



Council of the
European Union

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LIMITE

JEUN 119
EDUC 357
SPORT 70
CULT 92
EMPL 469
BUDGET 34
SOC 627
GENDER 108
SAN 644
ENV 807
SUSTDEV 139
CLIMA 338
CODEC 1408

NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee
No. prev. doc.:	13152/21
Subject:	Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a European Year of Youth 2022 - <i>Mandate for negotiations with the European Parliament</i>

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 14 October 2021, the Commission submitted to the Council its proposal for a Decision on a European Year of Youth 2022¹. In a post pandemic context, the main objective of this initiative is to honour, support and engage with young people.

¹ doc. 12873/21.

2. In terms of activities to achieve the objectives of the European Year, the Commission is proposing conferences, events, information, and promotion campaigns at European, national, regional and local levels. The Commission is also proposing to each Member State to appoint a national coordinator who will ensure the coordination of the activities at national level. At international level, cooperation will be sought in particular with the Council of Europe.
3. The Commission proposal does not foresee a separate financial envelope for the European Year. To finance the European Year, the Commission proposes to pull resources from existing Union programmes, in particular Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps.
4. There is an important time factor regarding the adoption of this proposal since the Commission plans to start implementing the activities of the European Year at the beginning of 2022.
5. Ms Sabine Verheyen (DE - EPP), Chair of the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT), has been appointed as rapporteur. The CULT Committee of the European Parliament is expected to present its report on 15 November 2021.
6. On 21 October 2021, the Council consulted the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee on the Commission proposal.

II. WORK IN THE COUNCIL

7. The proposal was discussed at informal video conferences of the members of the Youth Working Party on 20 and 26 October and 3 November 2021. The main changes to the proposal of the Commission, made in the light of these discussions and set out in the Annex, are the following:
- **Article 2(4):** a new overall objective is added to underline the need to mainstream youth policy across the European Union in policy-making at all levels.
 - **Article 4:** the involvement of young people has to be active and the young people shall co-create and implement the activities of the European Year together with the national coordinators.
 - **Article 5:** a new task is given to the Commission not only to implement the European Year but also to co-create it with stakeholders.
 - **Article 6 and recital 17a:** the synergy of the European Year with the campaign of the Council of Europe 'Youth for Democracy, Democracy for Youth' is added.
 - **Article 8 and recital 26:** a retroactive clause is added to allow the application of the proposal from 1 January 2022.

8. Further changes have also been made in the following parts of the text;
- **recital 7:** reinforcing the need to boost the active involvement of young people for the present and for the future of Europe.
 - **recital 10a:** the European year should contribute to the recognition of youth work.
 - **recital 17a:** encouraging synergies with several existing events or initiatives.
 - **Article 7** (monitoring and evaluation): the report of the Commission shall include ideas to create a legacy of the European Year.
9. During the examination of the proposal, recital 23 on the financial allocation for the implementation of the European Year was also discussed. All delegations requested that the Commission provide detailed information on the financial contributions that are envisaged to come from EU programmes other than Erasmus + and the European Solidarity Corps. The Commission undertook to provide this information by mid-November. The drafting of the provisions related to the budget for the European Year will thus need to be re-examined later in the light of this information.

III. TASK FOR THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE

10. The Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to authorize the Presidency to start informal first reading negotiations with the European Parliament on the draft Decision on a European Year of Youth 2022, on the basis of the mandate set out in the text in Annex.
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Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council
on a European Year of Youth 2022

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Articles 165(4) and 166(4) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee²,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions³,

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure,

Whereas:

1. Article 165(2) TFEU states that Union action shall be aimed at, *inter alia*, “encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe”.
2. In the Bratislava Roadmap of 16 September 2016⁴, the 27 Heads of State or Government committed to "provide better opportunities for youth", notably through "EU support for Member States in fighting youth unemployment and on enhanced EU programmes dedicated to youth".

² OJ C , , p. .

³ OJ C , , p. .

