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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

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Subject: Council conclusions on the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy
(2019-2021)

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy (2019-2021), as approved by the Council (Education, Youth, Culture and Sport) at its meeting on 29-30 November 2021.

Council conclusions on the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy (2019-2021)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL

RECALLING THAT

1. The Council Resolution on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 invites the Commission to report on the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy every three years.

CONSIDERING THAT

2. The first Commission report on the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy (2019-2021) (the Report) together with its accompanying Staff Working Documents covers the first EU triennial Work Plan for Youth under the current EU Youth Strategy, spanning two Council presidency trios (RO-FI-HR and DE-PT-SI).
3. The Report is based *inter alia* on information provided by Member States, the European Commission and the Youth Wiki online platform, which provides a comprehensive overview of national youth policies in 32 European countries.
4. To present the overall situation of young people in the EU, the EU Youth indicators were used with a revised dashboard and new quantitative and qualitative policy indicators.
5. The Future National Activity Planners (FNAPs) were an additional source of information on national youth policies, including the implementation of the European Youth Goals and cooperation needs in line with the EU Youth Strategy.

WELCOME

6. The Report, which, together with its accompanying Staff Working Documents, evaluates progress towards the objectives and priorities of the EU Youth Strategy for 2019-2021 and covers the first EU triennial Work Plan for Youth under the current EU Youth Strategy, including presenting a very comprehensive picture of the situation of young people in the EU.

EMPHASISE THAT

7. The years 2020 and 2021 have been atypical, with the pandemic severely affecting the implementation of youth policies, in particular youth mobility projects. Addressing the impact of the pandemic on children and young people has therefore been high on the European Commission's and Member States agenda since the outbreak. Over the past year, programmes such as Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps have been adjusted to respond to these disruptions by offering alternative solutions, especially digital solutions, to their activities.
8. The implementation of the EU Youth Strategy has been strongly affected by the pandemic in the years 2020-2021. Some actions included in the EU Work Plan for Youth 2019-2021 had to be modified, rescheduled or even cancelled. Notwithstanding that the youth sector could rely on the instruments developed over recent years, the impact of the pandemic accentuated the need to adapt to unforeseen circumstances, reinforcing such tools and strengthening existing cooperation. Youth mobility projects have been severely disrupted by the pandemic.
9. The EU appears to be a source of inspiration for other regions in the world when it comes to developing policies, programmes and initiatives for young people, particularly in our own neighbourhood.

ACKNOWLEDGE THAT

10. Ensuring that all young Europeans have equal access to opportunities and giving them the necessary support to live, work, learn and thrive remains at the heart of EU youth cooperation and policies. The 2019-2027 EU Youth Strategy and its European Youth Goal constitute a strong and impactful roadmap fostering cooperation between EU Member States and supporting youth policies both at EU and at national level, and are therefore vital to the achievement of these goals.
11. Setting up this strong policy framework, enabling exchange of knowledge and mutual learning between Member States, as well as channelling funding from Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps and other EU programmes towards the three strategic pillars ‘Engage. Connect. Empower’ will enable many young people in Europe to fulfil their full potential, for their personal development and transition to autonomy, will build their resilience and will equip them with the skills necessary to cope with a changing world, to be prepared for the green and digital transitions, and to shape a brighter and fairer future.

INVITE THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, IN LINE WITH THE SUBSIDIARITY PRINCIPLE AND WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES OF COMPETENCE, TO

12. Further mainstream youth-related issues, ensure that the concerns of young people are better heard and respected in EU and national policy-making and aim for better synergies and knowledge-sharing between the various policy areas at all levels affecting youth.

13. Further improve the outreach to young people from different backgrounds, particularly young people with fewer opportunities, young people with disabilities and young people from rural and remote areas, and increase the participation of young people from beyond the traditional youth representation models.
14. Further strengthen youth participatory processes and roll out the implementation of the European Youth Work Agenda and the EU Youth Strategy Work Plan 2022-2024 including the EU Youth Dialogue.
15. Further support processes and initiatives inspired by the EU Youth dialogue outside the European Union, such as the Eastern Partnership or Western Balkans, with the aim of engaging, connecting and empower young people.
16. Enable the effective use of EU programmes and funds such as the Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps, Horizon Europe, the European Social Fund Plus, the Youth Employment Initiative, the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the Just Transition Fund, etc. to support many policy fields affecting young people focusing on the resilience and recovery of youth and the youth sector in post-COVID times.
17. Effectively and with lasting legacy, implement the European Year of Youth 2022 to further stimulate Europe's young people to come forward with contributions and insights that can give shape to the Union's development and society at large.
18. Increase efforts to involve youth in key European initiatives, such as the Conference on the Future of Europe and the New European Bauhaus initiative, which addresses issues relevant for young people and their future.