



Berlin Position on Cultural Youth Education in Europe

“States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.”

(Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 31, of 20 November, 1989)

Children and youth have a right to a political environment that guarantees their cultural freedom and enables them to participate in cultural life! They have a right to live in a society that offers them opportunities for learning to live cultural diversity!

Giving shape to ideas, setting emotions to music, using one's voice for dramatic effect, telling stories and letting paintings and images speak...music, play, theatre, dance, literature, design and media – cultural education programmes both inside and outside schools open up the world to children and youth, they stimulate their imagination and their creative thinking in its intellectual, emotional and manual-practical dimensions. The special methods used in cultural children and youth education offer learning and experience environments in which it is possible to try new things, to improvise, to identify and push boundaries. Experiencing and creating things together plays a key role in artistic projects – whether it happens in film or drama groups, dance or art workshops, mobile play-busses, music classes, museums or hip-hop crews. By helping children and youth acquire social, artistic and personal competencies, cultural education makes them fit for life.

Background:

Different national and international developments have shaped the general conditions under which cultural youth education is organized in Germany and Europe.

These include:

- o the preparations made for a first UNESCO World Summit on Cultural Education in early 2006 in Lisbon,
- o the first draft of a UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Cultural Diversity,
- o the resumption of the GATS negotiations of the World Trade Organization,
- o the joint working paper of the Council of Europe and the European Commission on the recognition of non-formal educational effects in youth work,
- o the elections to a new European Parliament and the re-constitution of the parliamentary committee on culture, youth, education, media, and sport,
- o the reorganization and new composition of the EU Commission and its Directorates-General for culture, youth and education,
- o the expansion of the scope of cultural foreign policy by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, resulting in a cultural and educational foreign policy,
- o the changes in how programmes of international youth exchange are financially supported by the Federal Ministry of Youth.

Mise en forme : Puces et numéros

The German Federation of Associations for Cultural Youth Education (BKJ), as an organization representing the interests of children, young people as well as full-time and voluntary youth workers and educators in the very diversified area of cultural youth education, keeps in close touch with the political actors at these various levels. For a long time, BKJ has been pointing out that these developments urgently call for a close co-

ordination among the different policy-making areas and political levels involved, because they influence each other and are partly interdependent.

When the providers of cultural youth education consider the current action and funding programmes of the European Union in the areas of youth, culture and education, however, it is obvious that the idea implemented in 1999 to bring all three areas under one roof, that of the Directorate-General "Education and Culture", has not yet been successful:

- o Calls for proposals under the "Connect" programme, an attempt to better link culture and education, were separately launched in the two areas.
- o Not in one single year since the initiative started have the calls for proposals launched under the "Joint Actions" initiative of the education and youth programmes lived up to this title.
- o No adequate funding structure for multinational projects has been made available to the diverse group of providers of non-formal cultural youth education.

Mise en forme : Puces et numéros

Given these experiences and the vague announcement made by the EU Commission in its proposals for a new programme generation starting in 2007 that it will make sure that, in the future, programmes will be co-ordinated with other actions of the EU, there is reason to fear that in the political discussion and in the way in which EU youth, cultural, and educational policies are translated into funded programmes, cultural youth education will remain marginalized.

For this reason, BKJ, after it adopted the "Weimar Position on Cultural Youth Education" in 1999, has once again formulated its position and is prepared to engage in a constructive dialogue with all political actors on this statement.

We welcome:

- o the extension of the scope of cultural foreign policy by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, leading to a **cultural and educational foreign policy**, as well as the gradual implementation of this expanded definition of culture and education in international relations through the intermediary organizations.
- o the launch of the campaign **International Youth Work**.
The campaign, which is bound to attract wide, including non-expert interest, is an important step towards greater financial and non-material, moral support for international cultural youth projects and pools resources for international youth work across the boundaries of the different agendas of organizations and associations.
- o the support provided for the "*JugendkulturService* international" of BKJ, by the **Federal Ministry of Youth**, the bi-national organizations DFJW (Franco-German Youth Office) and DPJW (German-Polish Youth Office) as well as the two co-ordination centres 'Tandem' for German-Czech and 'ConAct' for German-Israeli youth exchange.
This enables BKJ to make available funding as well as guidance and training, for about 100 international exchange projects, to providers of international youth culture exchange programmes and international programmes for trained staff.
- o the support provided by the **Federal Ministry of Youth** for the development and testing of an "international competency record".
This gives young people a chance to credibly document the competencies acquired during international and intercultural cultural youth projects and use them for their job training and job career planning.
- o the **European Commission's White Paper** "A New Impetus for Europe's Youth" and the white paper process thus initiated.
- o the multi-annual support for European networks in the cultural field, as provided for in the first draft of the integrated **EU Action Programme "Culture 2007"**.
This holds out the prospect that their necessary, often minimal infrastructure will at least partially be secured.
- o the increasing "**internationalization**" of the work done by providers, organizations and associations of cultural youth work in Germany.

For young people as well as full-time and voluntary staff, having some international experience has become more important than ever. It is now perfectly natural for many of them to go abroad and look for successful and innovative concepts of cultural youth work outside Germany.

