



take part in the future !



BYSF2009 Declaration

youth participation

democratic citizenship

non-formal education through sport

Balkan Youth and Sport Forum 2009



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During the Balkan Youth & Sport Forum 2009 more than 40 youth leaders, representing over 11 countries, assembled in Sarajevo, Bosnia Herzegovina, to share our experiences and ideas for youth development. During the forum, we attended non-formal workshops, training sessions and had passionate discussions about the issues plaguing our communities across Balkan. From these discussions, an over-arching theme emerged and held prominence: 'Balkan Youth - What is the future?'

One part of future must be the important challenge to have youth engaged and involved in their communities, e.g., in decision-making processes. We see this as a cultural crosscutting process, where youth are regarded as equal citizens to development as opposed to token participation. This means that young people must and should be at the table when decisions regarding their communities are being made, no matter the authority, agency, or level of government. This must be reflected in policy and budgetary priorities.

We, the youth of Balkan, are motivated to be part of a continually bonding of cultures, religions and nations in the Balkan region, with our unshakable belief in the principles of tolerance, equity, and transparency. We call for NGOs, GOs and institutions to show interest in our beliefs, and to do so by supporting us in our efforts to improve participation of youth through democratic citizenship and non-formal education.

This declaration should be considered as a dynamic document, from where we all can engage in discussion and action planning around the issue of youth participation.

Enjoy.

THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE BYSF 2009

When involved in a Non-formal activity, young people step into society with self-esteem, tools to prevent bad influences and develop positive values and leadership abilities. At the same time NFE is one key method to ensure a dynamic development of organizations, to reflect youth trends of tomorrow.

Through non-formal education youth gain deeper understandings of their own identity, the respect of others and promotion of cultural diversity. NFE empowers young people to share opinions and experiences, achieve lifelong learning and personal development.



Recommendations & actions

Promote healthy lifestyles by initiating programs for youth from all social levels in society, to build better self-esteem and team spirit, that lead to stronger personalities and ultimately a stronger society.

The public sector and the NGOs needs to:

- Organize sport schools, forums, seminars, games and events, using the principles of NFE to teach sports and life skills.
- Organize events for the community to take part and learn the importance of having sports in everyday life.

Build partnerships between NGOs and public institutions to promote NFE and its values, having the wider communities recognize it and work on its implementation:

- The NGO's need to improve their public relation and media relations, advertising and advocacy in favour of NFE.
- Campaigns and outreach events on NFE in cooperation needs to be organized throughout Balkans.

The governmental organizations and non-government organization needs to increase and recognize the importance of NFE in society:

- Develop unified certificates with the logos from the organizers from the whole Balkan region and advocate national institutions for their acknowledgement.
- Create an online platform with shared tools and information for NGOs to implement NFE strategies.

NFE to be prioritized in rural areas:

- Motivate youth to start activities that are beneficial for the rural communities, with a focus on promoting positive values through sports.
- Encourage schools from rural areas to provide after school and leisure activities for young people .

Recommendations & actions

Democratic citizenship and youth participation is essential elements in creating a society with equal rights for all. Knowledge of and belief in the principles of youth participation is furthermore a great motivator for democratic citizenship, which makes the two closely related.

The active involvement of young people in organizations and decision-making enhances the feeling of responsibility and belonging to a diverse and multicultural society. This is the base for reducing discrimination and improving social inclusion, respect and understanding. Additionally, the engagement of youth in sports and organizations creates greater awareness of health in general and the importance of physical activity in society.

Ensure equal rights between young people and stakeholders, to be part of decision making processes.

- Create a Balkan NGO where young people are guaranteed to be heard if they experience injustice and discrimination.
- At least one third of all board members in sport and youth organizations should be below the age of 30
- Governmental organizations need to consult with grass root movements in youth and sport, to create policies, acknowledging sport as a tool for youth participation.

Promote volunteerism around Balkan and support local initiatives and NGOs, as an investment in the potential of young people.

- Use international events in the Balkan region to provide young people with more possibilities to volunteer.
- Promote youth activities using sport, role models and campaigns to show examples of good practice through the media for the society
- Develop youth participation through the usage of social media, directed at schools and youth organizations.

Motivate young people to take social responsibility in their own communities and be part of a unified Balkan identity.

- Encourage partnerships between sport for all organizations, to insure a sharing of knowledge and ideas across cultures.
- Simplify the registration processes in youth events: no visa fee and faster procedures.
- Create and implement strategies in the Balkan region to break down stereotypes and prejudices.
- Organize events, competitions and forums across borders to highlight the value of sport and youth.

Support volunteerism as a tool for youth participation.

- Improve the skills of workers and volunteers operating in rural areas, to involve non-active youth in sport activities.
- Educate peer-to-peer leaders, and develop their skill and effectiveness in encouraging other young people to participate.
- Empower future leaders through seminars, lectures and forum focusing on democratic rights and the importance of volunteerism as tool for active participation.



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- + **ISCA** - International Sport and Culture Association www.isca-web.org
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