



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 12 January 2024
(OR. en)

5406/24
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COVER NOTE

From:	Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Ms Martine DEPREZ, Director
date of receipt:	12 January 2024
To:	Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union
No. Cion doc.:	SWD(2024) 1 final
Subject:	COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Accompanying the document Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European Year of Youth 2022

Delegations will find attached document SWD(2024) 1 final.

Encl.: SWD(2024) 1 final



Brussels, 10.1.2024
SWD(2024) 1 final

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT
Accompanying the document

**Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the
European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions**

on the European Year of Youth 2022

{COM(2024) 1 final}

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Introduction

Article 7 of the Decision¹ on a European Year of Youth 2022 requires the European Commission to submit by 31 December 2023 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 measures provided for in the Decision. That report is to include ideas for further common endeavours in the field of youth in order to create a long-lasting legacy for the European Year.

This staff working document details the implementation, key results and achievements, and the feedback on the European Year of Youth 2022. It accompanies the Communication on the European Year of Youth, which proposes future follow-up actions in the field of youth to create the Year's legacy.

¹ Decision (EU) 2021/2316 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 December 2021 on a European Year of Youth (2022). Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2021/2316/oj>.

Executive Summary

The European Year of Youth 2022 (the EYY or the Year) was co-designed by EU institutions, Member States, youth stakeholders and young people. The co-creation process began in October 2021. As required by Decision (EU) 2021/2316 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 December 2021 on a European Year of Youth (2022) and in order to optimise coordination, a group was created composed of 29 EYY national coordinators from the EU Member States², 6 national contact points in Erasmus+ associated countries and more than 120 European-level youth stakeholders. This group was animated by the EU Youth Coordinator. It met nine times before and during the Year and exchanged views regularly on an online platform. The European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions were part of this group and contributed actively.

The EYY was essentially a **bottom-up initiative and successfully triggered large-scale mobilisation and engagement**. More than 2 700 stakeholders³ across the EU and beyond **implemented activities** that helped meet the Year's four objectives as set out in the Year's Decision.

Objective 1: highlighting how the green and digital transitions and other EU policies provide opportunities to young people after the COVID-19 pandemic

In the context of Objective 1, the Commission proposed a range of opportunities for youth to learn, exchange views and act. Acknowledging young people's growing call for action on the climate and biodiversity crises, the **Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on learning for the green transition and sustainable development**⁴ includes a clear roadmap for Member States to support learning and teaching for the green transition. Young people and stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the Recommendation, which highlights the importance of youth involvement in the design of solutions related to learning for the green transition and sustainable development. The Recommendation went hand in hand with the **Council Conclusions of 5 April 2022 on promoting engagement among young people as actors of change in order to protect the environment**⁵. These Council Conclusions included the ideas and opinions of young people that were shared at the EU Youth Conference under the French Presidency in January 2022, which launched the ninth cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue.

In the context of the European Sustainable Energy Week, the Year was the occasion for the Commission to organise the **European Youth Energy Day** and **youth policy labs**, including conversations with young people and youth organisations about the EU's energy independence and energy future.

² Youth policy is a competence of the three Communities in Belgium, which therefore appointed three coordinators.

³ Number of stakeholders who submitted activities on the EYY Activities map on the European Youth Portal.

⁴ Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on learning for the green transition and sustainable development. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022H0627%2801%29>.

⁵ Conclusions of the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council – Promoting engagement among young people as actors of change in order to protect the environment. Available at: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52022XG0412\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52022XG0412(01)).

To promote a responsible digital transition and after consultation with more than 750 children and young people, the Commission adopted a new **European strategy for a Better Internet for Kids (BIK+)**⁶ with the aim of providing age-appropriate digital services in which every child in the EU is protected, empowered and respected online **guidelines for teachers and educators**⁷. These were reinforced by the **Council Conclusions of 28 November 2022** on supporting well-being in digital education⁸.

The development of well-being and environmental policy frameworks went hand in hand with participative initiatives such as:

- the **HealthyLifeStyle4All Youth Ideas Labs**, where young people put forward ideas to promote healthy lifestyles and remove barriers to youth participation;
- the **Plastic Pirates – Go Europe!** initiative, which is part of the EU Mission ‘Restore our Oceans and Waters’ and was expanded across the EU to inspire young people to tackle plastic pollution;
- the **Green Track campaign**, which was launched in the run-up to the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) and invited young people across the EU to voice their hopes and concerns about nature, biodiversity and the EU’s sustainable future and inspired them to be drivers of the process;
- the **EU Teens4Green**, which encouraged young people to design and implement projects to address challenges linked to the just transition towards climate neutrality and a greener EU.

Objective 2: empowering and supporting young people, including those with fewer opportunities, to become active and engaged citizens and actors of change

The Year was **for** young people and was implemented **with** and **by** them. **92%** of EYY national coordinators and the non-EU national contact points collaborated with national youth councils made up of young people. Of the **18 EYY steering groups/networks** set up at national level, 16 included national youth councils and 12 included other youth organisations. Thanks to the EYY, a larger number of young Europeans experienced first-hand how the EU adds value to their lives, supporting their personal development and equipping them with key resources and skills to become active citizens, and agents of solidarity and positive change. The close collaboration with young people and diverse youth organisations was essential for ensuring that the Year was a year for all young people including those with fewer opportunities.

Young people’s highest expectation from the EYY was that society and decision-makers would listen more to young people’s opinions and needs⁹. To address this demand, the EU and Member States gave utmost priority to the topic of **youth participation**. It emerged as the EYY’s top theme, with the largest number of activities (43%) on the EYY activities map on the European Youth Portal¹⁰. The Year coincided with the final stage of the **Conference on**

⁶ A European strategy for a better internet for kids (BIK+). Available at: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/strategy-better-internet-kids>.

⁷ Guidelines for teachers and educators on tackling disinformation and promoting digital literacy through education and training, 2022. Available at: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/28248>.

⁸ Council conclusions on supporting well-being in digital education. Available at: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52022XG1209\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52022XG1209(01)).

⁹ Flash Eurobarometer survey 502 - *‘Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth’, May 2022*

¹⁰ Organisers, whether stakeholders or young individuals themselves from around Europe and beyond, were welcomed to showcase their European Year of Youth initiatives on the EYY Activities map.

One successful flagship initiative was the **Youth Policy Dialogues with Commissioners**. Almost 300 young participants took part in 26 exchanges in Brussels, sharing their ideas and insights with the Commissioners. They learned about the EU's functioning, networked with their peers and developed their expertise in various policy areas. 95% of the participants rated the dialogues as excellent or very good. The participants' voices were further amplified through online communication campaigns around the dialogues.

the Future of Europe (April 2021-May 2022), which had a specific focus on youth. The Year provided an extra boost in encouraging young people to speak up and share their ideas through new participatory formats and tools with a view to the formulation of the conference's final proposals. As part of the Year, the Commission launched high-level youth policy dialogues, participation platforms, learning hubs, new programme actions, Youth Talks, and the Youth Voice Platform. The Commission launched youth networks such as the **Bioeconomy Youth Ambassadors network**, the **Global**

Erasmus+ Alumni Mentoring Scheme, the **Network of Young European Ambassadors to promote Holocaust remembrance**, the **European Climate Pact Ambassadors** and the **Horizon Europe Young Observers**, where the Commission invited over 127 masters-level students to attend and learn how EU research and innovation project proposals are evaluated and selected by the EU's top scientists.

In 2022, the participation of young people from outside the EU was also highlighted as a key pillar of the first Commission **Youth Action Plan in EU External Action**. To empower children as active citizens, the Commission launched the **EU Children's Participation Platform** in September 2022. Co-designed with children and young people, its functions are to connect existing child participation mechanisms at local, national and EU levels, and to involve children in decision-making processes at the EU level. The **ALMA initiative** (aim, learn, master, achieve) was launched to help young, disadvantaged people aged 18–29 to integrate into the society and labour market across the EU. The European Youth Forum organised the capacity-building **LevelUp! Event** in the European Parliament on 28-29 October 2022, involving more than 1 300 young change makers from over 50 countries in activities, boosting their communication, advocacy and organising skills. This initiative was part of a larger campaign to increase participation in elections, including the 2024 European Parliament elections. In Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland and the Netherlands, EYY national coordinators set up **micro grants schemes to provide low-threshold easy access to opportunities for the youth sector and young people** to deliver EYY projects and to build capacity. In the context of the Outermost Regions Strategy¹¹ the Commission launched a EUR 1 million grant scheme to enable young people in the outermost regions to develop and implement actions to improve quality of life tailored to their communities and regions.¹²

¹¹ Communication 'Putting people first, securing sustainable and inclusive growth, unlocking the potential of the EU's outermost regions' COM(2022) 198 final.

¹² https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/whats-new/newsroom/05-04-2022-youth-for-outermost-regions-eur1-million-to-support-youth-in-the-outermost-regions_en; https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/whats-new/newsroom/03-08-2023-call-relaunched-youth-for-outermost-regions-eur1-million-to-support-youth-in-the-outermost-regions_en

Almost to 90% of stakeholders in the youth sector and 66% of young people, who provided feedback on the EYY via online surveys, stated that young people had opportunities to make their voice heard during the Year.

Objective 3: promoting the various opportunities available to young people from public policies at all levels

The EYY reached every corner of the EU and beyond. Public administrations, youth organisations and networks, universities and schools, civil society and intergovernmental organisations, which organised EYY activities, estimated overall outreach through events and social media campaigns at **more than 150 million citizens** and that the great majority of them were young people ¹³. The Year brought EU, national, regional and local institutions closer to young people. **83% of EYY activities took place face to face** and this outreach effort played an important role in informing young people, including those with fewer opportunities, about various opportunities.

Unprecedented outreach of the Year

More than **13 000** activities across **67 countries** were submitted on the EYY map and contributed to the Year's four objectives
2700 stakeholders organised activities
381 activities organised by Commission representations
150 outreach activities by the EU Youth Coordinator
Over 1 million pages views of the EYY page on the European Youth Portal
Over **210 million** impressions, over **10 million** engagements, over **91.4 million** reach on EU Youth social media channels

More than half of the organisers of EYY activities who provided feedback on the Year agreed that most of their activities took place because 2022 was designated as the European Year of Youth¹⁴. **70% of the young people** providing feedback to the EYY survey said that the Year positively changed their knowledge or view of the EU's work.

