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COVER NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	European Youth Forum priorities - <i>Presentation by the European Youth Forum</i>

Following the meeting of the Youth Working Party of 24 July 2024, delegations will find in Annex the presentation made by the European Youth Forum^{1 2}.

¹ European Youth Forum, REG number in the EU Transparency Register: 43251547769-22.
² This document contains a presentation by an external stakeholder and the views expressed therein are solely those of the third party it originates from. This document cannot be regarded as stating an official position of the Council. It does not reflect the views of the Council or of its members.

European Youth Forum Priorities

Presented by President Rares Voicu to the Youth
Working Party - Wednesday 24th July 2024

 european youth forum



YFJ Background



- We are the largest global youth platform - representing millions of young people and over 100 organisations at international and national level that all have a range of different expertise on a vast array of policy topics. E.g. Rural Youth Europe who you heard from at the previous YWP.
- We are staffed by a democratically elected 10 person board and a Brussels-based Secretariat and provide innovative, expert solutions to policy problems at EU level.
- In particular, we work to drive a focus on youth rights, youth participation and youth empowerment.
- Policy/advocacy focus on democracy, youth organisations, sustainability and socio-economic inclusion.
- More information can be found at: <https://www.youthforum.org>



Erasmus+ & European Solidarity Corps

Our position paper on the Erasmus+ programme can be found [here](#) and ESC position paper [here](#).

- Main demands:

- **Increase of the budgetary envelope** for both the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps successor programmes, to ensure the ambitions of the EU in youth policy receive appropriate resources
- **Programme simplification** at all levels and particularly local
- **Governance reform** for both programmes
- **Inclusion of non-EU youth and organisations**
- **EU volunteer status for ESC**
- Take necessary steps to bring **more E+ programme countries in**, and **CH and UK back**.
- Retention of ESC as a separate programme, and a separate youth chapter for Erasmus+

We are also currently working on **research to bring in a beneficiary perspective to the design of the future programmes** - through mapping how young people and youth organisations experienced the programme.

We will also be setting out our broader priorities including for youth-focused spending in other EU programmes during the next MFF in a position paper next year

EU Youth Strategy - next generation

Read more
in our paper
[here](#).

Development of the next Strategy - guiding principles:

- **Every Commission DG should be involved in the development of the next EU Youth Strategy** to ensure that the content is truly cross-sectoral.
- **EU Youth Dialogue** should be mobilised to inform the Strategy's content during the 11th cycle

Areas the Strategy should place renewed and new emphasis on:

- Inclusion of a chapter on the **EU Youth Check** - defining each of the pillars of the model
- Bigger role given **to improving the visibility, outreach and the implementation of the results of the EU Youth Dialogue process**
- Member State collaboration in the form of the **Future National Activity Planners should continue** - with the European Commission synthesising the information provided to find synergies and suggest joint activities.
- **Strong wording should be used to safeguard NYCs being marginalised in favour of undemocratic platforms.**

Youth Data & Youth Progress Index



- **EU Youth Strategy:** The collection, availability and use of youth data should also be further elaborated in the next Strategy - including via:
 - The setup of a **comprehensive platform of youth-specific data at the EU level** to prevent data fragmentation and enhance data accessibility.
 - An **assessment and commitment to filling in the data gaps in many policy fields and addressing the lack of age-disaggregated data.**
 - A commitment to using the [Youth Progress Index](#) to measure the reality of young people's realities and design political priorities and interventions accordingly.
- **National Youth Strategies: Let us know if you are in the process of updating or creating a national youth strategy** - we would love to speak with you about how to use the data provided by the Youth Progress Index to support evidence based policy making!



EU Youth Dialogue



- It is important that the outcomes from the **EU Youth Dialogue 10th cycle and EU Youth Conference are included in the Council Conclusions on Rural Youth.**
 - The Conclusions should also have a focus on intersectionality, including for LGBTIQ+ youth in rural areas.
- We encourage all Member States to continue their active role in the EU Youth Dialogue including in **sending consultation reports and implementation reports**, so that the voices of young people in all countries can be heard in this process.
- We look forward to following the **development of the Resolution on the experiences accumulated during the 10th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue** - which we hope will be ambitious - and thank the Presidency for taking this forward.



Composition of the next College



More information
can be found [here](#).

- It is key to raise the prominence of youth policy across the whole Commission and ensure that the goal of youth mainstreaming is realised.
- We have therefore co-developed a proposal with Greenpeace for **a Vice President for Youth and Future Generations in the next College and an agenda centered around intergenerational solidarity.**
- This post would act as a figurehead in the Commission **to mainstream young people's concerns in all policy discussions and discussions on the future EU programmes.**
- We would be delighted if you could support this initiative during discussions on the composition of the next College.

Youth Mental Health



Read more in
our position
paper [here](#).

- The COVID-19 pandemic and precarious working conditions have worsened Europe's youth mental health crisis.
- Symptoms of anxiety and depression are still double pre-pandemic levels in some countries and **suicide is now the second leading cause of death for young people in the EU**.
- There is also a worrying trend where the prevalence of **loneliness** among young people has skyrocketed and is now higher than that of any other age group for the first time.
- **EU recommendations:**
 - Introduce a proposal for an **EU Directive on psychosocial risks and mental health at work** that refers specifically to new and emerging risks arising from precarious forms of employment.
 - More of a policy focus on youth mental health as part of the **EU4Health programme** - where there has been no specific call to support youth mental health.

Quality Internships

- We noted the European Commission's publication of its **proposal to improve the quality of internships in Europe** in the form of a Council Recommendation and a proposal for a Directive - the 'Traineeship Package'.
- **Having a directive on the table is a great step in the right direction!** We've only made it this far due to the activism of young people across the continent.
- However, the directive leaves **too many responsibilities to the labour inspectors** who are already underfunded and overworked, and so **we worry about how this will work in practice.**
- We look to the **Parliament and the Council to strengthen the text** of the directive to **close any loopholes that would allow the exploitation** of young people in the labour market.
- **We are working on a series of amendments to both the Council recommendation and Directive which we will share with you and would be grateful if you could pass on to your SQWP colleagues!**

Other Priorities

- **Tax** - We are currently scoping and will shortly publish a **position paper on a green and fair tax system** to empower youth and create a strategic approach for a Just and Sustainable Future.
- **Housing** - We are scoping models and best practices across Europe to create a **position paper on Affordable Housing**.
- **EYE Village 2025**
- **EU Youth Check** - We are continuing to work with an expert on an amendment to Better Regulation to incorporate the Youth Test.
- **COP29** - We are defining our priorities - which we would be delighted to share with you and your climate-focused colleagues
- More detail about the **overall priorities for the Youth Forum** can be found in our recently adopted [Strategic Plan 2024-28](#).

Contact Us!

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We wish the Hungarian Presidency all the best for their term and are looking forward to continuing to work with you throughout the rest of the year!

