

Commission's implementation of the Paris Declaration

- The Commission **has taken already a number of steps** implementation of the Paris since its adoption in 2015:
 - Reviewed its policy frameworks in education, training and youth to reflect this new priority
 - Mobilised funding under the E+ programme
 - (1) priority is given to projects implementing the objectives of the Declaration within an envelope of 400M euros available for transnational cooperation projects
 - Dedicated call to upscale successful grass-roots initiatives - 13M
- TN hosted a **Colloquium** on promoting inclusion and fundamental values through education – a way to prevent violent radicalisation on 26 May.
- On this occasion, the Commissioner announced a **series of concrete measures** (see leaflet) that he will implement in 2016-17, for instance
 - *Ambassadors for inclusion programme*
 - *Virtual youth exchanges*
 - School to school exchanges via the expanded *e-twinning* tool to foster exchanges also with neighbouring countries
- Some **key messages** that are worth further discussion include:

Potential topics for discussion

1) **Role of OIC in countering violent radicalisation**

- How does OIC see its role in countering the violent radicalisation?
- What role for muslim communities in a more general sense in preventing violent radicalisation?

2) **Gender equality**

- How to reconcile muslim traditions with gender equality, which is a strong common value of the EU?
- **The non-acceptance of gender complicates the integration of young migrants** and the achievement of their full potential in society.

Many young migrant girls are not allowed to participate in some school activities like a school fieldtrip or that they are not allowed to meet their friends outside of school, to have drink, to go to a mall or to dance.

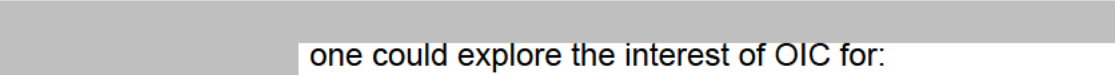
A rejection by muslim communities of those that deviate from traditional muslim gender roles: A young lady expressed at the Colloquium that her family broke all relations with her and

that she is exposed to dead threats because she stands up for gender equality and she has non-muslim and gay friends. People in the Mosque think she is not a good Muslim so in the end she feels safer to pray - as a Muslim - in a church.

- Examples of sexual assaults by migrant men contributes to **stigmatisation of the muslim community**

In Cologne police received more than 1,000 complaints from women, including 454 reports of sexual assaults, by migrant men related to New Year's Eve; and more recently at the Schlossgrabenfestes festival in Darmstadt, where 26 women were sexually assaulted by mobs of migrant men.

Possible ways of cooperation

- We have notably closely worked in the past 15 years with our Southern Mediterranean neighbours in the framework of Erasmus+ and predecessor programmes
- We have a budget of around 70 Meuro per year to fund incoming and outgoing mobility and capacity building for universities from this region.
- eTwinning is open to Tunisia on a pilot basis
- Commission will have a policy dialogue in education with the South Mediterranean Ministries of Education in July.
-  one could explore the interest of OIC for:
 - possible awareness raising activities. The objective of such activities could be to:
 - To work towards a common identity and show that many different identities don't rule out one another, but strengthen each other. It is perfectly possible to be Muslim and European, and to live as a Muslim in the European society.
 - Use role models for both boys and girls/men and women who manage to reconcile different identities.
 - possible ways to cooperate on developing counter-narratives for young people.

Background note

1. Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

The OIC has been founded in 1969 and includes 57 MS. The organisation states that it is "the collective voice of the Muslim World and works to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony". The OIC has permanent delegations to the EU and UN.

In June 2008, the OIC conducted a formal revision of its charter. The revised charter set out to promote human rights, fundamental freedoms, and good governance in all member states. Within the revised charter, the OIC has chosen to support the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international law.

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation has taken a firm stance against violent radicalisation of young people. It held an extraordinary meeting to discuss the subject. In 16/02/2015, following the meeting, its executive committee issued a press statement reiterating its determination to stand steadfast against extremism and terrorism in all their forms and categorically rejects any attempt to link terrorism with any country, ethnic group or religion or culture or nationality

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation has affiliated institutions in several fields; three of them are particularly interesting:

- the **Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation**, a Forum which aims at coordinating youth activities in the countries of the organisation of Islamic cooperation and is active in advocacy of youth interests, supporting sustainable development, promoting formal and non-formal education, strengthening moral values of young generation and engaging in the dialogue among cultures and civilizations. The Forum consists of 35 leading national and 6 international youth organizations
- the **Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation**, aiming at strengthening Islamic solidarity among youth in Member States and promote Islamic identity in the field of sports, inculcating the principles of non-discrimination as to religion, race or colour, in conformity with the precepts of Islam, preserving sports principles and to promote the Olympic sports movements in the Muslim world, encourage the spirit of sportsmanship, principles of fair play and non-violent behaviour in sports events, etc.
- the **World Federation of International Arabo-Islamic Schools**, which represents Arab-Islamic schools around the world with the intention to support and assist them. Among the principal objectives of the Federation are teaching of the Arabic language and the promotion of the Islamic culture and traditions. These objectives are attained through inter alia extending financial and moral support to the schools and cultural centres. The Federation has also a significant role in the training of personnel capable of developing the Islamic ethos and culture in Arab-Islamic schools.

