

# Safer Internet Forum

A Youth-Driven Initiative for Safer  
Cyberspace

# Contents

- **European Youth Forum**
  - **Mission**
  - **Aims**
  - **Work/Activities**
  - **Policy Areas**
- **European Youth Forum in Brussels, Feb 2008**
  - **Representatives from Cyprus**
  - **Recommendations from the Young**

# What is the European Youth Forum?

- It is made up of more than **90 National Youth Councils and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations**, which are federations of youth organisations themselves.
- It brings together tens of **millions of young people from all over Europe**, organised in order to represent their common interests.

# Mission of the European Youth Forum

- To empower young people to participate actively in the shaping of Europe and the societies in which they live in.
- To improve the living conditions of young people as European citizens in today's world.



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# Aims of the European Youth Forum

- **Increase the participation of young people** and youth organisations in societies, as well as in decision-making processes.
- **Positively influence policy issues affecting young people** and youth organisations, by being a recognised partner for international institutions, namely the EU, the CoE & the UN.
- **Promote the concept of youth policy** as an integrated and cross-sectoral element of overall policy development.

# Aims of the European Youth Forum

- **Facilitate the participation of young people** through the development of sustainable and independent youth organisations.
- **Foster the exchange of ideas and experience, mutual understanding, equal rights, and opportunities** among young people in Europe.
- **Uphold intercultural understanding, democracy, respect, active citizenship and solidarity.**
- **Deepen European integration** while at the same time contributing to the development of youth work in other regions of the world.

# Work of the European Youth Forum

- Provide a space for organisations to develop sustainability. It offers strategic support for capacity building, networking and the dissemination of good practice.
- Voice the concerns of its members into the political agenda of governmental institutions.
- Elaborate policies and positions, which are based on the opinions, experiences and expertise of young people from all over Europe.

# Policy Areas of the European Youth Forum

- **Education**

- Promote the concept of Life Long and Life Wide Learning, and the recognition and complimentarity of all the dimensions of Education: formal and informal education and learning.

- **Youth Policy in Europe**

- Increase the participation of young people in the shaping of the European policies concerning them and improve the qualities of youth policies and programmes.

# Policy Areas of the European Youth Forum

- **Employment and Social Inclusion**
  - Improve the social situation of young people in Europe, focusing on promoting the employment and social inclusion of young people and an adequate level of social protection.
- **Human Rights and Equality**
  - Develop policies aimed at recognising the diversity of Europe and ensuring equal opportunities to young people.

# Policy Areas of the European Youth Forum

- **Sustainable Development**
  - Promote sustainable development through advocacy work and involve youth organisations in policy making youth related issues.
- **Health**
  - Raise awareness of health issues among youth organisations and facilitate youth involvement in health policy development, namely on tobacco and alcohol issues.

# Policy Areas of the European Youth Forum

- **Training**
  - Provide training services to the member organisations and institutional partners through a pool of trainers and contribute to the monitoring of European training programmes.
- **Mobility**
  - Lobby, inform and investigate for the removal of legal obstacles to mobility in youth work.

# Policy Areas of the European Youth Forum

- **Global and Regional Youth Cooperation**
  - Allow young people to participate and provide political input at the global level, as well as contribute to the development of regional platforms and bringing their representatives together.

# The Youth Forum in Brussels



May 28-29, 2008

Child and Youth Research in the  
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13

# The Youth Forum in Brussels



In celebration of Safer Internet Day 2008, that takes place for the 5<sup>th</sup> time this year, the European Commission organized on February 12, 2008 a **Youth Forum on Safer Internet** in Brussels where youth (12-19 year olds) from Austria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Netherlands, Sweden and UK discussed issues related to their use of online technologies.

*Safer Internet Day is organized under the patronage of Commissioner for Information Society and Media, Viviane Reding.*

## Let's listen to children: They know how to make the Internet a safer place!

Today, 100 organizations in over 50 countries worldwide celebrate **Safer Internet Day**.

