy 2010, adopted by the Second Conference of Youth Ministers of the Pacific Community, held from 5 to 7 December 2005 in Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea),
- having regard to Title II (Investment, Trade in Services and E-Commerce) of the Economic Partnership Agreement between the Cariforum States and the European Community and its Member States, establishing free movement of services between the parties, and to Protocol III (on Cultural Cooperation) thereto,
- having regard to the report of the UN Secretary-General of 30 October 2008 on the Implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth: progress and constraints with respect to the well-being of youth and their role in civil society,
- having regard to the Council resolution of 14 December 2000 on the social inclusion of young people¹,
- having regard to the European Commission White Paper of 21 November 2001 on a new impetus for European youth² and the European Parliament resolution of 14 May 2002 on the Commission White Paper on a new impetus for European youth³,
- having regard to the Council resolution of 27 June 2002 regarding the framework of European cooperation in the youth field⁴,
- having regard to the conclusions of the European Council of 22 and 23 March 2005 adopting the European Youth Pact⁵,
- having regard to the communication of 30 May 2005 from the Commission to the Council on European policies concerning youth: addressing the concerns of young people in Europe – implementing the European Youth Pact and

¹ OJ C 374, 28.12.2000, p. 5.

² COM(2001)0681.

³ P5_TA(2002)0223.

⁴ OJ C 168, 13.7.2002, p. 2.

⁵ 7619/1/05, Annex 1 to the Presidency Conclusions.

promoting active citizenship¹, and the Council resolution of 24 November 2005 on addressing the concerns of young people in Europe – implementing the European Pact for Youth and promoting active citizenship²,

- having regard to the decision of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 on youth policy: Youth in Action Programme for 2007-2013³,
- having regard to the decision of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 establishing for the period 2007 to 2013 the programme ‘Europe for Citizens’ to promote active European citizenship⁴,
- having regard to the communication of 5 September 2007 from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on promoting young people’s full participation in education, employment and society⁵,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 16 November 2007 on a transversal approach to youth policy with a view to enabling young people to fulfil their potential and participate actively in society⁶,
- having regard to the communication of 27 April 2009 from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on an EU strategy for youth – investing and empowering: a renewed open method of coordination to address youth challenges and opportunities⁷, and to its accompanying Commission staff working document – EU Youth Report⁸,
- having regard to the UN World Youth Report 2003, the UN World Youth Report 2005 and the UN World Youth Report 2007,
- having regard to the UNDP Human Development Report 2004: Cultural Liberty in Today’s Diverse World,
- having regard to the Brussels Declaration on Asylum, Migration and Mobility and its action plan, adopted in April 2006 by the ACP Ministers in charge of asylum, migration and mobility,
- having regard to the ACP Group’s Brussels resolution on migration and development, adopted by the ACP Ministers in charge of asylum, migration and mobility,

¹ COM(2005)0206.

² OJ C 292, 24.11.2005, p. 5.

³ OJ L 327, 24.11.2006, p. 30.

⁴ OJ L 378, 27.12.2006, p. 32.

⁵ COM(2007)0498.

⁶ OJ C 282, 24.11.2007, p. 16.

⁷ COM(2009)0200 final.

⁸ SEC(2009)0549 final.

- having regard to Decision No 2/LXXXVII/08 taken at the 27th Session of the ACP Council of Ministers, held in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) from 8 to 13 June 2008, on the implementation of the ACP Group’s Brussels resolution on migration and development,
 - having regard to the World Bank’s World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation,
 - having regard to the ILO’s report of October 2008 entitled ‘Global Employment Trends for Youth’,
 - having regard to the Final Declaration of the Africa-Europe Youth Summit, held from 4 to 7 December 2007 in Lisbon (Portugal),
 - having regard to the European Youth Forum Position Papers of 3 May 2008 on youth and migration and on youth employment,
 - having regard to the European Youth Forum report of 2008 entitled ‘Development Needs Youth – Youth Organisations in Action’,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment (ACP-EU/100.504/09/fin.),
- A. whereas ‘youth’ is defined as young people between the ages of 15 and 24 years¹; whereas youth constitutes 18 % of the world’s population or 1.2 billion people, almost 85 % of whom live in developing countries,
 - B. whereas many young people live in poverty and suffer from exclusion or marginalisation, in particular young women, youth with disabilities, young migrants and refugees, youth living in rural areas and youth from ethnic minorities,
 - C. whereas the social, economic and cultural inclusion and active participation of young people in society are essential both for their personal development and for sound and democratic national and global development,
 - D. whereas education and employment are a prerequisite for successful integration and participation of young people in society,
 - E. whereas, despite the fact that today’s youth are the best educated youth generation in history, youth unemployment and underemployment have increased to record levels, exacerbated by the economic crisis; whereas young people represent 25 % of the global working-age population, but accounted for 43.7 % of the unemployed in 2007²,
 - F. whereas cultural industries promote an alternative economic development, create wealth and provide decent work for young people,

