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The young generation sacrificed: social, economic and political implications of the financial crisis

Reply to Recommendation[1]: Recommendation 2002 (2012)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully examined Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 2002 (2012) on "The young generation sacrificed: social, economic and political implications of the financial crisis" and has drawn it to the attention of member States' governments. It has also forwarded the recommendation to the relevant bodies of the Council of Europe.[2]

2. The Council of Europe's commitment to young people is now more essential than ever given the economic and financial crisis and its impact on the situation of young people in Europe. In drawing up the Council of Europe's youth policy, the Committee of Ministers' objective was to provide all young people with equal opportunities and enable them to develop the knowledge and skills required to play a full part in society.[3] It would underline the cross-sectoral dimension of the youth policy and the importance of involving young people in its formulation, implementation and follow-up.

3. As the Assembly reiterates its proposal to draft a European Framework Convention on the Rights of Young People, the Committee of Ministers would draw attention to its reply to Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1978 (2011), which is still relevant.

4. In addition to the legal and institutional measures recommended by the Assembly to enhance European co-operation and foster young people's access to social and economic rights and opportunities, the Committee of Ministers would underline the importance of quality education in preparing young people for life as citizens and for their integration in the labour market. It would also refer to the guidelines set out in the Council of Europe's Social Cohesion Strategy and Action Plan (2010), which encourage member States to provide all young people with equal opportunities on the labour market and to support young people in disadvantaged situations.

5. The issues raised by the Assembly in its recommendations were also tackled at the 9th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth (Saint Petersburg, 23-25 September 2012) which dealt with the role innovative youth policies can play to improve the access of young people to rights and at the 2nd Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Social Cohesion (Istanbul, 11-12 October 2012), entitled "Building a secure future for all".

1. Adopted at the 1154th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (14 November 2012).
2. Steering Committee for Education Policy and Practice (CDPPE), Governmental Committee of the European Social Charter and the European Code of Social Security, European Committee of Social Rights, Governing Board of the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) and Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ), European Committee for Social Cohesion (CDCS) and Executive Committee of the North-South Centre.
3. See Resolution CM/Res(2008)23

6. Pursuant to the Assembly's recommendation that the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) be closely involved (see paragraph 3.3), the Bank's Governing Board indicated that the Bank "stands ready to examine and to contribute, through its specific means of action, to projects aimed at improving access to socio-economic rights for vulnerable populations, and especially the young generation, presented by its member States".

7. As the Assembly notes, the North-South Centre plays an important role in promoting youth-oriented policies and capacity-building measures, in particular on the southern shores of the Mediterranean and in Africa. It works in co-operation and co-ordination with the other relevant Council of Europe bodies, not least in the framework of the Council of Europe Policy towards Neighbouring Regions. Very recently, the discussions at the 13th University for Youth and Development, held by the North-South Centre (Mollina, 16-23 September 2012) focused on youth rights.

8. The Committee of Ministers would also underline the excellent level of co-operation with the European Union, in particular in the field of young people's access to social, economic and political rights. More specifically, attention should be drawn to the current joint project between the Council of Europe and the European Commission, named "Edgeryders", which has set up an interaction channel between young people and democratic institutions in Europe.