In Brussels a **first ever pan-European Youth Forum on Safer Internet** is organized by the European Commission with the participation of the EU's Consumer Commissioner.

The purpose is to **increase dialogue between children and decision makers** on Safer Internet issues and to raise awareness of the best ways for protecting minors online.

# A word from the EU Commissioner

## Viviane Reding

- "Children have been very quick in making the most of online services such as social networking sites and mobile phones. But many still underestimate the hidden risks of using these, from cyber-bullying to sexual grooming online,"
- "Today, I am calling upon all decision-makers from the public and the private sector to listen and learn from children and to improve awareness strategies and tools for protecting minors. I myself will work on the EU's contribution by proposing, before the end of the month, a new Safer Internet program for 2009-2013 to allow for a continuation of the valuable work done to help children, parents and teachers in identifying problems for minors online."

# A word from the EU Consumer Commissioner

- Commissioner Meglena Kuneva, the EU's Consumer Commissioner, who represented the European Commission at Safer Internet events in Brussels today, added:

*"As the EU works to make the Internet and mobile phones safer for children and young people, we need to be sure that we know how they use the technologies and what they themselves think should be done to make them safe. From surveys, it appears that children's use of online technologies and their views on potential problems can be very different from adults' views and knowledge.*

*That is why talking directly to youth – today on Safer Internet Day, but also on the other 364 days of the year – is so important for us."*

# The Youth Forum in Brussels

The **27 young people** met Meglena Kuneva, the Commissioner for Consumer Protection, Industry and Politicians and gave their views on what they think should be done to make use of online technologies safer, in particular on:

- risks, experiences and precautions in using **mobile phones and social networking sites,**

- effective tools and methods for **raising awareness** of safe use of online technologies.



# Representatives from Cyprus

1. Freya Claydon from Highgate School in Nicosia
2. Denis Fedosov from the International School of Paphos
3. George Chrisostomou from Pascal English school in Limassol

The accompanying adult was Mrs. Eva Argyrou headmistress of Highgate School.



# Recommendations from the Young

## To Governments

- One of the main points which was highlighted by all groups of young people was the **need to involve schools** in awareness-raising and education. According to them, the most obvious place to learn about Internet safety is at school, and they recommend that internet safety should be **included in the school curricula**. None of the participants had ever received training at school. They suggest that their teachers themselves need to be trained on these issues. They also stressed the need for **mobile phone regulations in schools**.

# Recommendations from the Young

## To the Industry

- The young participants insisted that providers of social networking services need to **make the safety information** that one needs to read when one creates a social networking profile. Current terms and conditions are not read, or just skipped. They suggested social networking sites to be **more user friendly**. Moreover, **profiles and accounts** should be **private by default** or easily made private. They also asked for an improvement of the **moderation** of social networking sites: **Moderators need to be trained** to look for signs of grooming, as well as just swearing and bullying.

# Recommendations from the Young

## To all stakeholders

- It was clear that young people **expect more advertising on safer Internet issues**, especially to highlight that **problems are not rare**. Apart from school, young people suggested several ways to best reach them: Films could be used in school or cinema rather than on TV, safety advice could be sent by SMS.
- They requested a **clear place to report various problems**, such as cyberbullying and asking pictures to be removed, on social networking sites. There is **also a need to report when using mobile phones** (helplines for cyber bullying).

# Recommendations from the Young

## To all stakeholders

- The young people advised all stakeholders to **increase parental control mechanisms** so that their parents can check what they do online or protect them by blocking access to services. They provided several examples: through the provision of Internet history on mobile bill, bills for pre-paid mobile phones, allow for different mobile access to Internet to people under 16 and to people above 16 with different restrictions and regulations. They also suggested to implement automatically switch off of Bluetooth 5-10 minutes after use.