¹ UN definition.

² United Nation’s World Youth Report 2007, p. 238.

- G. whereas migration has become one of the coping mechanisms used by young people to expand their options for education and opportunities to work, but these educational opportunities do not benefit the developing countries from which they come or increase these countries' level of education,
- H. whereas globalisation has contributed to an increased mobility in education and vocational training, work and voluntary services, thus promoting solidarity and better cross-cultural understanding, and encouraging respect for difference and diversity,
- I. whereas culture plays an important role in the well-being and personal development of young people,
- J. whereas the proliferation of information and communication technologies (ICT) is presenting new opportunities to young people for their development, inclusion and civic participation; whereas governments' commitment to invest in ICT can reduce the current digital divide between EU and ACP countries and promote equality,
- K. whereas only if young people are recognised as decision-making partners will it be possible to find long-term solutions to global threats such as climate change and to meet development objectives,

General considerations

1. Urges ACP and EU governments to mainstream youth issues into all policy-making and enhance coordination between youth policies and other policy areas directly affecting youth;
2. Stresses the need to defend integrally the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular Articles 23, 24, 26 and 27 referring to work, education and culture;
3. Calls on the Commission to provide for balanced financing for Action 3.2 of the current Youth in Action Programme (2007-2013) within the provisions foreseen and, following the example of the Euromed Youth Programme, to establish an ACP-EU Youth Programme under the Cotonou Agreement, with additional appropriations in the follow-up programme;
4. Stresses that policy makers at all levels should further develop their cooperation and foster exchange of good practices on social and cultural integration and participation of young people, for instance through promoting inter-agency alliances that consolidate national, regional and international programmes for young people;
5. Calls on EU and ACP countries to guarantee to all young people full enjoyment of their rights and freedoms and eliminate all forms of discrimination; calls on the Commission, the EU and ACP countries to increase funding for programmes for social and cultural inclusion of young people from vulnerable groups;

6. Considers that the EU should develop a common migration policy that is coherent, with a strong sense of equality and focused on the social integration of migrants in receiving societies; calls on EU Member States to ensure respect for young migrants' rights and the same access to education, social services and economic opportunities as those enjoyed by the citizens of the country concerned;
7. Calls on the EU to enhance the protection measures for all young third-country nationals working legally in Europe; encourages the EU to work towards applying the status of long-term residents to them and defining the status of semi-skilled and non-skilled workers; considers also that EU and ACP governments should create programmes to curtail the brain drain of young people from developing countries and to coordinate their measures to prevent it;
8. Calls on EU and ACP governments to provide all young people with access to appropriate and youth-friendly health information and services;

Education

9. Calls on ACP and EU governments to establish programmes that reduce school drop-out rates, reduce youth illiteracy and improve the quality of basic education;
10. Calls for universal access to secondary education; calls on ACP and EU governments to remove barriers to access to primary education, especially for young people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups; urges governments to provide grants and concessional loans to students from developing countries who would like to enrol in tertiary education;
11. Calls on EU and ACP countries to promote a smooth transition from education to employment through a switch from theoretical classroom methods to practical experience at school and integration of entrepreneurship education in the curricula;
12. Urges ACP and EU governments to place emphasis on cultural and social education and encourage young people's involvement in cultural activities inside and outside school that could enrich their lives, lead to balanced personal development and protect them from drug addiction and other abuses, thus fostering their social and cultural integration into society;
13. Urges ACP and EU governments to recognise that young people are the group most open to change and the best ambassadors for change that any society possesses; calls on ACP and EU governments to use young people to effect positive change in society through such mechanisms as peer-to-peer education on HIV/AIDS, ICT and sustainable technologies to mitigate and adapt to climate change;
14. Calls for universal ICT access for young people; calls on governments to invest in ICT infrastructure and provide ICT facilities in schools; calls on the Commission and ACP and EU countries to link ACP and EU classrooms

through eTwinning technology to foster intercultural learning; calls on ACP and EU governments to promote distance learning as a means of facilitating the social integration of people from disadvantaged groups, particularly people with disabilities;

