



"declaration"

STOKE MANDVILLE, UK

EUROPEAN YOUTH AND SPORT FORUM 2005



*"building a culture
of **volunteering**
and **citizenship**
throughout europe"*

19TH TO 24TH OF NOVEMBER 2005 - UNITED KINGDOM

EYSF 2005

*“Building a culture of volunteering
and citizenship throughout Europe”*

The European Youth and Sport Forum took place from the 19th - 24th November 2005 at Stoke Mandeville Sports Stadium in the United Kingdom.

The Forum brought together young people from 28 European countries to discuss the issues of volunteering in sport, combating discrimination, and health and sport under the general theme of ‘creating a culture of volunteering and citizenship throughout Europe’.

The recommendations outlined in this document are constructed from the ideas of the participants, arising from workshops and discussions over the six days of the Forum. The recommendations do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organisers.

The recommendations are designed to assist the European Commission, the Council of Europe and Non-Governmental Organisations in Europe in developing their future strategies for European sport and recreation.

The Forum has provided young people with an opportunity to voice their opinions and the recommendations are true reflection of their experiences and lives in modern Europe. It is vital that their voices are heard; both to ensure that European policy making is successful and in recognition of their role in the future construction of Europe.

We hope that the Declaration will achieve the desired affect.

Volunteering and Active Citizenship

We believe that volunteering in youth and sport plays an important role in developing the leaders of tomorrow. Participation in volunteering teaches responsibility, leadership skills, tolerance and democratic values. Volunteering should be recognized as a tool for combating social problems by the positive use of young people's energy; requiring involvement and challenging them to be active citizens within the local and European Community.

Taking into account the advantages of volunteering, we recommend the following measures:

- Invite Sport and Youth NGOs to consult at inter-governmental meetings,
- Establish a policy of youth presence at executive committees dealing with youth- and sport related decisions,
- Support and develop existing sport and youth related networks at European level.

- Educate volunteers by:
 - Including life skills subjects in primary education;
 - Enabling experts to deliver courses and workshops in other European countries to promote best practise in youth and sport volunteering across Europe,
- Create a European-recognised Voluntary Log-Book – which can be used by volunteers when applying for further education and employment,
- Provide greater financial support within the “Youth in Action” programme to cover volunteer expenses

Volunteers represent a low level investment but will produce a big effect. Therefore, we hope the above recommendations might be easily undertaken. Volunteering means active citizenship and we would appreciate if you help us to activate other citizens.

Combating Discrimination through Sport

Sport is a non-verbal form of communication, with the ability to cross all boundaries. Sport is an excellent tool for combating discrimination and bringing people together. We believe that sport is a tool to unite Europe.

Therefore, we propose the following recommendations:

Education

Education is key to changing attitudes.

- We recommend frequent EU seminars to share ideas and good practice with representation from national sports organisations and young people.
- Implementation of a European wide education programme for trainers, teachers and coaches, giving them the skills to include everybody, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, social status and all other forms of discrimination.

Equal opportunities

- Money must **not** be a barrier to participation. European governments should work in partnership with sports facilities to encourage the participation of lower socio-economic groups.
- Information about sport in Europe must be fully accessible; including Braille, multi-lingual and large print.

Publicity

We recommend a series of hard-hitting adverts, funded by the European Union, to promote an anti-discrimination message across Europe.

Facilities

The European Union should implement a Directive making it law for sports facilities to be accessible for all participants.

Exchange programmes

We recommend greater networking between European NGOs and the EU Institutions.

Other projects

- All applications to EU funded projects should require a description of the organisation's anti-discrimination policy as part of the funding criteria.

Our dream is a level playing field where people are categorised by their participation and behaviour and not their background. Action is required by you to make this dream become a reality.

Health and Sport

Sport can help to improve people's social, physical and mental health. Investment in sport can lead to lower health care costs and a healthier Europe. We challenge you to recognize the role of sport as a tool for health promotion, therapy and active lifestyles. Physical activity is essential to the methodology of prevention vs. prescription and pro-action vs. reaction.

We believe the following recommendations will assist governments in achieving its responsibility of creating a healthier Europe:

- Reinstating compulsory daily Physical Education in pre-school, kindergarten, primary and secondary schools taught by *qualified* Physical Education staff.
- Improving the environment to encourage physical activity as a part of everyday life: more cycling lanes, safer sidewalks, more open park space, playgrounds, and public access facilities.
- Enhance cooperation between sport clubs and schools, sport clubs and medical professionals as well as sport clubs and volunteer sector.

- Increased number of government sponsored meetings, forums, and media campaigns to promote healthy lifestyles.
- Promote incentives for companies who encourage employee participation in physical activity.
- Restructuring of taxation to promote healthy lifestyle: reduced taxes for volunteer sports clubs, reduced taxes on healthy food, and increased taxes on food with high fat and/or sugar content.

Sport and physical activity are cheap and effective ways to promote healthier lifestyles. We hope that you take into consideration the above recommendations to build an active Europe for the future.

thanks to all the participants and our sponsors.

- *European Commission's Youth programme*

http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/program/index_en.html

- *CCPR Enterprises*

<http://www.ccpr.org.uk/dyncat.cfm?catid=4259>

- *International Sport and Culture Association*

<http://www.isca-web.org>



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