⁴ [Bratislava Declaration and Roadmap - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](#)

3. In the Rome Declaration of 25 March 2017⁵, the leaders of the 27 Member States and of the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission pledged to work towards "a Union where young people receive the best education and training and can study and find jobs across the continent".
4. The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 recognises that young people are architects of their own lives, contribute to positive change in society and enrich the EU's ambitions, and that youth policy can contribute to create a space where young people can seize opportunities and relate to European Union values. Previous European Years, such as the European Year of Rail 2021, the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, the European Year of Citizens 2013-2014, or the European Year of Volunteering 2011, offer valuable experience which should inform future efforts to engage youth in shaping their future and the future of Europe.
5. NextGenerationEU ensures a fast-forwarding of the twin transitions and provides the possibility to collectively emerge stronger from the pandemic and re-opens perspectives full of opportunities for young people, including quality jobs and adapting to social change. The Union aims for youth to be fully on board in the rollout of NextGenerationEU, enhancing their role in the green and digital transition.

6. On 15 September 2021, President von der Leyen announced in her State of the European Union⁶. Address that the European Commission would propose to make 2022 the European Year of Youth. Highlighting the confidence that she draws for Europe's future from the inspiration provided by Europe's young people, President von der Leyen added that *"if we are to shape our Union in their mould, young people must be able to shape Europe's future"*. Europe needs the vision, engagement and participation of all young people to build a better future, and Europe needs to give young people opportunities for the future, a future that is greener, more digital and more inclusive. This is why the President proposed *"a year dedicated to empowering those who have dedicated so much to others"*.
7. The active participation of young people in democratic processes is crucial for the present and the future of Europe and its democratic societies. In line with the Council conclusions on fostering democratic awareness and democratic engagement among young people in Europe⁷, the conclusions on strengthening multilevel governance when promoting the participation of young people in decision-making processes, but also with the European Democracy Action Plan⁸, and the Report on the reform of electoral law of the European Union⁹, the European Year of Youth therefore aims to give a boost to the active involvement of young people in Europe's democratic life, including by supporting participation activities for young people from diverse backgrounds in processes such as the Conference on the Future of Europe, promoting civic engagement and volunteering initiatives, thereby raising awareness of European Union values and fundamental rights, as well as European history and culture, bringing together young people and decision-makers at local, regional, national and Union levels and contributing to the process of European integration.

⁶ [soteu_2021_address_en_0.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

⁷ Conclusions of the Council and of the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on fostering democratic awareness and democratic engagement among young people in Europe (OJ C 415 of 1.12.2020, p.16)_____

⁸ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0790&from=EN>

⁹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2015-0286_EN.html?redirect

8. The essential role of young people is also recognised and must be supported “to channel their infinite capacities for activism into the creation of a better world”. The European Year of Youth is a concrete contribution to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (‘2030 Agenda’)¹⁰, which highlights that “children and young women and men are critical agents of change”, and should give a further impetus to the implementation of that Agenda, the road to sustainable development, and the capacity of young people to shape the present and the future, not only of the Union, but also EU partner countries and of our planet as a whole.
9. The European Year should contribute to strengthen youth participation in EU external action across all policies, create new opportunities for education, learning and exchanges, partnerships and dialogue between youth from the EU and partner countries, including Eastern partnership and Western Balkans, and to increase the role of youth engagement in strategic communication and public diplomacy action.
10. The European Youth Goals, which are an integral part of the EU Youth Strategy, and which have been developed by young people under the EU Youth dialogue process, are a testimony to the eagerness of many young Europeans to participate in defining the direction in which the development of the European Union should go.
- 10.a The European Year should contribute to the recognition of youth work and to the objectives of the European Youth Work Agenda and the Bonn Process.
11. The European Year of Youth should boost the successful implementation of first principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights¹¹ which highlights that "everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning" and of the European Education Area, which aims to stimulate young people in their personal, social and professional fulfilment by creating a genuine European space of learning by 2025 in which inclusive and high quality education and training for all is not hampered by borders.

