

GLOSSARY



Regional Youth Cooperation Office

Definitions and terminology¹

Definitions of the key concepts and terms most relevant for our work can be contested and even controversial. To avoid any misunderstandings in reading this document, we shall clarify these terms as we understand them. These definitions are consistent with dictionary and encyclopaedic definitions. They have, however, been developed and adapted in view of the discussions that have taken place during the process and during the negotiations that have taken place on the establishment of RYCO.

A

Advocacy: to publicly support or suggest an idea, a development or way of doing something.

Affirmative action: action taken by government or private businesses to make up for past discrimination in, for example, education and work against, for instance, women, those of specific races, ethnic groups, religions or disabilities. Affirmative action is one way to give disadvantaged groups substantive equality. Affirmative action should be seen as a temporary measure until such a time as equality is achieved.

Antisemitism: fear, hatred, resentment, suspicion, prejudice, discrimination or unfair treatment of people of Jewish origin or those who confess Judaism. Modern forms of antisemitism include Holocaust denial.

Association: an organisation formed by a group of individuals with the aim of accomplishing a defined purpose. Such organisations may also be called voluntary organisations, voluntary associations and unincorporated associations. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are associations. Associations form the basis for what is called “civil society”.

C

Civil rights: (sometimes known as civil liberties); a category of rights and freedoms that protect individuals from unwarranted government action and ensure their ability to participate in the civil life of the state without discrimination or repression.

Civil society: refers collectively to voluntary civic and social organizations, associations and institutions, for example registered charities, non-governmental organizations, community groups, women’s organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups and advocacy groups that form the basis of a functioning democratic society. Civil society is seen as distinct from the state and commercial institutions of the market.

¹ For the purposes of this document we have referred to the Merriam-Webster online encyclopedic dictionary of the English language: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/> and a variety of specialist literature developed in the European and international youth, education and mobility sectors. All reference material can be consulted in the bibliography.

Conflict transformation: the process by which conflicts such as wars and inter-ethnic and inter-religious violence are changed or transformed into peaceful outcomes. It is a long-term process that addresses the root causes of the conflict as well as the behavior and attitudes of the parties involved.

Conflict prevention: actions undertaken over the short term to reduce manifest tensions and / or to prevent the outbreak or recurrence of violent conflict.

Conflict management: actions undertaken with the main objective of preventing the vertical (intensification of violence) or horizontal (territorial spread) escalation of existing violent conflicts.

Conflict resolution: actions undertaken over the short term to end violent conflict.

Cooperation: The process of working together in a common effort.

Culture: a broad set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices, often based on historical traditions shared by an institution, organization or group.

Cultural rights: the right to preserve one's cultural identity and development.

D

Declaration on the Rights of the Child: adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1959, this non-binding instrument sets forth ten general principles, which later formed the basis for the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which was adopted in 1989.

Democracy: a form of government where the authority to govern is derived from the people, either by direct referendum or by means of representatives elected by the people entitled to vote.

Discrimination: any distinction, exclusion or restriction of preference, which is based on any ground such as race, culture, ethnic origin, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, physical handicap, or other characteristics not relevant to the issue in question.

Dialogue: The exchange of ideas and opinions and discussion between representatives of parties to a conflict that is aimed at resolution.

Diversity: The inclusion of different types of people (such as people with different cultural backgrounds) in a group or organisation.

E

European Union (EU): an economic and political union of member states located in Europe and committed to regional integration and social cooperation. The EU was established by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1993.

Evaluation: a structured conversation between facilitators and participants to enable participants to analyse and appraise what they have learned from an experiential and participatory activity. In the process, participants reflect on how this learning relates to what they already know and how they may use the learning in the future.

G

Gender: A social construct that informs roles, attitudes, values and relationships between women and men. While sex is determined by biology - the biological differences between men and women - gender is determined by society; almost always functioning to subordinate women to men.

