



COUNCIL OF EUROPE    CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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## *Training Course*

# **New Media in Youth Work**

Developing competences of youth workers and youth leaders to use new media in non-formal education projects and activities with and for young people.

**September 2011 – February 2012**

Residential training seminar:  
2-11 November 2011  
European Youth Centre, Strasbourg

**Course rationale  
Call for applications**

(Deadline: 18 September 2011)

## **New Media and youth work**

The digital age provides a variety of new opportunities for young people and youth workers. New media offer the possibility of every user/participant to create, publish, distribute and consume media content fostering therefore a space of full participation, engagement and self-expression.<sup>1</sup> The development of social networks, in particular, has increased the level of youth participation in cyberspace in a variety of ways ranging from keeping in touch with peers and developing new contacts to sharing content and exploring self-expression. New media are also new in the ways to access information, to learn and to participate through informal or formal groups, even if most users adopt mostly passive modes of participation.

One can argue we are in the midst of a communication revolution, where patterns of participation and civic involvement are rewritten as Facebook and Twitter have become a medium for organising civic movements (see Moldova<sup>2</sup>, Iran, Arab spring<sup>3</sup>), but as well a source for information and report on political and human rights issues. A study on the use of Facebook and Twitter in Arab countries during the Arab spring revealed that Facebook users were of opinion that Facebook had been used primarily to raise awareness within their countries about the ongoing civil movements, to spread information to the world about the movements and to organize activists and actions. Very little Facebook users surveyed (less than 15%) believed that Facebook was primarily used for entertainment and social reasons.<sup>4</sup>

The new digital technologies, especially social networking sites, are characterised by interactivity and participation, where one is not only consumer of online content, but similarly creator of online content, where feed-back and share of ideas are the norm. As the level of participation of young people in new media usage becomes higher, issues such as diversity, differences in access, social and economic inequalities, or literacy play as much a role in new virtual spaces as they play in real life. While the use of new media can facilitate positive youth development, supporting participation and expression, it is needed that policy makers and educators equally pay attention to the 'digital divide' and the development of media literacy competence among both young people and youth workers.

Online space, just as offline space, presents new opportunities, challenges and threats to young people. Just as in offline space, young people may equally be victims and agents of abuse online. Interaction in online space among different participants in communication, even though democratic and uncensored, cannot be value-void; projects and activities focusing on democratic participation and human rights education by youth workers and youth organisations need to include also activities in cyberspace. Exclusion is also a reality in online space, due to media illiteracy or disabilities.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on Wikipedia definition of 'new media': [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_media](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_media).

<sup>2</sup> Evgeny Morozov, *Moldova's Twitter Revolution*, available at [http://neteffect.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/04/07/moldovas\\_twitter\\_revolution](http://neteffect.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/04/07/moldovas_twitter_revolution)

<sup>3</sup> Dubai School of Government, *Arab Social Media Report: Civil Movements: The Impact of Facebook and Twitter*, Vol. 1, No. 2, May 2011, [www.ArabSocialMediaReport.com](http://www.ArabSocialMediaReport.com)

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*.

As participation in Arab spring movements with support of new media shows, online and offline identities should not be separated and the opportunities offered by these new contexts of participation should be fully seized by youth work and youth policy equally to enhance and develop young people's capacity to engage and participate meaningfully in social change.

## **Youth in the Council of Europe and new media**

The revised European Charter on Youth Participation of Young People in Local and Regional life stresses the fact that: "information and communication technologies can offer new possibilities for informing and allowing participation of young people. They can be used to exchange a wide variety of information, and increase the participation of young people". A recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, in 2004, focuses on e-democracy and makes proposals and recommendations for the member states.

The Council of Europe's Directorate of Youth and Sport has been developing youth policies and promoting quality youth work for the past forty years, fostering youth participation and engagement at all levels of decision making. Since 2005, the programme of the European Youth Centre has been offering training courses that use blended learning approaches, through use of both residential seminars and e-learning opportunities.

The second European Forum on Human Rights Education with and by young people (2009) has made use of new social media technologies, such as Facebook and Twitter, and so have had different training courses related especially with youth democratic participation.

A seminar on New Ways of Youth Participation based on information and communication technologies was organised in 2009; the seminar participants recommended the Directorate of Youth and Sport further develops its work on the use of new media in youth work through seminars and compilation of good practices across Europe and through training of youth workers and youth leaders<sup>5</sup>.

In 2001 the Council of Europe has also elaborated a Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest convention) that focuses on the need to support member states to cooperate in combating cybercrime and to protect legitimate interests in the use and development of information technologies.<sup>6</sup> An Additional Protocol to the convention which entered into force in 2006 requires states to criminalize the dissemination of racist and xenophobic material through computer systems, as well as of racist and xenophobic-motivated threats and insults.

Concerned by the rise of hate speech on internet websites, and the lack of conjugated response from the youth civil society, the Joint Council on Youth introduced a project addressed to youth leaders, youth organisations and young bloggers about combating hate speech and human rights violations online. Part

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<sup>5</sup> Documentation available at

[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Publications/2009\\_Seminar\\_new\\_ways\\_participation\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Publications/2009_Seminar_new_ways_participation_en.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Council of Europe, Convention on Cybercrime, Budapest, 23.11.2001, available at <http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/treatises/html/185.htm>

of the project is an online media campaign to denounce and counter hate speech in the online space carried out by young people, particularly young bloggers. The project will be initiated in 2012 and run through until, at least, 2013.