¹⁰ [21252030 Agenda for Sustainable Development web.pdf \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/2030-agenda/)

¹¹ [pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/euro-education-area/pdf/european-pillar-social-rights_en.pdf)

12. The European Year of Youth should support Union's efforts to expanding employment opportunities for youth in the post-pandemic recovery as stated in the European Parliament Resolution on the Youth Guarantee (2020/2764(RSP))¹² which underlines that lockdown measures have caused a sudden disruption to young people's formal and non-formal education as well as informal learning, traineeships, internships and apprenticeships, as well as jobs, affecting their income, earning potential and well-being, including their health, and in particular their mental health.
13. The European Year of Youth should give further impetus to the creation of quality youth employment opportunities under the Youth Employment Support (YES) initiative, including the reinforced Youth Guarantee¹³ and the new ALMA initiative (Aim, Learn, Master, Achieve) proposed by the Commission to be implemented under the European Social Fund +. ALMA should be a cross-border youth mobility scheme for disadvantaged people not in employment, education or training.
14. The European Parliament resolution on the impact of COVID-19 on youth and on sport (2020/2864(RSP))¹⁴ underlines the particularly acute impact the current pandemic has had on young people not in education, employment, or training (NEETs) and highlights the need to tackle the problems faced by young people from vulnerable groups; notes that youth unemployment and poverty have risen steadily since the outbreak of the pandemic and urges the Commission and the Member States to take all the necessary measures to counter the disastrous effects on youth employment. The Resolution recalls the role of volunteering in developing life and work skills for young people and considers that the European Solidarity Corps can help young Europeans to broaden their opportunities beyond their local realities.

¹² [Texts adopted - Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee - Thursday, 8 October 2020 \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹³ [pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹⁴ [Texts adopted - The impact of Covid-19 on youth and on sport - Wednesday, 10 February 2021 \(europa.eu\)](#)

15. The European Year of Youth should support giving effect to the Council Resolution of 1 December 2020 for establishing the European Youth Work Agenda¹⁵ and the Council Conclusions of 22 May 2019 on Young People and the Future of Work¹⁶, of 10 December 2019 on digital youth work¹⁷ and of 7 December 2017 on smart youth work¹⁸.
16. Reflecting the importance of tackling climate and nature crises in line with the Union's commitments to implement the Paris Agreement¹⁹ and to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, the European Year of Youth should contribute to mainstreaming climate and nature-related actions and to the implementation of the European Green Deal²⁰ in a fair and inclusive manner, the Horizon Europe missions and the Fit for 55 package²¹, notably by encouraging young people to formulate own initiatives and creative ideas on achieving the relevant targets.
17. The European Year of Youth should give further impetus to the European Parliament Resolution on Effective measures to 'green' Erasmus+, Creative Europe and the European Solidarity Corps (2019/2195(INI))²² which underlines that Erasmus+, through its support for formal and non-formal education, learning and training and for youth participation activities, is crucial for awareness-raising among Europeans, in particular young generations, to encourage them to have an active and informed position on sustainability and relevant policies and to become engaged and conscious future citizens; highlights, in this respect, the major role played by youth and civil society organisations in sharing best practices and implementing projects raising younger generations' awareness about sustainability.

¹⁵ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2020.415.01.0001.01.ENG

¹⁶ [pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹⁷ [Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on Digital Youth Work 2019/C 414/02 - Publications Office of the EU \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹⁸ [Council conclusions on smart youth work \(europa.eu\)](#)

¹⁹ [Paris Agreement | Climate Action \(europa.eu\)](#)

²⁰ [A European Green Deal | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

²¹ [EU's plan for a green transition - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](#)

²² [Texts adopted - Effective measures to 'green' Erasmus+, Creative Europe and the European Solidarity Corps - Tuesday, 15 September 2020 \(europa.eu\)](#)

- 17.a. The European Year of Youth encourages to seek synergies with European events and initiatives, such as the European Youth Event, the European Youth Week, the European Youth Capital, the European Capital of Culture, the Council of Europe campaign 'Youth for Democracy, Democracy for Youth'.
18. In her State of the European Union Address, President von der Leyen highlighted that “Europe needs all its youth”. In fulfilling its objectives, the European Year should be fully inclusive and actively promoting the participation of young people of diverse backgrounds and with fewer opportunities.
19. The European Year of Youth is firmly anchored in the principles recognised by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (the ‘Charter’)²³. In particular, in its actions and activities, the European Year of Youth seeks to ensure full respect for the right to equality between women and men and the right to non-discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, and to promote the Charter's application. The EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child²⁴ and the European Child Guarantee²⁵ set a new standard for child and teen representation and recognise children and young people as active citizens and agents of change.
20. In order to ensure that the European Year of Youth is efficiently and effectively implemented, it should make maximum use of delivery mechanisms already in place. In order to optimise the added value of the European Year, synergies and complementarity should be sought and build upon, in particular, between the European Year and Union programmes including those with international outreach specifically dedicated to young people, those without a transnational or international character, in particular those relating to education and training, sport, culture and the media, youth and solidarity, volunteering employment and social inclusion, research and innovation, industry and enterprise, digital policy, agriculture and rural development that have a focus on young farmers, environment and climate, cohesion policy, migration, security and international cooperation and development, and with activities undertaken by the Member States, with a positive long-term additional net impact on young people.

