

DECLARATION EYSF2006

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EUROPEAN YOUTH AND SPORT FORUM 2006

“Youth: A future for Sport in Europe”

26th of September
to 1st of October 2006 – Finland



Introduction

The European Youth and Sport Forum took place from the 26th September - 1st October 2006 in Pajulahti, Finland.

The Forum brought together young people from 32 European countries to discuss and exchange ideas on health, equality and active citizenship. The themes of the EYSF2006 were chosen to compliment the Finnish EU-presidency themes. The Finnish EU-presidency is campaigning for the recognition of voluntary organisations in Europe and for horizontal sport policies across all sectors.

The enthusiasm and engagement of the participants through out the Forum was a credit to them and their countries, and the recommendations outlined in this document are wholly those of the participants, arising from their ideas and discussions.

The Declaration reflects the beliefs and desires of young people directly involved in sport and are designed to assist in the development of future policies on sport in Europe.

At a time when physical activity amongst young people is increasingly being discussed in Europe, we hope that the European Commission, the Ministries responsible for sport and youth and sport organisations across Europe will take note of the recommendations and include them in the forthcoming White Paper on Sport; shaping and ensuring a bright future for all Europeans.

The participants do not ask you to do this alone; they are committed and willing to do their own part to full fill these recommendations. For the future it is important that we work together for a healthier and more active Europe.

During the Forum we have participated in both formal and non-formal methods of education. We believe that the opportunity to learn both in classes and seminars but also via activities and games is vital and recommend that this process is used in all programmes and projects involving volunteers and sport.

The case studies provided under each heading are examples presented by participants at the Forum. They are projects and programmes that the participants have been directly involved in and in many instances have led to their participation in the Forum. They are offered as examples of successful initiatives involving young people and are recommended for implementation in other European countries.

The participants of the EYSF2006

ISCA, SLU, ENGSO Youth, Young Finland Association, and Svoli

Health

Health is a key concern for young people in Europe. At this Forum we have had the opportunity to try a variety of sports and activities that are not only fun, but have also benefited our fitness and taught us new activities and ways in which to live healthy lives. It is important to young people that they are given the information, knowledge and facilities that will empower them to make their own choices concerning their health, and that society supports their desire to follow healthier lifestyles.

“10,000 Steps” - Robin Van Den Bosch

The 10,000 steps programme is a project at the University of Ghent. The main objective of the programme is to change peoples' attitudes towards physical activity. It does not 'tell' people to be physically active for 30 minutes a day or more, like the present recommendations, but rather encourages people to incorporate a more physically active lifestyle into their daily life. For example, instead of going by car or taking the elevator, students and staff are encouraged to go on foot or to take the stairs. To meet the daily recommendations for being physically active the participants are advised to take 10,000 steps everyday. Each step they take is a step closer to a healthier lifestyle. To measure their steps participants use a pedometer which records their steps and provides a total at the end of each day. The University hopes that through this project participants will change their habits and adopt a more active way of living.

Recommendations and actions:

1. Every European country to introduce free “physical activity on prescription”
 - doctors to check and monitor patients' weight and health
 - doctors to refer overweight patients to a sport co-ordinator in their local area who will advise on correct activities and clubs for each patient
 - doctors' surgeries and other public buildings to display leaflets on healthy eating choices, physical activities, and local sports clubs and fitness centres
2. Improve food labelling in European countries
 - all food labelling to contain information on calories, salt, sugar, fat, chemicals used in production and daily nutrition recommendation figures
 - introduce a unified European system for labelling and information charts, which will be colour coded, simple and easy to understand
 - all food labels to provide a website link to where there is detailed information on the food and it's ingredients
3. Make healthy food cheaper in European countries
 - increase taxes on unhealthy foods
 - offer subsidies to producers of healthier food
4. Encourage schools and workplaces to become healthier environments
 - only provide healthy foods and drinks in canteens and vending machines
 - offer corporate rates in sports clubs, gyms or sports facilities
 - encourage employers to offer 1 hour per week during work time for physical exercise and reward participating organisations
 - create a European kite mark for healthy schools and workplaces
 - include the topic of healthy lifestyles in physical education lessons

Equality

The possibility for every person to be treated equally and to have equal access to opportunities is at the very foundation of the growing European community. During the Forum we have proven that everyone can be treated equally; all participants have been given the opportunity to take part in activities and to voice their opinions without judgement. These are the values by which we wish to live our lives and the following recommendations, if implemented, would enable others to share in a more equal and enjoyable Europe.