The **Commission's EU4Youth Days** for the first time brought together young people, youth workers, policymakers and researchers from all EU neighbourhood regions (the Eastern Partnership region, the

Western Balkans, Türkiye and the Southern Neighbourhood) to highlight opportunities and good practices. The **first edition of the EU TalentOn contest** challenged young talented researchers to find solutions to the most pressing global issues, with the overall aims of promoting a career in research, facilitating collaboration and promoting the entrepreneurial skills of young researchers. It was organised by the Commission and co-created by Leiden2022 European City of Science.

Thanks to a partnership between the Commission, the European Festivals Association (EFA) and EUROPE, 73 festivals from 25 countries embraced the EYY through the **#ImpossibleWithoutYouth campaign**. The **European Parliament launched the Youth Hub** website to promote its comprehensive and diverse youth offer among young people, educators and youth organisations.

¹³ Estimated number of participants, by organisers who submitted activities on the European Youth Portal's EYY Activities map.

¹⁴ 53% of respondents in the stakeholder survey agreed that the majority of activities they organised and submitted on the EYY map took place because 2022 was designated as the European Year of Youth. 77% of EYY national coordinators and national contact points shared this opinion.

The EYY national coordinators have highlighted many examples of **EYY outreach events** in Member States. At least 13 Member States set up **dedicated webpages** to promote the EYY. In **Austria**, the State Secretary for Youth toured provinces to meet young people and discuss their expectations for the future. In **Ireland**, two national ‘All Aboard’ youth events were hosted on moving chartered trains. In **Italy**, an EYY truck tour raised awareness and promoted opportunities for young people. A similar tour took place in **Romania**, mainly targeting young people from rural areas. The Year also managed to reach out to citizens and organisations that had not previously taken up opportunities provided by the EU. Of the stakeholders who replied to the EYY stakeholders’ survey, **more than a third contributed to an EU initiative for the first time**. Thanks to the Year, young people acquired a better understanding of the various public policies opportunities available to them at EU, national, regional and local levels.

Objective 4: bringing a youth perspective across all relevant Union policy fields

Many policy initiatives and decisions have an impact on the lives of young people. This is also shown in the European Youth Goals, which provide a vision and guide for young people in the EU Youth Strategy. Taking better account of the youth dimension in all relevant policy areas and ensuring that young people have a say in these policy areas that affect them has therefore been a priority for EU youth policy cooperation since 2001, with the White Paper on a new impetus for European youth¹⁵ and the current 2019-2027 EU Youth Strategy¹⁶. The EYY is cross-sectoral¹⁷ in nature and mainstreaming the youth perspective across policy fields is one of its key objectives. The EYY created a large interservice mobilisation within the Commission. More than 30 departments and services contributed to the Year, with over **130 policy initiatives for young people, many of which were developed in cooperation with youth**. An **estimated indicative amount of around EUR 140 million**¹⁸ was identified in relevant EU programmes and instruments for the implementation of the Year’s objectives, such as via campaigns, events or calls for proposals.

The **Commission Youth Network**, which is coordinated by the EU Youth Coordinator is an internal network for capacity building, exchange, and collaboration on youth related issues between services. Composed of representatives of different services, the Network was a key enabler of the Year’s strong cross-sectoral dimension.

At national level, **81%** of EYY national coordinators and national contact points reported that they collaborated with ministries or public bodies other than those responsible for youth policy. **69%** set up steering groups / networks for the Year. Ministries or public bodies other than those responsible for youth policy were part of **61%** of these groups.

¹⁵ European Commission white paper – A new impetus for European youth. Available at: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a3fb3071-785e-4e15-a2cd-51cb40a6c06b>.

¹⁶ 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. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A42018Y1218%2801%29>.

¹⁷ The Year was structured around nine policy areas of special interest to young people: European learning mobility, employment and inclusion, policy dialogues and participation, green, digital, culture, health, well-being and sports, youth and the world and solidarity with Ukraine.

¹⁸ More explanation on this estimated figure can be found in Section 2.4, pp. 23-25.

This wide mobilisation of diverse stakeholders in the Year's preparation and implementation resulted in **new partnerships at EU, national and regional levels. This should boost youth cooperation for years to come.**

1. Why was 2022 chosen as the European Year of Youth?

On 15 September 2021, President von der Leyen announced in her State of the European Union Address¹⁹ that the Commission would propose to make 2022 the European Year of Youth ‘a year dedicated to empowering those who have dedicated so much to others’. 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’.

The EYY 2022 was launched at a critical time when young people and the youth sector were struggling to rebound from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic had an unprecedented – and uneven – impact on the education, employment, social inclusion and mental health of young people worldwide and across the EU. The pandemic disrupted their education, training and transition to employment, and many young people experienced feelings of social isolation, anxiety and depression. Children, adolescents and young adults have been extremely affected by disruptions of family and social ties, and the economic crisis provoked by lockdowns has hit young Europeans in particular²⁰.

At the same time, young people have shown remarkable intergenerational solidarity and support, while being forced to sacrifice valuable ‘youthful moments’ in their daily lives. Young people have shown great resilience and have helped to mitigate the pandemic’s impact.

President von der Leyen stated that ‘being young is normally a time of discovery, of creating new experiences. A time to meet lifelong friends, to find your own path. And what did we ask this generation to do? To keep their social distance, to stay locked down and to do school from home. For more than a year’²¹.

Against this backdrop, the Year mobilised the EU’s institutions, Member States’ public authorities at different levels and youth stakeholders to seek new and effective ways to honour, support and engage young people. The EYY encouraged the EU’s young people to provide contributions and insights to shape the EU’s development and society at large. The Year was also an occasion to raise awareness of the opportunities that lie ahead for young people.

1.1 Objectives of the European Year of Youth

Decision (EU) 2021/2316 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 December 2021 on a European Year of Youth (2022)²² (the Decision) laid down four objectives in its Article 2. These objectives aimed both to highlight the issues facing youth and to help tackle them:

- (a) renew the positive perspectives for young people, with a particular focus on the negative effects that the COVID-19 pandemic had on them, while highlighting how the green transition, the digital transition and other Union policies offer opportunities for young people and for society at large, drawing inspiration from the actions, vision and insights*

¹⁹ [2021 State of the Union Address by President von der Leyen](#)

²⁰ ‘Youth and COVID-19. Response, Recovery and resilience’ (OECD, 2020); ‘Youth and COVID-19. Impacts on Jobs, Education, Rights and mental Well-being’ (ILO, 2020); ‘Being young in Europe today – health. Statistics Explained. EU Youth report 2021’ (Eurostat, 2020).

²¹ [2021 State of the Union Address by President von der Leyen](#)

²² Decision (EU) 2021/2316 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 December 2021 on a European Year of Youth (2022). Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2021/2316/oj>.

of young people to further strengthen and invigorate the common European project and listening to young people, taking into account their needs and concerns, and support young people in developing concrete, inclusive opportunities and deliverables, while making optimal use of Union instruments;

- (b) empower and support young people, including through youth work, especially young people with fewer opportunities, young people from disadvantaged and diverse backgrounds, young people belonging to vulnerable and marginalised groups, young people from rural, remote, peripheral and less-developed areas and young people from outermost regions, to acquire relevant knowledge and competences and thus become active and engaged citizens and 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 that 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 process;*
- (c) support young people to acquire a better understanding of, and actively promote the various opportunities available to them from, public policies at Union, national, regional and local level support their personal, social, economic and professional development in a green, digital and inclusive world, while aiming to remove the remaining barriers thereto;*
- (d) mainstream youth policy across all relevant Union policy fields in line with the 2019–2027 European Union Youth Strategy to encourage the bringing of a youth perspective into policymaking at all levels.*

The context surrounding the Year's creation and implementation was further impacted by Russia's illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, which exacerbated the situation and challenges faced by young people, education systems, youth work and civil society organisations across the EU.

As European young people woke up to the horrors of a full-scale war and its consequences on the EU's borders, it became clear that the safeguarding of the EU's liberal and humanist values (solidarity, peace, unity, democracy, justice, dignity, safety and security, rule of law, freedom and the fight against disinformation) needed to be included in the themes of the Year. Solidarity was a key driver in the EU's response to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. Mobilising the EU's young people around these values and showing solidarity with Ukraine and its young people was therefore of utmost importance.

2. Implementation of the European Year of Youth

2.1. Target group

The Year was aimed at all young people in the EU and beyond. The 2019-2027 EU Youth Strategy²³ does not include an official definition of when a person is considered to be ‘young’. This definition is different from one Member State to the other. At EU level, the 15-29 age range is often used for statistical purposes.

In fulfilling its objectives and in line with Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1877(22)²⁴, the EYY aimed to be fully inclusive and actively promote the participation of young people. It included a particular focus on young people with fewer opportunities, from disadvantaged backgrounds and belonging to vulnerable groups. Such criteria include young people with disabilities, young people with migrant, Roma or LGBTIQ backgrounds, young people belonging to vulnerable groups, young people with reduced mobility and young people living in remote areas (e.g. the outermost regions) or facing economic obstacles. Efforts to include all young people in the EU and beyond also strove to achieve gender balance and the representation of diverse backgrounds.

To achieve these aims, the campaign took several measures to promote inclusiveness and representation.

All the campaign’s written communication published on the EYY’s web page was available in all 24 EU official languages. Through multilingual content, the campaign aimed to reach young people speaking different languages and ensure that language barriers did not hinder their participation. This approach enabled young people to access information and engage with the campaign in their preferred language, promoting a sense of inclusion and enabling wider participation.

In addition to linguistic inclusivity, the Years’ visuals placed particular emphasis on representing all groups of young people. By showcasing diversity in race, ethnicity, gender, ability and socio-economic backgrounds, the campaign sought to reflect the rich tapestry of young people’s experiences across Europe. This visual representation aimed to ensure that every young person, regardless of their background, could see themselves reflected and acknowledged in the campaign’s visuals.

Overall, the EYY communication campaign’s inclusive approach aimed to create an environment where all young people could feel valued, heard and represented. By providing multilingual content, embracing diverse visual representation, and collaborating with stakeholders, the campaign actively worked towards dismantling barriers and promoting equal opportunities for young people from all walks of life.

²³ 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. Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A42018Y1218%2801%29>

²⁴ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1877 of 22 October 2021 on the framework of inclusion measures of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes 2021-2027. Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32021D1877>.