²³ [text_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

²⁴ COM(2021) 142 final

²⁵ Council Recommendation of 14 June 2021 (EU)2021/1004

21. By creating an environment for promoting those objectives simultaneously at Union, national, regional and local levels, a greater synergy and a better use of resources can be achieved. In that regard, the Commission should provide timely information to and closely cooperate with the European Parliament, the Council and the Member States, the Committee of the Regions, European Economic and Social Committee and the bodies and associations active in the field of youth at Union level. In order to ensure that activities developed for the European Year of Youth have a European dimension, Member States are also encouraged to collaborate with each other.
22. The European Year of Youth should also focus on actions and activities which present a potential European added value. The notion of European added value is to be understood broadly and to be demonstrated in different ways, such as where actions or activities have a transnational character, particularly with regard to cooperation aimed at achieving a sustainable systemic impact or contribute to young people's European identity, awareness and ownership of European Union common values and fundamental rights, including gender equality and ability to take part in the Union's representative and participative democracy.
23. [At Union level, the necessary financial allocation for the implementation of this Decision be identified within the budget of the contributing programmes in accordance with the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027. Without prejudice to the powers of the budgetary authority, the aim should be to provide funding for the implementation of this Decision of at least EUR 8 million. Subject to the availability of funding, co-financing from the Union budget of activities in support of the European Year of Youth shall be in accordance with the rules, applicable to the relevant programmes, including in particular Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps and other Union programmes]²⁶.

²⁶ The provisions related to budgetary issues will be re-assessed on the basis of additional information to be provided by the Commission by 15 November 2021.

24. Since the objectives of this Decision cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States, but can rather by reason of the scale and effects of the proposed action be better achieved at Union level, the Union may adopt measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, as set out in Article 5 TEU. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, as set out in that Article, this Decision does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve those objectives.
25. In view of the impact of COVID 19 on the youth and consequently the pressing need for this Year's objective to honour, support and engage with young people in a post-pandemic perspective, it is appropriate to provide for an exception to the eight week period referred to in Article 4 of Protocol No 1 on the role of national Parliaments in the European Union, annexed to the Treaty on European Union, to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community,
26. Following the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, timely application of this Decision is needed for the purpose of ensuring swift implementation of the European year of Youth. This Decision should enter into force as a matter of urgency on the day following that of its publication in *the Official Journal of the European Union* and should apply, with retroactive effect, from 1 January 2022.

HAVE ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

Subject matter

The year 2022 shall be designated as the ‘European Year of Youth 2022’ (hereinafter referred to as the ‘European Year’).

Article 2

Objectives

In line with the objectives of the 2019-2027 EU Youth Strategy and the European Youth Goals²⁷, which have a cross-sectoral approach aiming at ensuring that the interests and needs of young people are taken into account in political action at all levels, the overall objective of the European Year shall be to boost the efforts of the Union, the Member States, regional and local authorities to honour, support and engage with young people in a post-pandemic perspective. In particular, the European Year shall be aimed at:

1. highlighting how the green and digital transitions offer a renewed perspective for the future and opportunities to counter negative impact of the pandemic on young people and on the society at large, drawing inspiration from the actions, vision and insights of young people to further strengthen and invigorate the common European Union project and listening to young people, taking into account their concerns and supporting them in developing concrete, inclusive opportunities, while making an optimal use of Union instruments,
2. empowering and supporting all young people, including through youth work²⁸, especially young people with fewer opportunities, from disadvantaged and diverse backgrounds or belonging to vulnerable groups, as well as from rural, remote, peripheral and less developed areas as well as from outermost regions, to actively engage in our society as actors of change, inspired by a European sense of belonging, including additional efforts at building capacity for youth participation and civic engagement among young people and among all stakeholders, who work to represent their interests and involving the contribution of young people from diverse backgrounds in key consultation processes, such as the Conference on the Future of Europe and the EU Youth Dialogue,

²⁷ As defined by the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 and its Annex 3.