Gender mainstreaming: a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. It is not an end in itself but a means to achieve the goal of gender equality though ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities including policy development, resource allocation and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects.

H

Human rights: rights that universally belong to all human beings. Human rights are indivisible, inalienable and universal and respect the equality and dignity of each individual.

I

Informal education: the lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educational influences and resources in his or her own environment (family, peer-group, neighbours, market place, library, mass media, work, play etc).

Intercultural: refers to the interdependency and interaction between various linguistic and ethnic communities. An intercultural perspective requires us to recognise that reality is plural, complex and dynamic, and that interaction is an integral part of all life and culture.

Intercultural learning: A process of education that supports people to both understand culture and interact with people from cultures different than their own. In this understanding culture can be many things (political, social, religious, national, community, regional, gender, etc) and individuals can identify with or belong to more than one.

K

Key workers: These are people that work with young people in different kinds of educational, leisure-time, volunteering, sport and cultural processes. They may be educators, working in formal or non-formal settings, they may be volunteering or exchange programme managers or implementers, they may be youth workers or social workers, they may be sport trainers, or cultural operators, they may be paid or voluntary staff of different institutions or organisations and they are often young themselves. More often than not, key workers combine several of these profiles in their work with young people. The criteria for being a key worker is that the person concerned is engaging directly with young people in a nominally organised manner (even if that is an informal group / initiative).

L

LGBT: an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

M

Minority: any ethnic, linguistic or religious group within a State, in a non-dominant position, consisting of individuals who possess a sense of belonging to that group and determined to preserve and develop their identity.

Multicultural: people of different cultures living side by side in a community, interacting to various degrees but at the same time retaining their distinctive features.

N

Non-formal education: any planned programme of education outside the formal educational setting that is designed to improve a range of skills and competences, for example youth work. Non-formal education is also referred to as non-formal learning.

Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs): organisations set up to be independent of government, normally with a lobbying, charitable, or activist role. Some are large and international e.g. the Red Cross, Amnesty International, the Scout movement, Human Rights Watch, the European Youth Forum. Others may be small and local e.g. an organisation to advocate for people with disabilities in a particular city; a coalition to promote women's rights in one refugee camp.

P

Participation: taking part in the public life of a community or society. The Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life is an international policy document to promote youth participation at the local level; adopted by the Congress of the Council of Europe in 2003.

Peace-building: (including post-conflict peace building); actions undertaken over the medium and longer-term to address the root-causes of violent conflicts.

Reconciliation: The process of finding a way to make different ideas, facts, etc., exist or be true at the same time, thereby addressing past or current conflicts in a constructive manner.

Q

Quality: A degree of excellence.

S

Skill: an ability to do an activity or job well, especially because you have practised it. The ability to defend human rights includes, for example, skills of communication, problem-solving, creative thinking, negotiation and teamwork.

Stereotype: an oversimplified, generalised and often unconscious preconception about people or ideas that may lead to prejudice and discrimination. A generalisation in which characteristics possessed by a part of a group are extended to the group as a whole.

Sustainable development: development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The term was first used by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), convened by the UN in 1983.

T

Tolerance: willingness to accept behaviour and beliefs which are different from your own, although you might not agree with or approve of them. Declaration of Principles on Tolerance (UNESCO 1995).

Trainer: a person who prepares programmes of learning activities, for instance, debates, study visits, viewing films and running Compass activities for a group of participants. When doing Compass activities, the trainer or teacher works democratically with the group of young people and has the role of facilitator.

Training: the process of learning the knowledge, skills and attitudes that you need to do a job or activity, for instance to enable you to defend human rights.

X

Xenophobia: (irrational) fear of foreigners, of persons from other countries or of things foreign generally. Xenophobia can lead to discrimination, racism, violence and even armed conflict against foreigners.

Y

Youth exchange: Youth exchanges allow groups of young people from different countries to meet, live together and work on shared projects for short periods of time.

Youth mobility: The act of moving from one place to another for a purpose such as education, work or volunteering.