2.2. Surveys on young people's expectations

Two surveys were conducted as part of the groundwork for the Year. They aimed to examine young people's anticipations and expectations about the Year. The surveys helped identify the policy areas of special interest to young people. The first survey, the Call for Ideas, was carried out at the end of 2021 by the Commission's Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC). The second survey was a Eurobarometer survey, the 2022 Flash Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth ('Flash Eurobarometer survey 502'), which was carried out at the beginning of 2022 at the request of DG EAC²⁵.

2.2.1. Call for ideas on the European Year of Youth 2022

The call was launched on the European Youth Portal in October 2021 and remained open until November 2021. The survey was promoted via social media ad campaigns on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter (now X) and was also shared with key stakeholders and multipliers. EUSurvey, the Commission's web application for online survey creation and publication, was used to collect the ideas. The call received 4 686 replies overall. Most of the respondents were between 18 and 24 years old (55.5%). Of the respondents, 81.1% were living in cities or towns and 16.3% in villages and rural areas. The survey report was published on the Youth Portal in December 2021.

Key outcomes and results of the survey

The report²⁶ on the results of the Call for Ideas on the EYY showed that young people:

- were eager to participate in the Year;

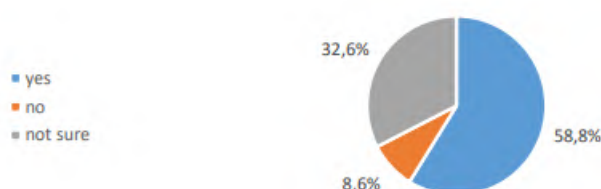


Figure 1. 'Would you like to actively contribute to the European Year of Youth?'
Source: Report on the results of the Call for Ideas on the EYY

²⁵ [Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth - May 2022 - - Eurobarometer survey \(europa.eu\)](https://youth.europa.eu/d8/sites/default/files/inline-files/Co-creation_survey_report.pdf).

²⁶ Report on the Call for Ideas: https://youth.europa.eu/d8/sites/default/files/inline-files/Co-creation_survey_report.pdf.

- wanted to make their voices heard to have an impact on policymaking but did not know how to do this;

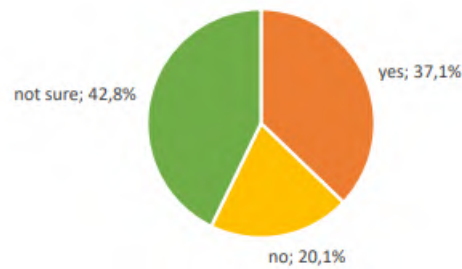


Figure 2. 'If you want to make your voice heard/to express your opinion, do you know how to do so?'
Source: Report on the results of the Call for Ideas on the EYY

- identified debates and interactive dialogues as the preferred way of making their voices heard;

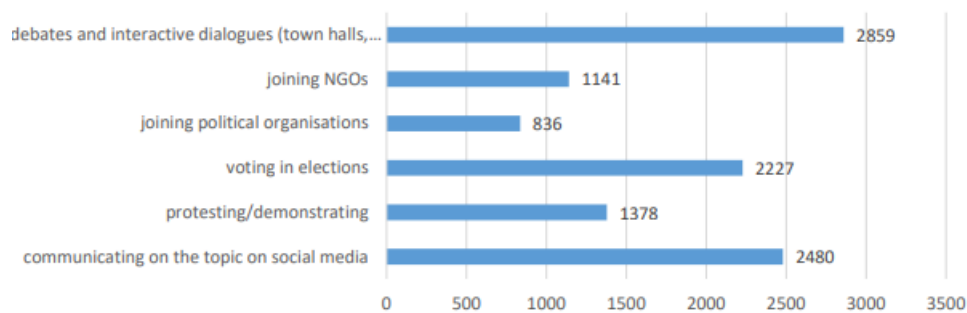


Figure 3. 'What is/would be your preferred way of making your voice heard?'
Source: Report on the results of the Call for Ideas on the EYY

- indicated the following themes as the most important and interesting: *education and training, climate change/environment, health/mental health, and inclusive societies*;

This was a multiple-choice (between 1 and 5 choices) mandatory question.



Figure 4. 'What themes do you think the European Year of Youth should focus on?'
Source: Report on the results of the Call for Ideas on the EYY

- wished to interact with young people from other European countries and emphasised the need for communication on the EU and youth;

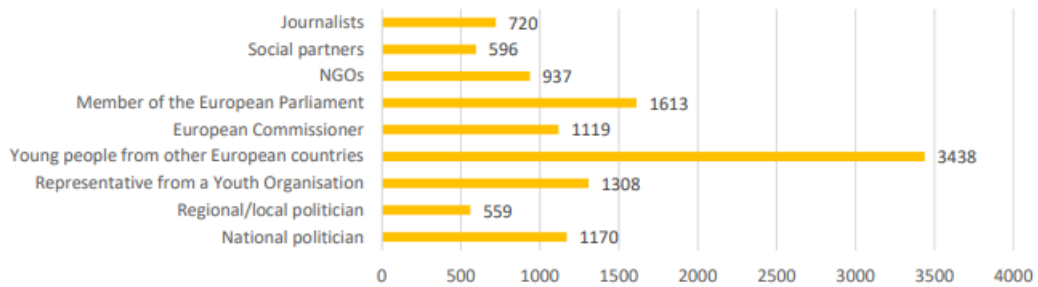


Figure 5. 'Who would you like to interact with during the European Year of Youth?'

Source: Report on the results of the Call for Ideas on the EYY

- suggested social media, podcasts and digital tools as a means of informing and involving young people;

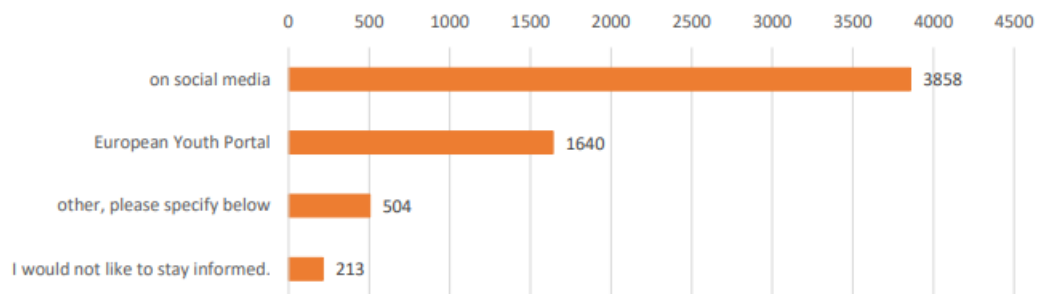


Figure 6. 'How would you like to stay informed on developments of the European Year of Youth?'

Source: Report on the results of the Call for Ideas on the EYY

- wanted to take part in the following activities: festivals, workshops, debates and training.

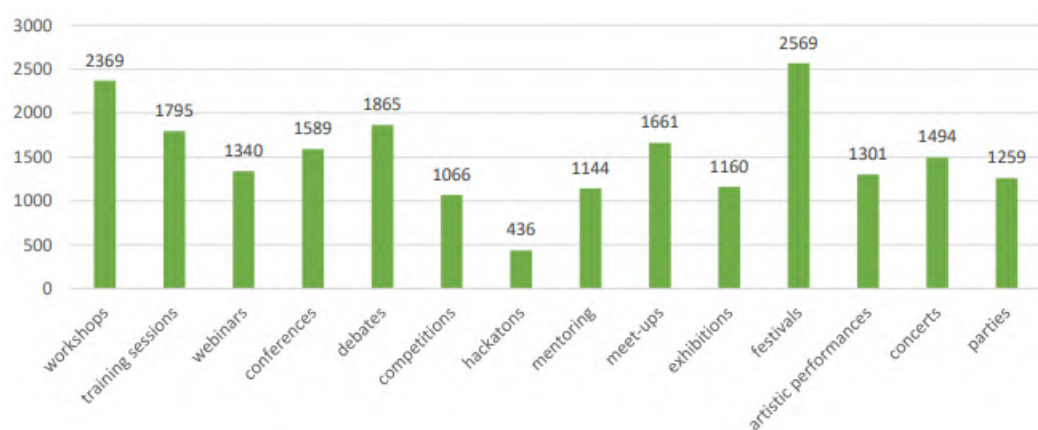


Figure 7. 'What kind of activities do you think should absolutely be part of your European Year of Youth?'

Source: Report on the results of the Call for Ideas on the EYY

2.2.2 The 2022 Flash Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth

The Flash Eurobarometer survey 502 was conducted by Ipsos European Public Affairs at the request of DG EAC. They interviewed a representative sample of young people aged 15 to 30 in each of the 27 Member States. Between February and March 2022, 26 178 young people were surveyed via computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI) using Ipsos online panels and their partner network. The survey report²⁷ was published in May 2022.

Key outcomes and results of the survey

The Flash Eurobarometer survey 502 executive summary report showed that young people:

- expected the EYY to lead to society and decision-makers listening more to young people's opinions and needs;

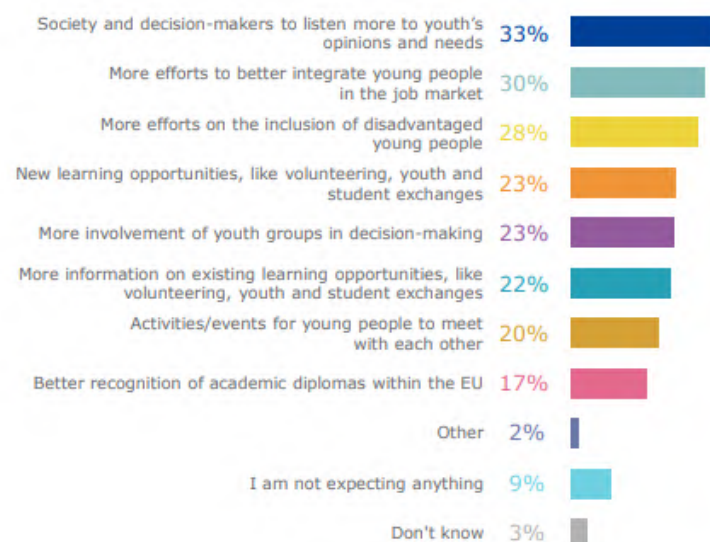


Figure 8. 'What do you most expect from the European Year of Youth? You can select up to three answers.'
(% - EU27)

Source: 2022 Flash Eurobarometer on 'Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth'

²⁷ Flash Eurobarometer survey 502 – ['Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth', May 2022.](#)

