



Resolution on Youth Forum Policy in relation to the Northern dimension of EU

**Adopted by the Executive Committee
Potsdam (Germany), 26-28 March 1999**

Background

Youth organisations have been many years doing intensive co-operation in the northern region of Europe. Both the national youth councils and the national, regional and local branches of international organisations have been involved in this co-operation. For us the role of non-governmental organisations in developing democracy and stable civil society is self-evidently clear. We have been able to do many good projects, we have been creating active networks, we have participated in the formation of the official youth policies in this region. At the same time we have given a lot of opportunities for young people to participate in international activities and learn from each other.

Therefore we see that it is vital to include this sector of society into the formal documents that are being prepared for the Northern Dimension Policies of European Union.

The Commission of EU has prepared a mid-term report on the Northern Dimension of EU and this report was discussed in the Vienna summit in December 1998. Now Commission is preparing the final report on the actions that should be taken concerning the Northern Dimension. (It should be clarified that this will not be a new initiative or a new program, but all the actions will take place in the frame of the current existing programs.)

The report, in its current format, concentrates heavily on transport, trade, industry and oil and gas technology. Environmental concerns and health issues are also included in the report. But what is completely lacking is the role of citizens, their activities and organisations.

Proposal

The European Youth Forum should act and lobby -together with its members- the Commission, The Council and the member states to include reference to civil society, democracy and youth co-operation into the report.

The following chapter should be added into the action plan/report on Northern Dimension of the European Union:

h) Democracy and civil society

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46. The support for the networks of the civil society actors, specially non-governmental organisations, should be continued in the frame of the Tacis and Phare -democracy programs. Special attention should be given to the continuous improvement of the relations between EU member states and the program countries.

47. The Commission supported the organisation of the Baltic Sea Youth Ministers Conference in Visby, Sweden June 1998. According to the recommendations made by the Conference it is essential to encourage and support specially the development of the youth co-operation in the northern region of Europe. Therefore the Commssion continues to support this co-operation in the frame of the currently existing programs and institutions.