

MEMORANDUM



COUNCIL OF EUROPE    CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**Directorate General IV - Education,  
Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport**

*The Director General*

*Coordinator for Intercultural Dialogue*

*Coordinator for the Anti-discrimination Campaign*

CN 046/2011 – GBD/sd/ii

Strasbourg, 21 June 2011

**For the attention of Mr Piotr Switalski  
Directorate General of Democracy and Political Affairs**

**Subject: ALER-T / Group of Eminent Persons**

Following your request on 8 June, please find hereafter DGIV's priority recommendations.

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cc. : O. Olafsdottir  
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## **ALER-T/Group of Eminent Persons Priority Recommendations DGIV**

Taking into account the work already done by the ALERT group, and the Report of the Group of Eminent persons, DGIV would like to highlight the following recommendations, with a number of proposals for action in the following fields:

### **(1) Report of the Group of Eminent Persons**

#### **I. STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendation 8.** A positive presentation of diversity and migration would be an equally important step to address the long-term requirements of the continent. The Council of Europe could for instance help member states by developing a policy statement which could take the form of a "White Paper on demographic developments and migration in Europe".

**Recommendation 17.** A long-term political investment in the democratic development of the Arab region and in Central Asia would be very relevant. A political investment here could prevent at least part of the knock-on problems that are addressed in other recommendations. The DYS is fully ready to be part of that political priority.

#### **II. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **Education, youth, intercultural dialogue**

**Recommendation 31** is about intercultural competences and requires a holistic approach, whereby all sectors would develop relevant action to optimally use the resources available for intercultural dialogue (often yet un-detected) so as to achieve a sustainable impact. Given the broad thematic coverage of the CoE, combined with its specific profile on educational/cultural/social/media matters, this seems to be a natural task for the Organisation. From the Pestalozzi Programme to the youth field and including the reflection of Higher Education, the Council of Europe can play a crucial role on this issue.

**Recommendation 32** on mobility of students and reinforcement of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in terms of promotion of its principles both on national level and on Academic levels. This will also underline the cornerstone of recognition issues in the strengthening of mobility. In relation with the Arab spring and in relation with the Mediterranean network of information centres on recognition of qualifications, dialogue around the Mediterranean could be supported and developed.

**Recommendation 35** is about follow-up and monitoring of policies and practices, and indeed, progress or not with the intercultural agenda. Again, CoE is uniquely placed for

such a task because of the availability of a great number of relevant tools that can be used in the compilation of progress reports, preparation of Fora, or else (such as ECRI, Compendium, CultureWatchEurope, HEREIN, specific monitoring instruments related to Conventions, etc.). As a matter of fact, we could assign CultureWatchEurope a future work focus on ICD issues. Already it is an accepted activity of the CDCULT, and could become even more relevant in the framework of the new Committee, which is even labeled "Steering Committee Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue". The "junior edition" of the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue should be implemented straight away and would not need any further debate.

### **Media**

**Recommendation 36** on media, the JP MARS - Media against racism in sport - is doing exactly what the recommendation states. We intend to pursue this work in the future, possibly through new joint programmes.

### **Roma**

**Recommendations 41-44.** The CoE could consider allocating some resources to the Route of Roma Culture and Heritage which addresses Roma citizenship, employment and intercultural exchanges between Roma and non-Roma

### **Support for action at local and regional level**

**Recommendation 47** should be taken up: We invite the Council of Europe to further develop its "Intercultural cities" programme and in particular to encourage the creation of national networks of intercultural cities in order to adapt the concept as much as possible to specific national contexts; and also to facilitate the extension of the "Intercultural cities" programme beyond Europe, with the support of the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe. Such reinforcement will require some resources (15.000 € per national network), 20.000€ per new member city in the international network, but especially HUMAN resources - at least one A2/3 and one B2

## **(2) ALER-T proposals**

Among the proposals developed by the ALER-Team, we would like to recommend paying particular attention to "youth unrest" ([proposal no.4](#)) - but preferably not in the form of addressing a "looming risk" which needs to be put down, but under the aspect of harnessing the political and creative potential offered by young people who engage themselves, i.e. as a welcome chance for democracy to develop further. The "Arab spring" is a powerful illustration of the energy of that youth movement. The entire youth

policy of the Council of Europe could develop only because our forefathers and foremothers understood the need to harness the dynamics of 1968.

The issue of youth rights (proposals no.22, 23 and 24) is controversial among member states; many suffer from 'convention fatigue' and are against a further codification of youth rights. Taking this into account, the Council of Europe could engage itself in a strategy to improve at least the effective enjoyment of (and not only the access to) the existing rights that young people have. The link to questions of intergenerational dialogue and to children policy, both priorities of the youth policy of the Council of Europe, are obvious.