- considered voting in local, national or European elections to be the most effective way for their voices to be heard by decision-makers;

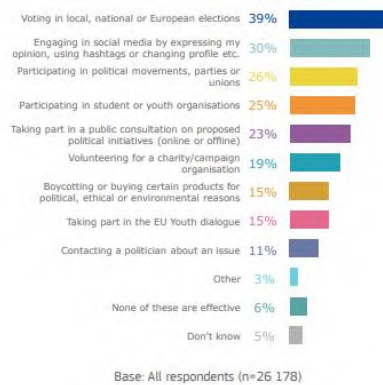


Figure 9. 'In your opinion what are the most effective actions for making young people's voice heard by decision-makers? You can select up to three answers.' (% - EU27)

Source: 2022 Flash Eurobarometer on 'Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth'

- selected the top four EYY priorities:
 - improving mental and physical health and well-being;
 - protecting the environment and fighting climate change;
 - improving education and training;
 - fighting poverty and economic and social inequalities;

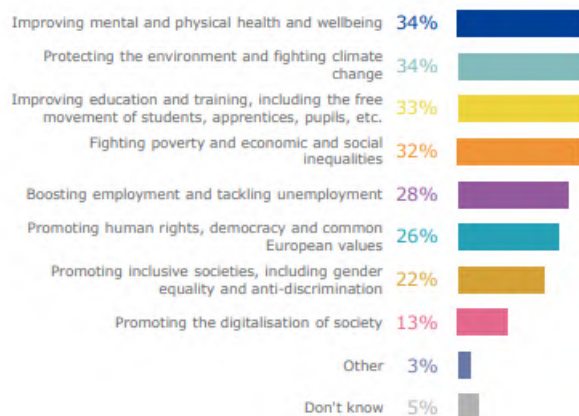


Figure 10. 'The European Commission has decided to make 2022 the "European Year of Youth" to support the generation that has sacrificed the most during the COVID-19 pandemic. What are the key themes you think the European Year of Youth should focus on?' (% - EU27)

Source: 2022 Flash Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth survey report

- wanted to participate in festivals, artistic performances, concerts, meet-ups and exchanges with young people from other European countries, conferences, workshops and training;



Figure 11. 'In the context of the European Year of Youth, activities will be organised on topics that affect young people. In which activities, if any, would you be most interested in participating? Activities can take place online and offline.' (% - EU27)

Source: 2022 Flash Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth survey report

- were well aware of the Erasmus+ programme but did not have much knowledge about other EU-funded opportunities to stay in another EU country.

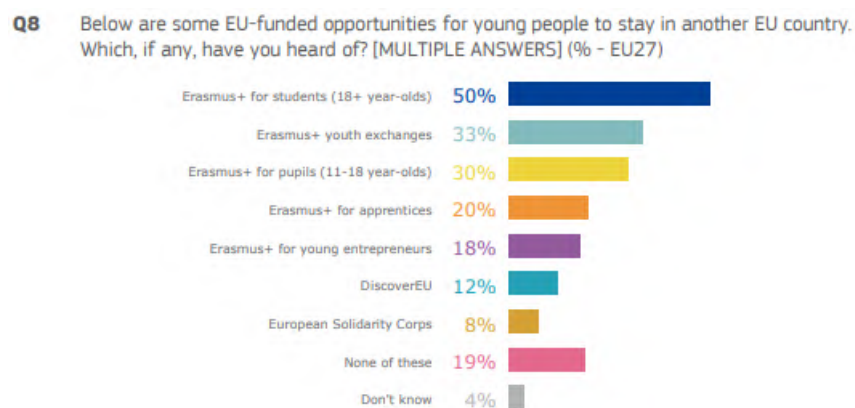


Figure 12. 'Below are some EU-funded opportunities for young people to stay in another EU country. Which, if any, have you heard of?' (% - EU27)

Source: 2022 Flash Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth survey report

2.2.3 Comparative analysis between the surveys

Youth participation in civic life

The two surveys clearly demonstrated that young people's major expectation for the Year was youth participation. Respondents had a fundamental desire to engage in policymaking. Young

people were concerned that their voices remained unheard. They wished to connect with policymakers and showed interest in contributing to EU policymaking and decision-making.

Young people's views on the European Year of Youth

Responses in the two surveys about young people's views on the EYY also overlapped. The themes young people showed most interest in were mental health, education, environment/climate change and inclusive societies. The two surveys' responses on young people's preferred activities were also similar: festivals, workshops, debates and training were the top four activities.

While the Call for Ideas included a question directly related to communication ('Who would you interact with during the European of Youth?'), the Flash Eurobarometer survey 502 touched upon young people's awareness of EU opportunities for them.

The two surveys provided some valuable insights that helped select the Year's themes most relevant to young people. This facilitated the Commission's efforts to meet young people's expectations throughout the Year. It also enabled the subsequent development and introduction of new formats and tools for youth participation, such as the Youth Voice Platform, policy dialogues with European Commissioners, the Youth Talks and the Pool of European Young Journalists.

2.3 Key policy areas and initiatives

Apart from the Year's four objectives, eight policy areas were identified for the Year. Based on the Commission's political priorities, these areas were identified as being of special interest to young people. More than 130 Commission policy initiatives of relevance to young people were identified as contributing to the Year's four objectives and framed under the policy areas.

The eight policy areas were: European learning mobility; employment and inclusion; policy dialogues and participation; the green and digital transitions; culture; health, well-being and sports; youth and the world. A ninth area, solidarity with Ukraine, was added in February 2022.

The Year's key policy areas and main policy initiatives are described in more detail below. In **Chapter 3 'Key results and key achievements'**, you will find a more detailed explanation of the main initiatives.

1. European learning mobility and education

The pandemic had an unprecedented impact on mobility activities, particularly those organised under the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes. In 2020, 50% fewer learners started a mobility abroad compared with 2019²⁸. Nevertheless, young people can be confident that the new Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes for 2021-2027 specifically dedicated to young people have returned with more improvements. These new

²⁸ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy (2019-2021), p.10. Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0636>.

programmes not only provide new opportunities for inclusion, cultural enrichment and unique learning experiences, but also contribute to the EYY's objectives.

In 2022, the Erasmus+ programme marked its 35th anniversary. The EYY was a great opportunity to celebrate the participation of more than 13 million young people in the programme since 1987 and promote the new edition of the programme, covering education, training, youth and sport. The European Solidarity Corps also entered its fifth year in 2022.

Main initiative under this policy area: Global Erasmus+ Alumni Mentoring Scheme²⁹ (DG EAC).

2. Employment and inclusion

The economic crisis provoked by the pandemic and lockdowns hit young people in particular. As a result, youth unemployment rates in the EU grew from 11.9% in 2019 to 13.3% in 2020³⁰³¹. The EYY therefore focused heavily on increasing employment opportunities for young people and promoting youth entrepreneurship as part of the post-pandemic recovery, including through vocational education and training (VET). The Year included a series of initiatives, events, and activities for young people. These aimed to boost the efforts of Member States and regional and local authorities in supporting and engaging with young people as part of the economic and social recovery.

Main initiative under this policy area: ALMA³² (DG EMPL).

3. Policy dialogues and participation

Strengthening young people's democratic participation and providing youth spaces in all areas of society is key to maintaining an active civil society in Europe. It is also crucial for the EU and its democratic societies today and in the future. The EU promotes youth participation in policymaking globally, building on the experience of the EU Youth Dialogue. This is a mechanism that ensures that young people's needs, views and opinions are taken into account when drawing up the EU's youth policies. The EU Youth Dialogue is a tool to bring young people's voices closer to decision-makers by consulting with them and listening to their recommendations. These efforts were further boosted in 2022.

Main initiative under this policy area: 'Family of policy dialogues': Members of College in conversation with youth³³ (Secretariat-General).

4. Green

Young people will be affected the most by the climate crisis and biodiversity loss. Of the challenges faced by the EU, climate change is one of the three main concerns highlighted by

²⁹ [Global Erasmus+ Alumni Mentoring Scheme](#).

³⁰ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy (2019-2021), p.2. Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0636>.

³¹ [Eurostat on 'Youth unemployment by sex, age and educational attainment level'](#).

³² [ALMA](#).

³³ ['Family of policy dialogues': Members of College in conversation with youth](#).

young Europeans³⁴. Since 2019, young people's civic participation and engagement, in particular through the global climate movement, shows the importance they give to tackling climate change and achieving climate justice. Therefore, it is crucial to involve and prepare the next generations for the green transition. In the context of the EYY, the EU proposed several opportunities under its green priority for young people to engage, act and learn about topics related to climate and the environment.

Main initiative under this policy area: The Green Track campaign³⁵ (DG ENV).

5. Digital

96%³⁶ of young Europeans use the internet daily³⁷. The COVID-19 pandemic led to an acceleration in digital trends. Despite being digital natives, young people, especially those under 18, deserve support and empowerment in a world where the distinction between online and offline is increasingly blurred. Rapidly advancing digital technologies present both new opportunities and challenges for young people, especially on digital skills, the digital divide and the potential exposure to harmful online content. To address these issues, there is an urgent need for education and capacity building to accelerate the digital transition and equip young people with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in a digitalised world.

Main initiative under this policy area: Updated Better Internet for Kids (BIK+) Strategy³⁸ (DG CNECT).

6. Culture

When asked about what creates a sense of community in the EU³⁹, 29% of young Europeans indicated culture as playing a significant role. Europe's cultural heritage is a rich and diverse mosaic of cultural and creative expressions, an inheritance from previous generations of Europeans and a legacy for those to come. Cultural heritage and creativity enrich the individual lives of people, drive the cultural and creative sectors, and help create and increase Europe's social capital. The EYY connected young people to culture through music and encouraged them to visit cultural heritage sites around Europe.

Main initiative under this policy area: Culture Moves Europe new mobility scheme for artists in the EU (DG EAC).

7. Health, well-being and sports

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about an unprecedented increase in mental health distress, particularly among young people. Addressing well-being calls for a comprehensive policy approach, bringing together sport, health, food and other policies. A healthy lifestyle is first and foremost about being aware of its importance. However, many people face different

³⁴ Eurobarometer Survey – '[Youth Survey 2021](#)', October 2021.

³⁵ [The Green Track](#).

³⁶ According to Eurostat, [Internet use and activities](#).

³⁷ Eurobarometer – '[Youth Survey 2021](#)', October 2021.

³⁸ [Updated Better Internet for Children Strategy](#).

