Council of the European Union

Brussels, 19 November 2026
(OR. en)

15577/26

JEUN 247
SOC 730

OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Conclusions of the Council and of the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on promoting youth spaces for young people in Europe

Delegations will find attached the abovementioned conclusions approved by the Council (Education, Youth, Culture and Sport) at its session on 19 November 2026.

ANNEX

Conclusions of the Council and of the representatives of the governments
of the Member States meeting within the Council
on promoting youth spaces for young people in Europe

THE COUNCIL AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL,

RECALL:

1. Texts adopted within the European Union (EU) with relevance to youth policy, including the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027,[1] and the Council Conclusions on civic spaces for young people[2] as well as those related to participation, inclusion, intergenerational fairness, civil society and democratic engagement.

2. The European Pillar of Social Rights, which recognises the rights of young people to access education and training, equal opportunities and protection against discrimination, supporting the creation of inclusive, resilient communities in which young people are actively engaged and economically and socially safe.

3. Council Recommendation on the New European Bauhaus[3] which advocates actively engaging young people in shaping inclusive and youth-friendly public and common spaces.

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1 Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (OJ C 456, 18.12.2018).

2 Conclusions of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on safeguarding and creating civic spaces for young people that facilitate meaningful youth participation (OJ C 501I, 13.12.2021).

3 Council Recommendation on the New European Bauhaus (Council doc. 9128/26).

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THESE CONCLUSIONS:

4. “Youth spaces” are described, in line with the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 Youth Goal #9: Space and Participation for All, as youth-led physical facilities and infrastructures which are autonomous, open and safe, accessible to all, offer professional support for development, and ensure opportunities for youth participation. While acknowledging the value and importance of safe virtual youth spaces, especially the accessibility they offer for young people, these conclusions focus on physical youth spaces due to the opportunity for in-person interaction and the important role that they can play in the personal and social development of young people.

TAKE NOTE OF:

5. The European Commission's Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness[4] and its ambition to ensure that future generations are not unduly burdened by and equally benefit from present day policymaking. In particular, its focus on stronger inclusion of youth participation in fair policymaking, fair opportunities and fair places.

[4] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness, doc. 7112/26 INIT + ADD 1.

ACKNOWLEDGE THAT:

6. Youth spaces play a significant role in supporting young people's personal and social development, positive mental health and wellbeing.

7. Youth spaces exist in different forms and may operate under different governance models across the Union, including fixed and mobile provision, indoor and outdoor settings, functioning as local community hubs and adapt to the needs of young people in their communities. These spaces can be supported by youth organisations and public authorities at appropriate levels.

8. Youth spaces can act as gateways to wider support services by providing accurate, reliable and youth-friendly information and signposting young people to relevant resources.

9. Safeguarding access to these youth spaces is particularly important for vulnerable and marginalised young people and young people with fewer opportunities, including ethnic minorities, refugees, LGBTI[5] people, people with disabilities and those who experience social, economic and geographical disadvantage, including those living in the outermost regions, as well as sparsely populated, rural and remote areas.

[5] See also the LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy 2026-2030 (COM(2025) 725 final).

10. Youth spaces, which may include civic spaces, provide opportunities for meaningful youth participation, empower young people to raise issues and express themselves, engage with a range of diverse perspectives, challenge disinformation and misinformation, and develop the confidence and skills to become active and engaged citizens in their communities, including through non-formal and informal learning.

11. Youth spaces can serve as platforms for intergenerational dialogue and collaboration, fostering mutual understanding between young people and other generations. These spaces can also serve as platforms for exchange of best practices regarding European and international youth opportunities such as volunteering and mobility.

12. Youth work and youth workers, together with youth organisations, play an important role in the personal and social development of young people, supporting them to develop important relationships built on trust, with their peers and adults.

13. Youth work and youth workers, together with youth organisations, play a central role in strengthening the democratic resilience of young people by creating safe and inclusive youth spaces where young people can develop critical thinking and participation skills fostering a sense of civic responsibility.

AGREE THAT:

14. Across the Union, there are insufficient physical spaces available for young people that can serve as youth spaces.[6]

15. The reduction in the number of safe, inclusive and accessible youth spaces for young people is an increasingly important issue across Member States, with sustaining access to these spaces becoming a growing concern for young people[7].