²⁸ In line with the Council Resolution on the framework for establishing a European Youth Work Agenda (2020/C 415/01).

3. promoting opportunities for young people arising from the public policies at EU, national, regional level and local level in order to support their personal, social and professional development in a green, digital and inclusive world.
4. Mainstreaming youth policy across the European Union in line with the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 to ensure that a youth perspective is brought into policy-making at all levels.

Article 3

Type of measures

1. The measures to be taken to achieve the objectives set out in Article 2 shall include the following activities at European and in line with existing possibilities also at, national, regional or local level, and, where relevant, in partner countries, linked to the objectives of the European Year:
 - a) conferences, events and initiatives to promote inclusive and accessible debate on challenges, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, that young people, including those with fewer opportunities and belonging to vulnerable groups, are facing and on the course of action that stakeholders at different levels can take;
 - b) promoting youth participation and enhancing the use of existing and new innovative tools, channels and programmes that enable all young people to reach policy-makers by identifying, collecting and sharing of experiences and good practices and raising awareness among policy-makers of these tools;
 - c) gathering ideas using participatory methods, in an effort of co-creating and implementing together the European Year;
 - d) information, education and awareness-raising campaigns to convey values such as equality, solidarity, volunteering, sense of belonging and safety, feeling of being heard and respected, to stimulate an active contribution of youth to build a society that is more inclusive, green and digital;

- e) creating a space for exchange on turning challenges into opportunities in an entrepreneurial spirit;
 - f) undertaking studies, research and surveys on the situation of youth in the Union, paying particular attention to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, producing European harmonised statistics and using them and other relevant EU level data, including from the Youth Wiki, as well as promoting and disseminating these results on European, national or regional level;
 - g) promoting programmes, funding opportunities, projects, actions and networks of relevance to youth, including through social media and online communities;
2. The Commission and the Member States may identify other activities which could contribute to the objectives of the European Year and allow references to the European Year to be used in promoting those activities in so far as they contribute to achieving those objectives. The European institutions may also identify such other activities and suggest them to the Commission.

Article 4

Coordination at national level

The organisation of participation in the European Year at national level shall be a responsibility of the Member States. Member States shall appoint national coordinators to that effect. The national coordinators shall ensure the coordination of relevant activities at national level. They shall also ensure the active involvement and engagement of young people and youth civil society organisations, including if appropriate National Youth Councils, and other relevant stakeholders in co-creating, implementing and reviewing the implementation of the activities of the Year at national level.

Article 5
Coordination at Union level

1. The Commission shall convene meetings of the national coordinators in order to coordinate the running of the European Year. These meetings shall also serve as opportunities to exchange information regarding the implementation of the European Year at national and Union level. Representatives of the European Parliament may participate as observers and contribute to these meetings.
2. The coordination of the European Year at Union level shall have a transversal approach with a view to creating synergies between the various Union programmes and initiatives of relevance to young people.
3. The Commission shall convene meetings of stakeholders and representatives of organisations or bodies in the field of youth, to assist in co-creating and implementing the European Year at Union level.

Article 6
Cooperation at international level

For the purpose of the European Year, where necessary, the Commission shall cooperate with international partners and competent international organisations, while ensuring the visibility of the Union's participation. The Commission shall in particular ensure the cooperation with the Council of Europe, including through the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership, and encouraging synergies with the 'Youth for Democracy, Democracy for Youth' campaign, as well as with international youth networks and organisations.

Article 7
Monitoring and evaluation

By 31 December 2023, the Commission shall submit a report to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation, results and overall assessment of the initiatives, including ideas for further common endeavours in the field of youth to create a legacy of the European year, provided for in this Decision.

Article 8
Entry into force

This Decision shall enter into force on the day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply from 1 January 2022.

Done at Brussels,

For the European Parliament

For the Council

The President

The President