³⁹ Eurobarometer – '[Youth Survey 2021](#)', October 2021.

barriers, for instance, due to their financial situation or a lack of information. Promoting a healthy and active lifestyle from a young age is essential in helping reduce non-communicable diseases later in life.

Main initiative under this policy area: HealthyLifeStyle4All Youth Ideas Labs⁴⁰ (DG EAC).

8. Youth and the world

The EYY was not only relevant to European youth but also to young people all over the world. Through specific initiatives, the EU aims to provide opportunities for education, learning and exchanges, partnerships and dialogue between young people from the EU and partner countries, such as from the Eastern Partnership, the Western Balkans and Africa. The EU also seeks to increase the role of youth engagement in strategic communication and public diplomacy action.

Main initiative under this policy area: Youth action plan (EEAS/DG INTPA/DG NEAR, DG ECHO, FPI).

9. Solidarity with Ukraine

A **ninth policy area**, solidarity with Ukraine, was added in February 2022, following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Chapter **3.1.8 Solidarity with Ukraine** describes the Year's many initiatives related to supporting the Ukrainian people. These initiatives were promoted through the EYY's communication campaign.

All the Year's initiatives fell under one or more of the above policy areas. The Year's policy initiatives, in line with its objectives, provided many opportunities for young people from Europe and beyond to engage in learning and civic engagement activities. This enabled them to gain the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to move forward in life with confidence. The initiatives aimed to help young people become more familiar with politics at EU, national, regional and international levels.

Most of the initiatives are published on a special section of the European Youth Portal⁴¹ where young people can access them. The content is written in a language adapted to young people and describes the benefits for them.

At the Commission level, 31 DGs, agencies and services contributed to the Year with their programmes, policy initiatives and communication channels.

2.4. Budget implementation and resources

A budget mapping exercise was carried out during the Year. This gave an estimation of the Commission's indicative investment in actions mainly targeting youth (but not always exclusively) under different EU programmes and budgets.

⁴⁰ [HealthyLifeStyle4All Youth Ideas Labs](#)

⁴¹ https://youth.europa.eu/year-of-youth_en#eu-policies

As laid down in recital 30 of the Decision, the financial allocation required to implement the Decision had to come from the budget of the contributing programmes in line with the 2021-2027 EU long-term budget (also known as the multi-annual financial framework). Subject to the availability of funding, co-financing activities in support of the Year from the EU budget had to comply with the rules and procedures of the relevant programmes, including Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps and other EU programmes. EU programmes with objectives in line with the goals of the Year were examined to identify activities and initiatives that could contribute to the Year's objectives, thus contributing to its overall success.

From a technical and operational point of view, there was no transfer of funds from one instrument to another, and each programme implemented activities in line with its own rules and decision-making procedures. However, to better assess the Year's impact and have an idea of how much these activities contributed to its objectives, examples of relevant activities and corresponding estimates were mapped in the programmes involved.

In its conciliation procedure (concluded on 15 November) for the revised 2022 budget, the budgetary authority provided for additional budget for the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes. Part of this budget was earmarked for preparing and carrying out activities in line with the EYY, namely EUR 5 million for Erasmus+ and EUR 3 million for the European Solidarity Corps.

In the budget negotiations with Parliament and the Council, the Commission made the following statement: 'The Commission will carry out a mapping exercise throughout the Year and will regularly update it outlining the possible and actual contributions by EU programmes and instruments to the implementation of the Year and reporting on the activities. The progress in the deployment of contributions by the Union programmes will be regularly presented to the European Parliament and the Council. These contributions should be considered as complementary and above the minimum operational budget of EUR 8 million'⁴².

On four occasions, the Commission shared an update on the indicative estimates of the budget mapping and the initiatives with Parliament and the Council (in December 2021, May 2022, October 2022 and May 2023). The budget mapping exercise could not be exhaustive as certain actions were not directly managed by the Commission (e.g. shared management); other actions might have included young people among the target population or beneficiaries but may not have focused exclusively on them. As a result, the indicative amounts are estimates rather than precise amounts.

An estimated indicative amount of around EUR 140 million was identified in the following participating EU programmes, schemes and instruments for the implementation of the Year's objectives, for example, via calls for proposals, campaigns and events. Apart from the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes, relevant actions to achieve the EYY objectives were identified in Creative Europe, Horizon Europe, European Social Fund+, the Just Transition Fund/REACTEU, the European Regional Development Fund, the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund, the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Value programme, the Single Market programme, Digital Europe, the Justice Programme, the Connecting Europe Facility, NDICI Global Europe, the Foreign Policy Instrument, the Programme for Environment and Climate Action, activities supporting EU transport policy, transport security and passenger rights, including communication activities, EU4Health, the Technical Support Instrument (TSI), ESTAT budget, DG Communication's budget (citizen's dialogues and visitor's centre), Finance, Learning, Innovation and Intellectual Property Rights

⁴² Statement by the Commission (2021/C 523/02). Available from: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32021C1228\(02\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32021C1228(02)).

for cultural and creative sectors preparatory action (FLIP), EU Datathon, the Internal Security Fund – Police, the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs.

2.5 Co-creation process with stakeholders and multipliers

The Year was created in a spirit of co-creation. Once the Commission adopted its proposal for a Decision on the Year, it immediately kicked off a co-creation process with other EU institutions, Member States, youth stakeholders and young people. Recital 27 of the Decision emphasises the need for collaborative creation in coordinating the EYY at EU level. To effectively execute and co-create the Year, the Commission arranged joint meetings and individual ones with stakeholders, representatives from youth organisations and bodies, and national coordinators ('NCs'). In these gatherings, the EU Youth Coordinator assumed a vital role, actively engaging with diverse stakeholders and representatives of youth-focused organisations or bodies.

Furthermore, Article 6 of the Decision underscores the importance of efficiently implementing the Year by maximising its international outreach and leveraging existing delivery mechanisms. To optimise the added value and ensure a bigger impact on young people, it was crucial to create synergies and complementarities between the EYY and EU programmes, particularly those with an international dimension, including programmes in cooperation with the Youth Partnership Council of Europe. This cooperation encompassed joint participation in stakeholder meetings and the exchange of valuable studies issued by the Youth Partnership Council of Europe.

Additionally, a series of events was organised to promote studies on youth political participation, the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on democratic youth participation, new forms of youth civic engagement and critical thinking in citizenship education. These collaborative efforts further boosted the Year's effectiveness in addressing the needs and aspirations of young people across Europe and beyond.

2.5.1 Interservice steering group and the Commission Youth Network

An interservice steering group (a Commission cross-department group) on the European Year of Youth was set up immediately after the Year was announced. In total, eight meetings took place with 31 departments (Directorate-Generals or DGs) participating and consulted throughout the Year.

In the Commission, a new Youth Network was created, coordinated by the EU Youth Coordinator. The Commission Youth Network enabled continuous exchanges between the DGs on youth-related initiatives and was a key enabler of the Year's strong cross-sectoral dimension. Nine meetings have taken place since its establishment, listed in detail in the table below.

23 June 2021	1st Commission Youth Network Meeting: 9 DGs attended (ENV, CLIMA, COMM, ENER, INTPA, MARE, MOVE, REGIO, RTD), presenting information on practical matters related to the functioning of the informal network.
28 October 2021	2nd Commission Youth Network Meeting: 12 DGs attended. Discussion on the role of the Youth Network in the EYY and Commission EYY policy initiatives.
8 December 2021	3rd Commission Youth Network Meeting: DGs were updated and had the chance to discuss the timeline and main points of the negotiations on the Decision on the Year, the EU survey and visual identity, the EYY budget mapping and policy initiatives.
3 February 2022	4th Commission Youth Network Meeting: EYY updates, a demo of the EYY site, and 3-minute updates from each DG on upcoming EYY plans.
30 March 2022	5th Commission Youth Network Meeting: EYY updates (policy fiches, reporting exercise, etc.) and change of narrative linked to the war in Ukraine.
3 June 2022	6th Commission Youth Network Meeting: 16 DGs and services attended. EYY updates, reflections on EYY legacy, and presentations on the Green Track campaign (ENV); the Council Recommendation on learning for the green transition and sustainable development (EAC); Youth Climate and Sustainability Roundtables (EESC); the Better Internet for Kids Strategy (CNECT); and ALMA (EMPL).
17 October 2022	7th Commission Youth Network Meeting: EYY updates, presentations from DGs on EYY activities and events and its legacy (RTD, NEAR, EAC, D3).
16 December 2022	8th Commission Youth Network Meeting: EYY updates (activities, closing conference, EYY reporting) and presentations by European Youth Forum on the outcomes of EU Youth Dialogue; REGIO on the Youth4Cooperation initiative; CLIMA on #MyEUClimatePact campaign; SG/EAC on youth policy dialogues with Commissioners; and EMPL on the European Year of Skills 2023.
25 May 2023	9th Commission Youth Network Meeting: EYY updates and presentation of legacy – ‘the way forward.’ Presentations by SG on ‘EU Democracy in Action – Have Your Say with the European Citizens’ Initiative’; INTPA on the Youth Action Plan and youth initiatives for international partnerships’; EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership on the EU Youth Dialogue evaluation and findings on inclusion; and EMPL on the European Year of Skills 2023.

Table 1. Meetings of Commission Youth Network

2.5.2 The EYY national coordinators, national contact points and stakeholder group

As mentioned in recital 27 and in Article 5 of the Decision, the Commission set up a group of European Year of Youth national coordinators, national contact points and stakeholders ('EYY NCs/SH group') as soon as the Commission proposal for a Decision on the Year was published in mid-October 2021.

The EYY NCs/SH group was open to any EU-level non-profit organisation, network or platform, which was led by young people or worked with them. Any organisations interested were invited to express interest to be part of the group via an online form. More than 120 stakeholders at European level were part of the group. The organisations work in a wide range of policy fields, contributing to a fully cross-sectoral approach to the EYY.

The Commission set up an online collaboration space on Microsoft Teams for regular exchanges on the Year. Stakeholders used this space to ask questions about the Year and promote their projects and activities. The space was also used to share all the reports and presentations from the EYY NCs/SH group meetings. On 2 June 2023, the space had 216 members (including 19 Commission staff).

Members of the group participated in co-creating and implementing the EYY. They organised activities linked to the Year's objectives and promoted youth participation. They acted as multipliers and represented their organisations and the interests of their members in meetings at EU level and in the EYY NCs/SH group.