The training course on use of new media in youth work is introduced in response to these developments. It also intends to respond to the needs expressed by both youth organisations and youth leaders to develop the competences of youth organisations to engage meaningfully with new media technologies when working with young people on human rights, intercultural dialogue and participation. This includes also the capacity of youth organisations to reach young people in these new contexts, and to support young people develop their competences in media literacy, especially critical thinking and critical analysis of information in online contexts.

### **Aim and objectives**

The training course aims to develop the competences of youth workers and youth leaders in using new media in their non-formal education projects and activities with and for young people based on human rights education, intercultural learning and intercultural dialogue and on youth participation.

The specific objectives of the training course are:

- To develop the competences of 30 youth leaders and youth workers in using new media technologies in youth work;
- To share and learn from practices and experiences, tools and dilemmas from using new media use in youth work;
- To develop participants' competences in using new media technologies to enhance the reach out of youth work and to support inclusion and participation of young people;
- To raise the participants awareness of online space as public space and to develop competences to promote human rights values in online environments while empowering young people to take an active role as e-citizens;
- To associate participants with the values and work of the Council of Europe on Internet governance and on-line hate speech;
- To contribute to the preparation and launching of the project about fighting hate speech on the Internet and the media youth campaign supporting it;
- To initiate an informal network of youth workers with expertise on using new media in youth work;
- To support participants in developing follow-up projects based on new media in youth work.

### **Competences**

Through the training seminar, participants are expected to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes in the following areas of work:

- Competences of using new media technologies in youth work, with a particular focus on social media technologies in youth work, especially in

relation with: outreach of young people; empowering young people to participate meaningfully in society and social change; developing inclusive youth work online;

- Human rights, including key concepts, international standards and mechanisms of protection, identification of human rights violations and capacity to speak against them in online and offline spaces; working with young people to become human rights promoters and advocates with the support of new media technologies, and in relation to cyberspace.
- Intercultural dialogue and learning and their application in youth work online;
- Knowledge and awareness of the Council of Europe work on human rights, internet governance and combating hate-speech;
- Development and implementation of youth initiatives and projects with a particular focus on use of new media.

## Profile of participants

The training course is designed for participants who are:

- Active youth workers and/or youth leaders in a youth organisation, network or informal group at local, national or international level focusing their work particularly on one of the following areas: human rights, intercultural dialogue and/or youth participation.
- Already experienced in working with young people and have had some experience in integrating new media in their youth work;
- Motivated to further develop their competences and share their experiences, good practices and challenges with the other participants;
- Interested and motivated to develop follow-up projects to the training seminar;
- Committed to attend for the full duration of the seminar, including the pre-seminar online phase and the follow-up phase;
- Have access to the internet and are able to devote at least 3 hours per week between October and January 2011 for online training.
- Are supported by their organisations;
- Are able to work independently in English in both written and oral form;
- Are aged between 18 and 30 years old, exceptions can be made upon justification;
- Are residents in a state party to the European Cultural Convention.

## Application, procedure and selection of participants

All candidates must apply on-line, completing the application form under this link: <http://courses.opencontent.it>

Applications must be submitted by **18 September 2011**. If the participant is affiliated with an organisation, a letter of support from their sending organisation can be uploaded on the platform or sent separately by e-mail, fax or post to express support offered throughout the project to the participant and his/her initiatives.

The team will select 30 participants on the basis of the the profile outlined above. The selection will also take into account balance between sexes, geographical regions, different types of experiences, cultural backgrounds and organisations, institutions and projects. A waiting list may be established. Candidates will be informed about whether their application has been accepted or rejected, and if they have been put on the waiting list, by **23 September 2011**.

### **Deadline for applications**

The application form must be submitted on-line, with the support letters if applicable, until **Sunday, 18 September 2011**.

### **Financial and practical conditions of participation**

#### Working language

The common working language of the course will be English. Candidates must be able to use English language independently in both written and oral communication.

#### Travel expenses

Travel expenses and visa costs for all residential training seminars of the project are reimbursed upon presentation of the relevant receipts, according to the rules of the Council of Europe. Only the participants who attend the entire training course can be reimbursed. The payment will be made either by bank transfer after each course, or at the end of each course in cash (in Euros).

#### Accommodation

Board and lodging for the training seminar are provided and paid for by the Council of Europe at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg.

#### Enrolment fee

An enrolment fee of **60 Euros** is to be paid by each participant for each training seminar. This amount will be deducted from the amount to be reimbursed for travel expenses or paid at the EYCs during the course.

### **Other training courses of the Directorate Youth and Sport**

If you are interested in a training course in international youth work, but your profile does not fully correspond with the requirements of this course, please note that the Directorate of Youth and Sport organises other training courses. For details please consult our webpage [www.coe.int/youth](http://www.coe.int/youth) or contact one of the European youth centres.