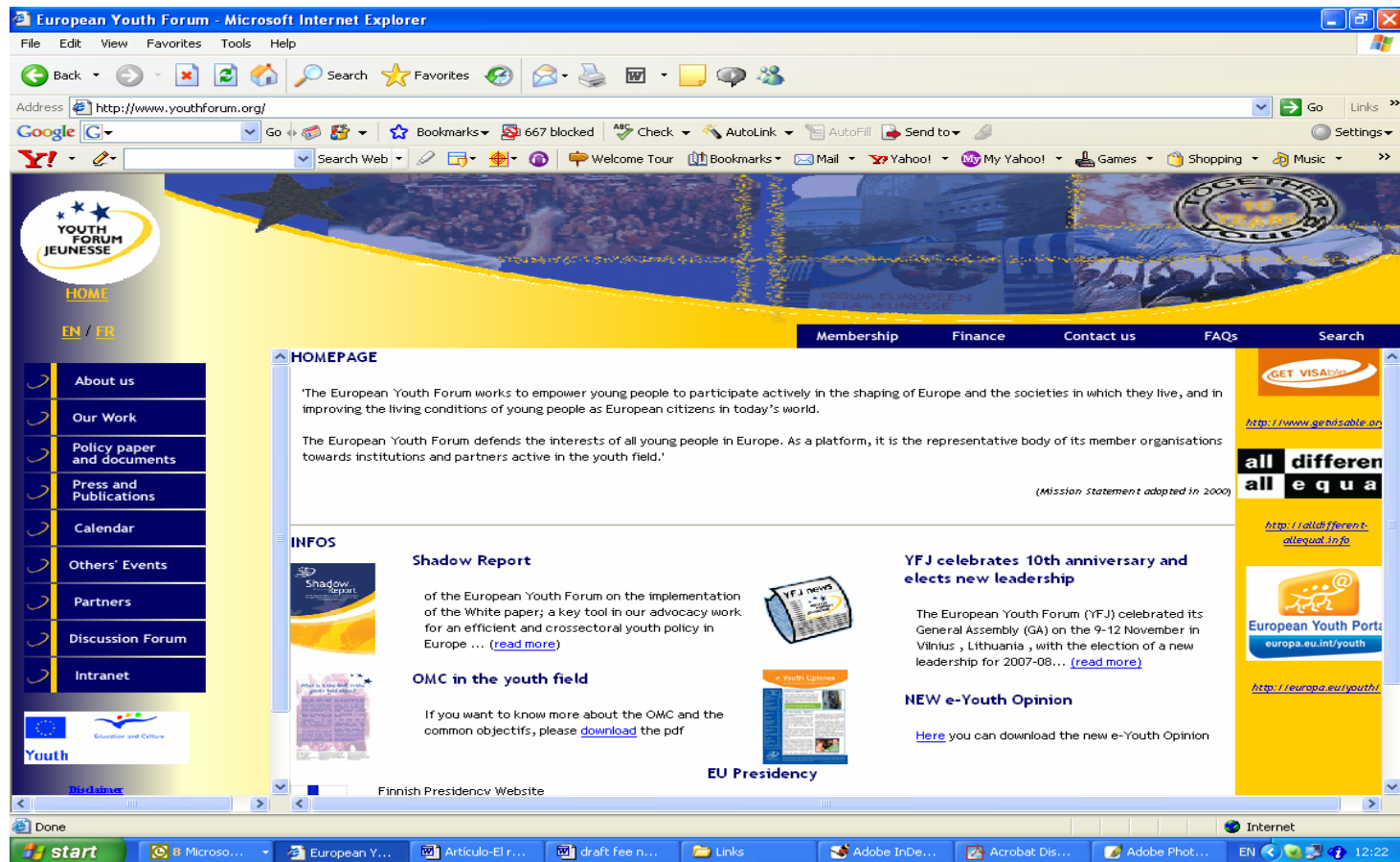
# Video from Brussels



Youth Forum.mpg

# Visit the Youth Forum Website

[www.youthforum.org](http://www.youthforum.org)



May 28-29, 2008

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25

Thank you for your attention!