A “New Point of View” - Simone Digennaro.

The Non-Governmental Organisation “Italian Union of Blind Persons” (UIC) aims to give blind people the opportunity to play an active part in society. It is committed to improving the lives of blind people and strengthening communities by utilising several kinds of activities which to promote health, culture, education and integration.

Sport and play are an important part of UIC’s activities. Through a specific programme lead by ‘A.S.D. Ciociaria Non Vedenti’, they are used in a non-formal way in order to provide opportunities to get involved, to promote healthy lifestyles and develop new educational approaches.

At the same time, UIC promotes a general educational platform where seeing people, especially children, can experience what it is like to play sports as a blind person; developing their knowledge, abilities and skills and helping in the creation of an integrated and understanding society.

Recommendations and actions:

1. Make all sports equally important but specifically increase government focus on marginal sports, especially those that attract people from minority and disadvantaged communities
 - make sports accessible by providing specialist equipment and facilities
 - provide more information about the different types of sports and activities which are available in local areas
 - clubs to offer free trial sessions to new participants
2. Provide equal opportunities for participating in sport to everyone with regard to gender, age, physical ability, ethnic and other minority backgrounds
 - coaches to include the principals of equality in all their sporting activities
 - ensure that sports club membership fees are affordable to everyone in society
3. Improve teachers and coaches skills in providing sporting opportunities for everyone - not just the talented and able
 - introduce or improve equity training during the sports teachers’ and coaches’ studies at college or university and encourage the sharing of best practice
 - include training on how to integrate able and disabled participants in the same activities
 - enforce minimum standards of equality in schools and sports club

Active Citizenship

Active citizenship has become a key word in European integration. It has played a central role in our activities at this Forum, as we have met and exchanged good practice with other young people from thirty two European countries and many different backgrounds.

Our ability to attend this Forum is something that we all value and we wish that opportunities like this are given to more young people in Europe. Our recommendations below reflect this desire and also call for greater youth involvement in clubs and organisations; enabling us to become more active citizens.

“Junior Team” - Eva Geithner

The junior team is an open group of young volunteers who work together without the need of being elected. The team motto is 'everybody who wants can join'. The members do not need to take part in every meeting; they are only attached to specific projects if they desire.

It is a new flexible form of volunteer youth work in sports and the idea has been used by the German Sports Youth for several years. The goals of the team are to create a network of young volunteers from different levels of the sports youth organisations as well as to provide education for team members, for example in time management or communication.

Another aim is to provide the possibility for the team members to organise projects and implement them themselves. Therefore, the members gain training in workshops on topics such as decision making, as well as soft skills. There is also room for the exchange of experience between the team members and learning within the organisation.

Recommendations and actions:

1. Request that every country in Europe promotes the values and benefits of sport for encouraging active citizenship
 - good examples from sports clubs and organisations, including marginal sports, to be shown on national television programmes and in newspaper articles
 - introduce a national promotional campaign for active citizenship, with posters and commercials in public places
2. Establish a European-wide generic volunteering strategy (both local and trans-national) to ensure that every volunteer is able to reach the same standards and share the same opportunities
 - introduce a unified credit system that recognises the skills and experiences of volunteers
 - fund more forums and workshops to enable young people to share information and develop leadership skills
 - provide awards and certificates for volunteers to thank, motivate and encourage them
 - provide a European insurance scheme for volunteers
3. Ensure that young people are given opportunities to be fully involved in all the decision making processes associated with the clubs, federations and national organisations that they are affiliated to
 - every board to add a minimum of one official place for a young person (under 30)
 - ensure that the views and the voice of the young person counts by giving them equal voting rights to all other board members
 - each young person should be offered a mentor to work with them and provide them with experiences and opportunities

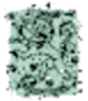
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Sponsors

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