16. In a context of increasing digitalisation and screen use among young people, physical youth spaces can provide valuable opportunities for in-person interaction, social inclusion, physical activity, wellbeing and positive community engagement, while mitigating the risks of increasing levels of loneliness among young people[8].

17. Sustainable, accessible and simplified funding, including from EU instruments, is an important factor for the availability, quality and inclusiveness of youth spaces.

18. Inequitable access to youth spaces can lead to young people, particularly those in rural and remote areas, being excluded from youth spaces that play an essential role in their personal, social and civic development.

19. Across the Member States, there are variations in the levels of investments and the policy frameworks for physical youth spaces for young people at local, regional and national levels.

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6 OECD, Recommendation of the Council on creating better opportunities for young people, Meeting of the Council at Ministerial Level, 9-10 June, JT03497457; European Youth Forum, Youth Progress Index 2023.

7 OECD, The Protection and Promotion of Civic Space: Strengthening alignment with International Standards and Guidance, 2022.

8 Joint Research Centre (JRC) survey on loneliness in the EU. https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC125873

INVITE THE MEMBER STATES, AT THE APPROPRIATE LEVELS, TO:

20. Promote the development of a cross governmental evidence-informed, strategic approach to the mapping, support, and future development of youth spaces involving, where appropriate, local, regional and national authorities, youth organisations, youth workers and young people themselves.

21. Support research, data collection and knowledge development on the impact of youth spaces in fostering inclusion, participation, wellbeing and democratic engagement among young people.

22. Further promote youth mainstreaming in development and implementation of policies relating to youth spaces across indoor and outdoor settings, including civic and other spaces where young people interact, engage and socialise.

23. Explore ways with young people to preserve existing youth spaces, consider establishing new youth spaces, and, where appropriate, implement measures to improve the quality, accessibility and sustainability of these spaces for all young people.

24. Make full use, where appropriate, of relevant existing Union funding instruments to support the establishment, preservation, operation and improvement of youth spaces.

25. Encourage and support the development of accessible and safe youth spaces that offer young people opportunities for in-person interaction and meaningful social connections, in order to address the challenges associated with the digital transformation of society.

26. Promote increased awareness and accessibility for all young people to safe and inclusive youth spaces through youth-friendly information and outreach, including measures targeting young people with fewer opportunities.

27. Recognise the role of youth workers and youth organisations in providing and supporting youth spaces and as important actors for developing and promoting active citizenship among young people and fostering their democratic resilience and encouraging intergenerational dialogue and collaboration.

28. Explore ways to build and strengthen the capacity of youth workers to further enhance the value of youth spaces, in order to provide access to meaningful opportunities, and support young people to realise their potential.

INVITE THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY, TO:

29. Continue to support the implementation of all relevant EU policies and ensure that the views and concerns of young people, as well as the expertise of the youth work sector, particularly concerning youth spaces, are adequately incorporated into all future policy and decision making.

30. Consider promoting knowledge sharing and exchange of best practice to support Member States in their strategic approach to the ongoing and future development of youth space**s**, including through existing networks, such as the EU Youth Stakeholders Group, the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership and the network of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps National Agencies.

31. Promote the co-creation, design and governance of youth spaces with the active involvement of youth workers and young people, ensuring that youth spaces are not only physically accessible but also socially inclusive, participatory and responsive to evolving needs.

32. Further involve young people in the planning and implementation of EU programmes and initiatives that have an impact on their lives, in particular relating to youth spaces, through youth mainstreaming, and the application of the Youth Check and the principle of intergenerational fairness.

33. Continue to promote and inform the Member States and all relevant stakeholders of the full range of existing EU funds, cooperation tools and programmes available to develop and sustain youth spaces and to support young people in Europe to become active and engaged EU citizens. This information could be disseminated via existing European instruments and tools, such as European Youth Portal, Youth Wiki, or Eurodesk.

34. Support research, data collection and knowledge development on the impact of youth spaces in fostering inclusion, participation, wellbeing and democratic engagement among young people