Employment

15. Calls on ACP and EU governments to establish national youth employment strategies and action plans in cooperation with the ILO and to regularly monitor the employment situation of young people;
16. Calls on the EU and ACP governments to promote employment rights and a fair remuneration as an effective way to promote social inclusion;
17. Notes that young people working while studying gain valuable experience that facilitates their transition from education to the labour market; encourages the private sector to create more apprenticeship opportunities for young people still in school; warns against all types of employment exploitation in this context;
18. Notes that young women¹ and young people with disabilities² face higher rates of unemployment and underemployment; calls for the elaboration of specific policies to support employment of young women and people from disadvantaged groups;
19. Stresses the need for creating more favourable conditions for young entrepreneurs by providing them with information and financial incentives and removing administrative burdens from those wishing to set up a business; calls on the financial institutions to facilitate access to micro-credit for young people; calls on governments to establish professional counselling and financing programmes for young entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative industry sector, and to encourage community-based services with a view to improving social integration at local level;

Culture

20. Calls on national parliaments and on EU and ACP governments to incorporate the protection of existing cultures on their territory in their national legislation, as a guarantee of the preservation and development of those cultures;
21. Rejects a concept of culture as a commodity subject to profit rules; upholds the democratisation of the creation and bringing to fruition of culture to stimulate cultural development for young people, defined according to their own aspirations and with their participation;

¹ Global trends in women's access to decent work, ILO, Occasional papers No. 43, May 2009, p. 18.

² Men and women with disabilities in the EU: statistical analysis of the LFS ad hoc module and the EU-SILC – final report, 2007, p. 94.

22. Urges ACP and EU governments to create plans or support existing initiatives to help boost the development of cultural tourism, encouraging young people to appreciate the cultural and natural heritage of our countries;
23. Calls on ACP and EU governments to create or strengthen already existing intercultural policies in order to promote cultural diversity and peaceful coexistence of different cultures in society; also calls on ACP and EU governments to encourage decentralisation of cultural policies, thus promoting local development on the basis of culture and subcultures, and respect for diversity and difference;
24. Calls on ACP and EU governments, the Commission and international organisations to strengthen their efforts to organise workshops, seminars and youth camps for young people from different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds as a means of promoting intercultural understanding;
25. Considers that the UN, the Commission and governments should incorporate a cultural dimension in development cooperation policies, programmes and plans;
26. Calls on the international community and EU and ACP governments to focus on preserving traditional handicrafts by allocating more funds to vocational training and manufacturing possibilities; to support sales and marketing of these products; to improve market access opportunities for cultural goods and services, especially those produced by young people, in order to improve the mobility of cultural goods and services; and to support initiatives for the teaching of local languages via the Internet;
27. Calls on ACP and EU governments to ensure that the voices of young people are being heard and welcomes the establishment of youth parliaments in an effort to promote young people's political culture and the development of their sense of responsibility;

Participation

28. Welcomes the Commission initiative on structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations on policy matters relevant to them, but underlines the need to better define the implementation of such a concept;
29. Notes that improving access to information enhances the transparency of governments and public administration, which will encourage young people's empowerment and participation in decision-making; stresses the importance of ICT in improving access to information and calls on governments to create and implement mechanisms that ensure the protection of young ICT users; underlines the role of ICT in strengthening new forms of youth participation such as cyber-participation and e-citizenship;
30. Considers that the minimum age for voting should not be above 18 years of age, to ensure the full participation of youth in society;

31. Instructs its Co-Presidents to forward this resolution to the ACP-EU Council, the European Commission, the African Union, the EU Member States, the ACP countries, the UN and UNESCO.