Relations with other Muslim organisations

Religious organisations can be valuable partners in our efforts to reach out to all young people and tackle social exclusion and marginalisation. In 3 March, Commissioner Tibor Navracsics met with a delegation from the Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations (FEMYSO), the representative voice of Muslim Youth in Europe. They exchanged views on youth empowerment and participation and agreed to maintain a good level of cooperation. FEMYSO participated in the recent EU Youth Conference in Amsterdam as an effort to broaden and diversify the structure dialogue.

2. State of play of implementing the Paris Declaration

In the wake of the terror attacks in Paris and Copenhagen in 2015, the 'Paris Declaration' on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education was adopted at the Informal Education Ministerial Meeting of 17 March 2015. It calls for the mobilization of the education sector at European, national, regional and local level to tackle youth radicalisation and promote ownership of Europe's fundamental values and democratic principles in order to help children and young people become responsible, open-minded members of our diverse society.

The Declaration identifies concrete policy objectives to be pursued by Member States and urges EU level actions "to cooperate and coordinate, to exchange experiences and to ensure that the best ideas and practices can be shared throughout the European Union" with a view to:

1. Ensuring young people acquire social, civic and intercultural competences, by promoting democratic values and fundamental rights, social inclusion and non-discrimination, as well as active citizenship;
2. Enhancing critical thinking and media literacy, particularly in the use of the Internet and social media, so as to develop resistance to of discrimination and indoctrination;
3. Fostering the education of disadvantaged children and young people, by ensuring that our education and training systems address their needs;
4. Promoting intercultural dialogue through all forms of learning in cooperation with other relevant policies and stakeholders.

Announced and ongoing measures by the COM since the adoption of the Paris Declaration

1. Mobilising funding

Erasmus+ has made available more than EUR 400 million in 2016 for transnational partnerships to develop innovative policy approaches and practices at grass-root level. Within this envelope, priority will be given to those projects tackling the objectives of the Paris Declaration. In addition, a specific call with a budget of EUR 13 million has just been released to support dissemination, upscaling and mainstreaming of good practices on the

ground in areas of social inclusion, citizenship education and fundamental values. Promoting fundamental values through education and training addressing diversity in the learning environment is also the first of the seven priorities of the ongoing call for proposals on European policy experimentations in education, training and youth (overall budget : 14 Mio €).

2. Better knowledge

The Commission is planning to strengthen the knowledge base and the collection of evidence at EU level to support Member States in fostering inclusive education as well as the teaching of social and civic competences. This will be done in particular through:

- The annual **Education and Training Monitor**, which captures the trends in Europe's education and training systems by bringing together a wide array of evidence in one report;
- A newly launched study on **citizenship education across Europe**, to be undertaken by the **Eurydice** education information network , which will provide a comprehensive overview of the structure, content, and practice of citizenship education in Member States (2017).

3. Teachers and schools

Schools can make a major contribution to fostering inclusion. It is here that young people from different backgrounds come together and that the mutual trust and respect sow the seeds of integration. Apart from equipping pupils with skills, schools must provide an environment where diversity is seen as an asset, where controversial issues can be openly debated and where fundamental values are promoted. Teachers have a key role to play here. They must be equipped to address diversity in the classroom and transmit common values to pupils. The Commission is committed to boost support mechanisms to schools and teachers, notably through:

- Expanding the **European Toolkit for Schools**¹, which is a new online platform, offering good practice examples and resources on how to introduce collaborative approaches in schools to improve inclusiveness and achieve success for all. It will be further developed during 2016 to include additional functionalities and translations in all EU languages;
- Enhancing the use of the on-line **eTwinning** platform, connecting teachers and classrooms across Europe, to step up support to teachers and foster exchanges, in particular to promote fundamental values and citizenship. The platform has already reached 300 000 teachers. The Commission will explore the possibility of extending the use of e-Twinning to countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership;
- Promoting more **teacher training courses** on citizenship education through Erasmus+. The objective is to empower teachers in dealing with today's diverse classrooms and translate into practice the Paris Declaration principles, with particular attention for promoting inclusion, fundamental values, civic and social competences and non-violence;
- Establishing a network of **Ambassadors for Inclusion** to enable direct contacts with positive role models for young people who may have lost hope. The network will

¹ www.schooleducationgateway.eu/europeantoolkitforschools

include well-integrated young and senior women and men from various cultural backgrounds, entrepreneurs, artists, sportspersons, as well as formerly radicalised people. Ambassadors would go to schools, youth and sport clubs and prisons to speak and bond with children and young people.