Nine meetings took place before, during and after the Year (and there was an additional meeting before the Year on Youth Councils). Two preparatory meetings took place in November and December 2021 to exchange ideas on the Years' policy areas and activities. Representatives of the European Parliament, the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) also attended. In 2022, the Commission held five other meetings with this group to discuss the Year's implementation. The Commission organised two more meetings with the group in 2023 (February and May) to discuss the Year's reporting, follow-up and legacy. At these meetings, the EYY team provided general updates on the Year, followed by contributions from keynote speakers and presentations on plans for the Year and policy initiatives by other DGs. There were also group discussions/brainstorming in breakout sessions on certain topics.

16 November 2021	1st Joint Meeting, online
17 December 2021	2nd Joint Meeting, online
9 February 2022	3rd Joint Meeting, online
29 March 2022	4th Joint Meeting, online
2 June 2022	5th Joint Meeting, online
18 October 2022	6th Joint Meeting, online
5 December 2022	7th Joint Meeting, in person, Brussels
16 February 2023	8th Joint Meeting, online
3 May 2023	9th Joint Meeting, online

Table 2. EYY NCs/SH group meetings

2.5.3 National coordination grants

In November 2021, Member States were invited to appoint a NC, responsible for coordinating relevant activities and all the EYY policy areas at national, regional and local levels, as set out in Article 4 of the Decision. The NCs were expected to have a cross-programme and cross-field coordination role of national activities. The aim was to ensure the close involvement of national youth councils, youth civil society organisations, Erasmus+/European Solidarity Corps National Agencies and Creative Europe Desks, youth workers, organisations implementing EYY activities and young people during the Year. These activities were intended to contribute directly to the four objectives of the EYY.

It was proposed that the NCs would closely involve national youth councils, youth civil society organisations and young people in the Year.

The NCs were therefore expected to:

- represent their country in meetings at EU level;
- organise or act as a multiplier at national, regional and local meetings and events;
- raise awareness and communicate on EYY national, regional and local activities;
- encourage a broad involvement in the Year, beyond the youth policy focus;
- work closely and promote synergies with different national stakeholders in fields relevant to young people.

To ensure a smooth implementation at national level, the Commission allocated grants to the NCs under the Erasmus+ programme for a total amount of EUR 4.5 million. A call for proposals for national coordination grants opened on 15 December 2021 and closed on 1 February 2022. In March 2022, the evaluation took place, and then information on the results were issued.

The call for proposals for grants to the NCs included the following requirements based on the types of measures set out in Article 3 of the Decision:

- promote an inclusive and accessible debate on challenges that young people face (including those with fewer opportunities and belonging to vulnerable groups) and on potential courses of action; this includes addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- promote youth participation and improve existing tools, channels and programmes, enabling young people to reach policymakers by identifying, collecting and sharing experiences and good practices;
- gather ideas using participatory methods to co-create the Year;
- support information, education and awareness-raising campaigns to convey values, such as equality, solidarity, volunteering, a sense of belonging and safety, a feeling of being heard and respected, in order to inspire young people to actively help to build a society that is more inclusive, green and digital;
- create a space for an exchange on turning challenges into opportunities in an entrepreneurial spirit;

- carry out studies and research on the situation of young people in the EU, including by producing European harmonised statistics, and promoting and disseminating these results at European, national and regional levels;
- promote programmes, funding opportunities, projects, activities and networks of relevance to youth, including through social media and online communities.

A particular emphasis was placed on ensuring that the events and activities organised would be environmentally friendly.

The award criteria for the call were as follows:

- **Relevance:** clarity and consistency of the project, objectives and planning; the extent to which they match the themes and priorities and objectives of the call; contribution to the EU strategic and legislative context; European/transnational dimension; impact/interest for a number of countries (EU or eligible non-EU countries); possibility to use the results in other countries; potential to develop mutual trust/cross-border cooperation (34 points)
- **Quality – project design and implementation:** technical quality; logical links between the identified problems, needs and solutions proposed (logical frame concept); methodology for implementing the project (concept and methodology, management, procedures, timetable, risks and risk management, monitoring and evaluation); feasibility of the project within the proposed time frame; cost effectiveness (sufficient/appropriate budget for proper implementation; best value for money) (33 points)
- **Impact:** ambition and expected long-term impact of results on target groups/general public; appropriate dissemination strategy for ensuring sustainability and long-term impact; sustainability of results after EU funding ends (33 points).

Following the evaluation, 28 national coordination grants were signed (Level 2 commitments). The maximum Commission contribution per Member State is listed in the table below.

Member State	Max. Commission grant amount (EUR)	Member State	Max. Commission grant amount (EUR)
BE	319 404	LT	143 089
BG	142 985	LU	71 542
CZ	143 089	HU	114 471
DK	107 430	MT	71 542
DE	286 174	NL	143 016
EE	130 212	AT	143 089
IE	143 089	PL	226 953
EL	100 000	PT	143 079
ES	286 174	RO	143 089
FR	286 176	SI	143 089
HR	143 088	SK	143 089

IT	286 174	FI	143 089
CY	143 089	SE	142 207
LV	143 089		

Table 3. Maximum Commission contribution for national coordination grants per Member State

Several of the grants awarded to the NCs continued into 2023. Many of these grants had an end date between March and May 2023, enabling many events to take place in the first part of 2023.

With the aid of these Commission grants under Erasmus+, Member States organised meaningful projects and launched new initiatives, youth structures and strategies. These are a major legacy of the Year at national, regional and local levels.

2.6 The main EYY events

2.6.1 Traineeship and European Year of Youth welcome event

On 21 March 2022, an informal and interactive online welcome event was held to inaugurate the EU institution's 2022 traineeship session, with a focus on the EYY. The primary objective of the event was to promote meaningful connections among trainees, providing an opportunity to highlight the European vision for the future, driven by democratic principles, solidarity, peace and European values. The participants included trainees from the Commission and other EU institutions, such as the European Parliament, the Council, CoR, the EESC and the European Ombudsman. In total, the event hosted approximately 1 000 participants.

2.6.2 LevelUp! Accelerating change festival

Focusing on the second objective of the EYY – supporting young people to help them gain knowledge and skills – the European Youth Forum organised the LevelUp! Accelerating change festival in cooperation with the Commission and the European Parliament.



*Figure 13. LevelUp!
Source: European Youth Forum*

On 28 and 29 October 2022, more than 1 330 young people participated in over 220 workshops to boost their skills and accelerate change in their communities. The interest shown was impressive as there were more than 3 000 applications for attendance of the festival at the time of registration.

Young people with diverse experiences and backgrounds from more than 50 countries, including the 27 Member States, gathered at the heart of Europe. The President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola opened the event in Brussels encouraging young people from across Europe to bring the promise of Europe wherever they go. More than 25 trainers and more than 10 partners made the event happen. The training areas focused on three meta-skill sets: communication, advocacy and organising.

2.6.3 Claim the Future EYY closing conference

On 6 December 2022, the EYY's closing conference, on the theme 'Claim the Future', took place in the European Parliament in Brussels. The event was jointly organised by the Commission, the European Parliament and the Czech Presidency of the Council. As Michaela Šojdrová, a Member of the European Parliament (MEP), pointed out after the event, it was the first time all three main EU institutions had jointly organised an event on such a scale.



Figure 14. Claim the Future EYY closing conference

Source: European Commission

The conference was an ideal opportunity to reflect on the legacy of the Year and how youth policy could remain high on the political agenda after 2022. Over 700 people, including MEPs, Commissioners, Czech, Swedish and French ministers or state secretaries, civil society representatives and many young people participated. They all had the opportunity to attend thematic sessions on education and mental health, participate in the discussions and leave their mark on the Year's legacy. At the closing session, former Commissioner Mariya Gabriel reaffirmed the need to listen to, engage with and support young people. This kicked off the Year's legacy process.



Figure 15. Claim the Future EYY closing conference
Source: European Commission

3. Key results and key achievements

3.1 The European Year of Youth communication campaign

3.1.1 The EYY campaign in numbers

During the communication campaign that started in January 2022 and lasted until 8 May 2023, various promotional activities and initiatives were carried out. These activities were aimed at creating awareness, generating interest, and engaging the target audience.

Article 3 of the Decision lays out the ‘Types of measures’ to be taken to achieve the Year’s objectives. In short, various activities and measures were undertaken at different levels, including EU, national, regional, and local levels, as well as in partner countries, all related to the goals of the EYY.

These activities encompassed conferences, cultural events and policy initiatives aimed at engaging young people in inclusive discussions about the challenges they faced, such as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, covering areas such as their social circumstances, access to education and training and working conditions. The aim was to identify courses of action that stakeholders at different levels could take.

Additionally, efforts were made to promote youth participation and utilise innovative tools and programmes to enable young people to communicate their experiences and best practices to policymakers, raising awareness of these channels. Participatory methods were employed to gather ideas and involve young people in co-creating and implementing the EYY. Information campaigns, educational initiatives, and awareness-raising activities were conducted to instil values like respect, equality, justice, solidarity, volunteering and a sense of belonging among young people. The objective was to motivate their active contribution to building an inclusive, environmentally friendly and digitally advanced society.

Moreover, spaces and tools were created to facilitate exchanges, encouraging an entrepreneurial spirit, promoting creativity, community, and cooperation, and turning challenges into opportunities. Studies and research were conducted to assess the situation of young people in the EU, with a particular focus on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This involved producing and utilising standardised European statistics and disseminating the findings at EU, national and regional levels.