We call on:

- **local governments and federal states** not to withdraw from funding international youth exchange programmes, as is happening in large parts of Germany!
It does not make any sense to leave the provision of funding for these international encounters of youth and of trained youth workers only up to the Federal Ministry of Youth and the European Commission. Events like these must be an integral part of any up-to-date cultural youth work. Therefore, providers of cultural youth education urgently need contact persons, guidance and tangible support on the ground, provided by local governments and the federal states.
- **the Federal Ministry of Youth** to make available genuine project funding for the diverse forms of international cultural youth and trained staff exchange programmes!
The narrowly defined guidelines of the children and youth plan of the federal government that limit funding to mobility support barely allow adequate funding for international cultural youth projects and should therefore be handled more flexibly.
- **the Federal Ministry of Youth and the Franco-German Youth Office** to make available adequate funding for the “Jugendkultur Service international“ run by BKJ!
BKJ must finally be enabled to meet the need of its member organizations for a wider commitment in international co-operation by providing increased funding, more guidance and more training and skilling programmes.
- **the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the intermediary organizations** to give more recognition and to offer opportunities for increased co-operation with the providers of international cultural youth exchange as part of its cultural and educational foreign policy!
The providers of international cultural youth and trained staff exchange can and want to make a contribution to this process, drawing on their diverse experience. Young people must be given more opportunities to participate in the intercultural dialogue by contributing their own creative ideas.
- **the European Parliament** to maintain one single committee on youth, culture and education with its current competences!
This is the only way in which the European Parliament can fulfil its leadership and policy-setting role in the cross-sectoral field of cultural youth education.
- **the EU Commission** to make sure that the EU bodies responsible for these areas engage in permanent close co-operation!
This is the only way in which the Commission can do justice to the cross-sectoral character of cultural youth education in all relevant decisions.
- **the EU Commission and the Council of Europe** to draw on the experience BKJ has gained with its Cultural Competency Record, when redesigning and expanding the “Europass“ and when developing a system for recognizing competencies acquired in non-formal youth work.
This instrument, developed by BKJ for enabling recognition of competencies acquired in the area of non-formal learning, expands the scope of recognition to include achievements other than cognitive skills and learning results, which use to be the focus even in non-formal learning contexts.
- **the EU Commission** to study, by means of pilot actions, how adequate funding can be made available to the providers of cultural youth education and their added-

European-value projects, and to do this while the current EU programmes in the sectors of youth, culture and education are running!
These pilot actions need to be developed in co-ordination with actors from all three sectors, in order to implement the lessons learned in the new generation of EU programmes.

- **the EU Commission** to initiate a co-ordination process along the lines of the method of open co-ordination on the issues of “methods, forms and experiences in cultural youth education in Europe”!
Through such a co-ordination process, both school-based and out-of-school cultural youth education could be reviewed and further developed by all ministries, providers, associations and organizations involved, in a genuine cross-sectoral stock-taking process.
- **the EU Commission** to clarify specifically how the European Voluntary Service proposed in the draft for the new EU programme “Youth in Action” relates to the different forms of non-military alternative service in Europe!
The BKJ, due to its own experience with the FSJ Kultur (year of voluntary service in the cultural sector) in Germany, supports the demand made by the German National Agency for the YOUTH-Programme to make absolutely sure that the character of a voluntary civic service-learning concept is preserved in all cases.
- **the EU Commission** to ensure a simplified access for providers of out-of-school cultural youth education to actions initiated under the new, integrated EU action programme in the field of lifelong learning as of 2007!
- The programme must accommodate the diverse forms of co-operation that can be found in school-based and out-of-school international cultural youth projects and programmes for trained staff.
- **the EU Commission** to explicitly commit itself in its new integrated action programme “Culture 2007” to using the option of funding multinational networks for supporting the establishment of an urgently needed European “Network Youth Culture Education”!
Adequate conditions must finally be created to steadily develop networks among the actors in this complex cross-sectoral field.
- **the EU Commission** to absolutely refrain from making any de-regulation offers at the GATS negotiations on liberalizing trade in services in the areas of culture and education!
The members of the BKJ explicitly support the identical demand made by the German Cultural Council, because this is the only way in which the diversity of the range of different programmes and projects in these areas can continue to be protected.
- **the UNESCO** to speedily adopt and implement the more stringently worded draft of the UNESCO Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Contents and Artistic Expressions as well as on **the federal government** to maintain its own negotiating mandate and to explicitly support Article 19, Option A of the draft.
- **the UNESCO** to extend its initiatives on the worldwide strengthening of cultural education to the diverse forms of non-formal programmes and projects and not to limit them to supporting art category-specific education at primary school level!
This is the only way in which all nations involved can be given a chance to keep developing and extending programmes and projects in cultural youth education adequately while maintaining the necessary diversity.

We offer:

More intercultural learning in Germany!

BKJ and its member organizations offer their support to the **Federal Ministry of Youth** for strengthening the integration of children and youth with a migration background into youth welfare programmes. A nationwide pilot project of BKJ and its members could encourage increased co-operation between cultural youth education work, programmes of intercultural learning and providers of international cultural youth projects.

More international voluntary services in cultural institutions!

As part of the European Voluntary Service and, especially, based on the proposals made by the **EU Commission** on the new action programme "Youth in Action", BKJ, along with partners from many neighbouring European countries, offers to organize international voluntary services in the cultural sector. Given the great demand for such a service in Germany and on the basis of the experiences gathered from the national FSJ Kultur (a year of voluntary service in the cultural sector), we expect such a European Voluntary Service in the cultural field ('EVS culture') to be a success because it will be an attractive offer for different target groups of young people in Europe.

More competency development through cultural youth education!

BKJ offers **UNESCO** to share the scientific basis used, the set of tools developed, and the experiential data collected during the 'Cultural Competency Record' project as a contribution to the agenda of the World Summit on Cultural Education and to actively support countries and organizations that are interested in developing or implementing such a documentation procedure.

More co-ordination and joint steps!

Moreover, BKJ and its member organizations would like to point out to the competent German ministries, the elected MPs and appointed officials in the European Parliament, the EU Commission as well as the Council of Europe and UNESCO that they are prepared to engage in talks in order to discuss the items laid out in this position paper and in order to initiate specific steps towards the implementation of individual demands spelled out here.

Adopted by the Members' Meeting of BKJ

Berlin, Oct 2, 2004