4. Universities

Students and staff of higher education institutions play an important role in engaging with their communities through institutional and grass-root initiatives and by providing spaces for discussion. The Commission encourages higher education institutions to **award credits for volunteering** and to **develop curricula that combine academic content with civic engagement**. Some institutions already allocate credits for volunteering and civic engagement during or following an Erasmus mobility stay.

5. Youth

Youth work is a particularly powerful tool as it can reach out to the most vulnerable young people and bridge the gap between society and individuals in need of support. Participation in youth work brings tangible benefits not only to society, but also to the individuals involved, since it helps develop skills and competences such as empathy, tolerance and civic responsibility. The Commission will therefore step up support to youth workers and organizations in particular through:

- Developing a **specific toolkit**, which will give youth workers and youth organisations concrete guidance on how to reach out and work with young people at risk of marginalization (2016). The toolkit will be developed by the recently launched expert group on the contribution of youth work to fostering active citizenship, preventing marginalisation and radicalization;
- Strengthening the **European Voluntary Service** (2017). In 2016, priority will be given to support projects promoting diversity, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, common values of freedom, tolerance and respect of human rights, and to projects enhancing media literacy, critical thinking and sense of initiative among young people. The Commission will also open the Service to a broader range of young people and organisations;
- **Reinforcing support to grass-root youth projects** in Erasmus+. The Commission will step up its efforts to involve new actors, such as municipalities, allowing the scaling-up of local initiatives within larger, cross-border partnerships.

6. Sport

Participating in sport can be an effective way of integrating into a community and developing a sense of belonging. In addition to the many positive values sports conveys, it can be the final safety net for young people not in education or employment and on the margins of society. Supporting local actors who promote inclusion through sport, especially in the most deprived areas, is of crucial importance. The Commission will therefore promote successful and innovative projects through a **European Award for social inclusion in sport** (2017).

3. Highlights from the Colloquium of 26 May

- **School curriculum is not static.** Common values can be dealt with in many different subjects. However, values cannot only be taught - they have to be **lived**. Children need to reflect on their experiences with democratic values;
- Discussions about **controversial and difficult issues** are essential. Teachers should talk *with* the children not *to* them. Hope, trust and mutual respect are key elements. Teachers need to be trained to be able to create room for expression/acceptance of 'super diversity';
- No cases of radicalisation from **schools deeply rooted in the Community**. Schools should be fully part of the local communities; responsibility comes with a feeling of ownership. Important that teachers have strong bonds with the local communities and parents;
- **Address violence** through "*experience restorative justice*" (i.e. sanction + repair + return in the group/inclusion.);
- **Equal treatment** does not bring equal opportunities, important to recognize the **potential of every learner** and have high expectations from them;
- Education cannot succeed in a vacuum, much more needs to be done **outside the classroom** to ensure continuity and consistency of approaches and to create a virtuous dynamic throughout society at large;
- "**Spaces of collective intelligence**", which bring together people in common public spaces, can help overcome differences through joint reflections, discussions and actions;
- New **identities** (e.g. player in a football club, citizens of a town) are needed, which embrace diversity, thus strengthening community cohesion through a new shared "diverse identity", it is essential to break the isolation of young people (not a "Moroccan football team, but a Mechelen team");
- Create a **climate of ambition** for all citizens, while being at the side of the weakest. Look for 'role models' with street credibility, who can motivate young people;
- **Online radicalisation** can be dealt with by: **reducing the supply**, i.e. removing content from the internet and social media; **reducing the demand** for violent extremism messages, e.g. by encouraging civic challenges to extremist narratives, by promoting awareness and education of young people to understand how propaganda/ conspiracy theories are constructed and develop counter narratives;
- **Counter narrative** messages are more efficient if they come **from people young people** feel they can trust (so partnerships with NGOs and young people's role models are crucial);
- Cooperation between the **IT industry, social media, civil society organisations and learning environments** can help young people develop their own alternative narratives to hate speech and indoctrination videos.