- **More than 13 000** activities in **67** countries and territories were published on the EYY Activities map on the Youth Portal contributing to the objectives of the Year. The **most popular topic was youth participation and engagement**.
- **More than 150 million Europeans** were reached via the published engagement and awareness raising activities*.
- Young journalists who are part of the European Pool of Young Journalists have published and distributed **55** different pieces, **33** articles, **16** podcast episodes, **5** episodes of a digital video series and **1** interview.
- **More than 700 000 visits** were made to the EYY page on the Youth Portal, with **over 1 million page views**
- **1 792 voices** were submitted to the Youth Voice Platform
- Increased engagement on social media:
 - Instagram: **100 445** followers (increase of 66%)
 - Facebook: **299 401** followers (increase of 13%)
 - Twitter: **48 780** followers (increase of 7.9%)
- Since the launch of EYY and until 8 May 2023:
 - Impressions: 210 048 049
 - Engagements: 10 108 236
 - Reach: 91 489 429
- Instagram Live series: **10** live sessions took place - each interview averaging almost **60 000** post interview views. What's Up LIVE episodes: **(1)** Ukraine - #youth4regions; **(2)** Civic Participation; **(3)** EU Solidarity Corps; **(4)** Youth Employment; **(5)** Inclusivity; **(6)** Arts & Culture; **(7)** European Week of Sports; **(8)** Mental Health & Well-being; **(9)** Sustainability **(10)** Volunteering in Humanitarian Aid
- Social media activation: #TheEuropeIWant: **115** highly creative entries, winner received an interrail ticket
- **58 EYY Instagram REELS** published on the @european_youth_eu account (not counting the What's Up episode recaps that are posted as REELS too)
- **LevelUp! Event Bootcamp/become an #EYYAmbassaddor** contest: 350 comments (around 120 quality entries); 19 200 likes to the post
- **EYY hashtags** (#EYY2022, #EuropeanYearOfYouth, #EUYearOfYouth, #EUYouth):
 - 11 200 unique authors
 - 255 400 engagements
- New Discord community launched with more than **2 000** participants by 8 May 2023

* This is an estimation based on what event organisers have provided as info on the interactive map on the Portal. This estimation includes online and physical interactions.

Table 4. EYY communication campaign in numbers

Lastly, efforts were made to promote relevant programmes, funding opportunities, projects, actions, and networks for young people, utilising social media platforms and online communities. Additionally, the Commission, Member States, and other institutions and bodies

of the EU and Member States could identify additional activities that contributed to the Year's objectives and use references to the EYY as a label to promote those activities.

3.1.2 Goals of the EYY campaign based on the four objectives of the Decision

The Year's communication campaign focused on achieving several specific goals in relation to its four objectives. These goals included:

- **Celebrating young people:** The campaign aimed to honour young people by highlighting their contributions to society, the green transition, the digital transition and other EU policies. It showcased their aspirations, talents, insights, and enthusiasm, recognising and appreciating their efforts, particularly in the context of the post-pandemic context.
- **Engaging in society to become active citizens:** Another objective of the campaign was to help young people become familiar with the political landscape at the EU, national and regional levels. The campaign aimed to encourage their active involvement in shaping the development of the EU and society by proving their contributions and insights.
- **Promoting opportunities:** The campaign sought to raise awareness of various opportunities available to young people, including employment prospects and opportunities in areas such as sustainability and digitalisation. The campaign aimed to empower young people to actively participate in building a greener, more inclusive, and digitally advanced society.
- **Bringing a youth perspective to the EU's policies:** The communication campaign aimed to promote and establish connections between youth policy and all EU policies across the Commission's portfolio.
- **Solidarity with Ukraine:** The campaign aimed to show solidarity with Ukraine and celebrate European values related to democracy.

Overall, the communication campaign aimed to create awareness, inspire action, and promote unity and solidarity among young people, while promoting their active participation in society and the European project.

Young people are considered 'digital natives', having grown up in a world surrounded by digital technology. Therefore, digital formats were the primary means of reaching out to them for various purposes, such as raising awareness and promoting active citizen participation. The campaign approach was based on the findings of the Call for Ideas survey (see **Chapter 2.2.1 Call for Ideas on the European Year of Youth**), which indicated that digital tools are viewed as the most effective and relevant way to engage with youth. It acknowledges young people's preference for digital platforms and the potential of these tools to capture their attention, connect with them, and convey messages or information effectively.

By utilising digital formats, such as social media, websites, mobile apps and online campaigns, the campaign successfully engaged with the target audience, facilitated meaningful interaction and ensured the content was delivered in a manner that resonates with their digital lifestyles.

3.1.3 Look and feel of the European Year of Youth

3.1.3.1 Slogan and messaging

The EYY campaign made adjustments in its slogan, messaging, and visuals due to the political circumstances surrounding Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. The slogan 'Voice your Vision' became the key message of the campaign. The original slogan, 'Claim the Future', was later used for the closing event of the Year, marking the beginning of the Year's legacy period.

The 'Voice your Vision' slogan aimed to empower young people, providing them with various formats and avenues to express themselves and ensure that their voices were heard. One such tool was the EYY Youth Voice Platform, which offered an immersive digital experience where young individuals could record their voices and share their views, visions and thoughts on topics related to the EU. The campaign employed several communication strategies to drive young people to the Voice Platform through various channels, including the Youth Portal, EYY website, and social media channels.

The communication team developed a system to organise user traffic across all digital and offline components of the campaign. By defining a dedicated user journey and establishing a matching link structure for each element, the team aimed to encourage long-term engagement and interaction with the EYY campaign throughout the Year.

3.1.3.2 Development of the visual identity

The main element of the visual identity of the Year was the EYY logo and hashtag (#EYY2022). The logo was designed to be a similar size to the EU emblem.



Figure 16. European Year of Youth logo and font. European Year of Youth 2022 – Communication material
Source: European Youth Portal, European Commission



Figure 17. European Year of Youth logo and colours. European Year of Youth 2022 – Communication material
Source: European Youth Portal, European Commission

The visual concept incorporated a ‘double bubble’ effect, representing movement without excessive joyfulness, out of respect for the difficult situation in Ukraine. The concept involved overlaying a bubble-shaped cutaway of a selected image on top of the original photo, with no changes in transparency or colour.



Figure 18. European Year of Youth sample of all elements. European Year of Youth 2022 – Communication material
Source: European Youth Portal, European Commission

The campaign featured examples of the visual identity, including the logo and slogan translations in different languages.

A comprehensive style guide⁴³ on the visual identity was published and made accessible to stakeholders and the public. Translations of the logo in 28 languages (all EU languages plus Icelandic, North Macedonian, Norwegian and Turkish), along with different colour variations, were uploaded to the EYY website under the ‘communication material’ section.

⁴³The EYY style guide is available at: https://youth.europa.eu/d8/sites/default/files/inline-files/EYY_Guidelines_220217_0.pdf.

3.1.3.3 The hashtag: #EYY2022

The hashtag #EYY2022 was included in all social media postings. It was clickable, enabling users to discover and explore other posts that also include the same hashtag.



Figure 19. Examples of hashtags used during the Year
Source: Monthly EYY social media report produced by ICF Next

During the EYY, the use of hashtags would typically coincide with peak activities and events related to the campaign. Hashtags serve as a way of generating online discussions, raising awareness and engaging the public in conversations surrounding the EYY.

The impact and success of using hashtags during the EYY campaign were remarkable, significantly increasing the engagement, reach and visibility of the campaign's messages and activities. In turn, this resulted in increased awareness and greater community engagement.

The tracking and analytics enabled us to gather data and insights, and analytics tools provided information on the reach, impressions and engagement levels of posts containing the campaign hashtags. This data proved instrumental in evaluating the campaign's performance, identifying trends and making informed decisions for future activities.

3.1.4 European Youth Portal – EYY webpage

The EYY campaign created a dedicated webpage on the Youth Portal in January 2022. This webpage served as the primary communication hub for the Year, providing young people with essential information, opportunities and activities related to youth policy initiatives.



Figure 20. Header from European Year of Youth page
Source: European Youth Portal, European Commission

Additionally, the webpage gave young people a space to make their voices heard. It enabled them to share their perspectives, thoughts and visions on youth-related topics and the EU. This interactive feature aimed to empower young people, encourage their active participation and ensure that their voices were taken into account.

The dedicated webpage on the Youth Portal was organised into five major content blocks:

1. Activities

An [interactive activities map on the EYY webpage](#) (EYY activities map) served as a visual representation of the geographical distribution of activities related to the Year. It enabled visitors to explore and discover events happening in different countries in Europe and beyond, providing a comprehensive overview of the campaign's reach and impact. As of 8 May 2023, the total number of activities submitted was 13 020.

In line with the concept of the EYY's co-creation, activities took place all around the world. The majority were organised by EU Member States, including the outermost regions Guadeloupe, Mayotte and French Guiana (France) and the autonomous Swedish-speaking region of Finland, Åland.

Among the non-EU countries that carried out EYY activities were Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Georgia, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Moldova, Mongolia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tunisia, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States and Uzbekistan.

One of the Year's objectives was to honour young people from a post-pandemic perspective, and this was reflected in the fact that the predominant activity format was face to face. An impressive 10 768 face-to-face activities were organised, followed by 1 481 online and 769 hybrid activities.

The three most common types of activities during the Year were workshops (2 112), conferences (1 729) and meetups (1 491). The other types of the activities, in descending order, were artistic performances (717), training sessions (624), debates (533), webinars (516), festivals (433), exhibitions (360), activities related to studies and results (85), hackathons (31) and surveys (28).

Among the submitted activities, 2 556 were registered as 'other', as they either combined several categories or didn't fall within the listed ones. Among these were award ceremonies, youth-themed weeks, EU-themed games and quizzes and info-sessions about EU opportunities. Themes such as participation & engagement, youth and the world, culture, inclusion & equality and education were prominent, showcasing the commitment to addressing the challenges faced by young people from a post-pandemic perspective.

2. 'Voice Your Vision'

This external 3D platform facilitated an immersive audio experience that enabled young people to join in and record their voices to express their visions for the future of the EU.

The [Youth Voice Platform](#) enabled young individuals to contribute their thoughts and perspectives on various topics relevant to the EU, such as employment, peace and security, climate change, education, inclusion and mental health. By using the Voice Platform, young

people had the opportunity to actively engage in shaping the future of the EU by sharing their unique insights and aspirations. The immersive audio experience provided a dynamic and engaging way for young people to express themselves. By recording their voices, they could communicate their ideas, concerns and suggestions on the given topics. This approach aimed to ensure that the opinions of young people were heard and taken into account in the decision-making processes and policy development of the EU.

In total, 1 792 voice recordings were posted on the Youth Voice Platform within the EYY campaign, representing the individuals who actively used the platform to record their voices.

3. Voices of young European journalists

The [Pool of Young European Journalists](#) consisted of 11 young journalists from across Europe who were selected to contribute opinion-based articles, videos and podcasts. The young journalists in the pool had the opportunity to use their storytelling skills to give young people a voice. Through their articles, videos and podcasts, they aimed to capture the experiences, concerns and aspirations of young individuals all over Europe. In addition to producing content, the Pool of European Young Journalists had the opportunity to cover the main European events happening during the EYY. By covering these events, they could report on the experiences and perspectives of young people participating in or affected by these activities.

Within a collaboration with the Joint Research Centre (JRC), a section called ‘Views and Hopes for the Future’ was created on the dedicated EYY webpage to highlight stories from young people. The ‘Views and Hopes for the Future’ section provided a platform for young individuals to communicate their perspectives, aspirations and visions for the future.

4. The ‘News’ section

A dedicated 'News' section on the Year's webpage served as a valuable resource for young people to stay informed about the latest news and developments related to European youth and the Year itself, offering timely and relevant information on a wide range of youth-related topics, initiatives, events, and updates within the EU, including youth policies, opportunities, projects, and success stories.

5. The ‘We Count on You’ section

The 'We Count on You' section comprised a digital video gallery highlighting numerous videos associated with the campaign and its events. These videos included introductions and promotions about the Year and its activities, as well as specific content addressing themes like solidarity, democracy, interculturality, and support for Ukraine.

This section also featured the ‘Youth Talks’, which covered various important topics, including solidarity, democracy, interculturality and more. These Youth Talk videos aimed to facilitate meaningful conversations and discussions among young people, promoting their active engagement and participation. More information about ‘Youth Talks’ can be found in **Chapter 3.2.2.1.1 European Commission**.

3.1.5 Communication material/stakeholder toolkit

An additional page section was created on the Youth Portal to serve as a repository for all communication materials. This page gave stakeholders and organisations easy access to the Year's visuals, guidelines and branding material. The communication material page included various resources such as logos, banners, slogans, videos and other promotional materials available in all official languages of the EU. By providing a central location for accessing these materials, it ensured that everyone involved in promoting the Year could easily utilise the approved visuals and guidelines in their communication efforts.

To facilitate the participation of stakeholders, a stakeholder toolkit⁴⁴ was developed and made available on the EYY webpage as a separate PDF document. Additionally, the stakeholder toolkit emphasised the promotion of the Youth Voice Platform. The toolkit was divided into two sections.

- The first section outlined the reasons for stakeholders to participate in the EYY and the benefits they could gain from it. It aimed to motivate and encourage their active involvement in the campaign.
- The second section focused on providing various ways in which stakeholders could participate.

To support stakeholders in their communication efforts, the EYY webpage provided all the necessary visual assets, including visuals, fonts, logos, Word and PowerPoint templates and social media assets for the Voice Platform. These visual assets were accompanied by visual guidelines, terms and conditions and a privacy statement for youth stakeholders. Translations in all 24 EU languages were provided where necessary.

3.1.6 Key statistics of the European Youth Portal

The dedicated EYY webpage and its communication campaign achieved significant engagement and visibility throughout the year 2022. Listed below are some key highlights and statistics.

Website traffic:

- The page received nearly 600 000 visits and over 1 million page views.
- The positive bounce rate of 36.34% indicates that visitors engaged with the content and explored multiple pages.
- 78% of the visitors were new, suggesting successful communication and outreach efforts.

Geographical distribution:

- The top five countries from which visitors came were Türkiye (14%), Spain (10%), Italy (10%), Germany (6%) and France (4%).
- This indicates a broad reach and interest in the Year across different European countries.

⁴⁴ EYY stakeholder toolkit available from: https://youth.europa.eu/d8/sites/default/files/inline-files/EYY_Guidelines%20for%20Stakeholders%27%20Engagement.pdf.

Devices used:

- Desktops accounted for 49% of visits, smartphones for 44% and phablets for 6%.
- The popularity of desktop and smartphone access highlights the importance of ensuring a responsive and user-friendly design across devices.

Most viewed pages:

- The homepage received over 650 000 page views, indicating its significance as the main entry point for visitors.
- Activities' pages were also popular, with over 265 000 page views, demonstrating the interest in participating in and learning about the various activities.
- News pages received more than 38 000 page views, and the contributions from young journalists received over 24 000 page views, showcasing engagement with the campaign's content and updates.

Activities:

- Over 13 020 activities took place in 67 countries during the Year, showing a widespread mobilisation of the youth sector and beyond.
- The most common activity topic was youth participation and engagement, indicating the focus on empowering young people and involving them in decision-making processes.

Pool of Young European Journalists:

- A total of 49 articles, 10 podcast episodes, five episodes of a digital video series and one interview were published.
- The articles received more than 22 000 page views, with the highest-viewed article being 'Ukraine and the others: the environmental impacts of war' with over 2 000 page views.
- The Young Journalists covered a wide range of topics, including physical and mental health, climate change, LGBTQ rights, Ukraine, reflections on the COVID-19 pandemic, democracy, education, culture and social media.

'Views and hopes for the future':

- This section featured 20 stories from young people, providing insights into their perspectives and aspirations.

Overall, the EYY webpage achieved significant engagement and reach, attracting visitors from various countries and generating interest in the campaign's activities, news, Young Journalist contributions and personal stories shared by young individuals.

3.1.7 The European Year of Youth social media campaign

For the EYY social media campaign, a multi-touchpoint strategy was implemented to target all young people but emphasising the core demographic of 18-24-year-olds. This strategy focused on strong digital support and utilised various tactics to reach the target audience effectively.

1. Breakdown of the key aspects:

The social media campaign employed a variety of strategies: paid promotion on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to promote key events, regular organic content and community engagement to promote a sense of community and loyalty, and regular content boosting to enhance visibility and overall campaign effectiveness. Additionally, influencers with significant followings were utilised to ensure effective communication to each country's audience, boosting engagement and the campaign's success. By combining these strategies and tactics, the campaign aimed to create a strong digital presence, capture the attention of the target audience and drive engagement with the desired messaging.

The planning for the Year was divided into different phases. In the first half-year, the main goal was to create awareness of the Year. This phase took place before the events on 9 May. Following this, the second phase focused on engaging with the target audience. The last month of the year was dedicated to celebrating the Year, culminating in a closing event. After that, the initiative entered a legacy phase starting in January 2023.

The design for the digital outreach of the Year has been based on smart objectives. This approach ensures that the objectives set for the digital campaign are clear, quantifiable, attainable, relevant to the goals of the Year and time bound. To evaluate the success of the digital campaign, various key performance indicators were set in advance for each digital activation. These indicators serve as metrics to measure the effectiveness and impact of the digital outreach efforts. The social media outcomes can be seen in **Chapter 3.1.1 The EYY campaign in numbers**.

2. Social media adjustments – Ukraine in the EYY communication strategy

In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Commission adjusted the EYY communication campaign. The overall strategy, messaging matrix and tone were reviewed and toned down, in light of the situation. It was more crucial than ever to uphold and promote EU values, demonstrate solidarity and support young people who were already dealing with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The social media strategy of the campaign was revised to reflect messages of unity, peace, freedom, solidarity, democracy and a sense of belonging. It aimed to convey a strong sense of support for Ukraine.

The **European External Action Service (EEAS)** stepped up its efforts through [EUvsDisinfo](#) project, now linked to the [European Youth Portal](#), to better forecast, address, and respond to disinformation campaigns affecting the European Union, its Member States and partner countries, including in social media. The project has been marked with a more intensive work since 2022, especially in terms of raising awareness of Russia's disinformation and information manipulation in the context of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

3. Social media features

Stories were a significant tool for engaging the audience during the initial 6-8 months of the campaign, providing a dynamic and immersive way to share content. The campaign also incorporated interactive features like GIFs, quizzes, and stickers to enhance engagement,

offering a fun and participatory experience, entertaining the audience while encouraging their active involvement.

EYY Stickers were creatively used to emphasise the Year's themes and enhance brand visibility. These visual representations aimed to create a recognisable and memorable visual identity that resonated with the audience, contributing to the campaign's impact and recognition.

Reels, a short video format, proved highly engaging during the EYY campaign, with the audience responding positively to their captivating and interactive nature. Notably, followers actively contributed to the campaign by creating their own reels as part of the #TheEuropeIWant activation, generating around 130 high-quality entries. This not only showcased the audience's enthusiasm for the campaign but also the effective use of reels to promote engagement and interaction, underscoring the campaign's impact and reach.

Instagram Lives were employed effectively in the EYY social media campaign to engage young people and create an appealing channel. These live sessions featured discussions with experts, such as European Solidarity Corps volunteers, a mental health specialist, and a green influencer. What set them apart was the incorporation of audience questions, promoting participation and engagement. In sum, the use of Instagram Lives showcased a tailored and interactive approach, addressing young people's interests, providing valuable information, and cultivating a sense of connection and engagement.

The **Discord Server's** launch and its subsequent growth in membership are notable achievements. It was created to align with the interests and digital habits of the target audience, leveraging Discord's popularity among young people to engage them in a familiar and actively used space. With over 2 100 members by May 2023, the EYY Discord Server's success is evident in attracting and retaining an active community.

The **Voice Your Vision Feedback Loop** was created to address young people's concerns about their involvement in EU decision-making, aiming to boost their sense of ownership and co-creation. This initiative led to the establishment of the Youth Helpdesk, which operated from October to December 2022, providing information on ideas already under consideration by European institutions in carousel format. Those linked young people's ideas with ones already considered at Commission level and aimed to show that the ideas had already been taken into consideration

The **EYY Youth Voice Platform video compilation** played a vital role in gathering voice recordings and ideas from young people. The campaign aimed to showcase some of the best ideas collected through social media and events, to demonstrate that young people's ideas were being heard and to encourage more contributions. Selected voices from the Platform were reposted on social media channels to highlight the ideas and inspire others to participate.

Three compilation videos were created, featuring a broader selection of ideas from the platform, and were shown at stakeholder events. The final video, featuring the best ideas, was presented at the EYY Closing Conference 'Claim the Future'. Sharing these videos at events amplified young people's ideas, empowering and recognising their contributions. It exemplified the campaign's commitment to valuing young voices and motivated others to participate and share their perspectives on the Voice Platform.

The **EEAS** launched the campaign page of [Our Voice Our Future](#), which was a major contribution to the EYY 2022. #OVOF has a global scope, has evolved organically on social

media, creating a network of young leaders and is essentially a youth-led campaign, with youth and for the youth.

4. Social media activations

The following four activations were organised during the key phases of the year, to support their launch and reach a maximum number of young Europeans:

- **The What's Up Live Instagram Series**

The topics in the series comprised: Ukraine – #youth4regions, Civic Participation, European Solidarity Corps, Youth Employment, Inclusivity, Arts and Culture, European Week of Sports, Mental Health and Well-being and Sustainability.

- **The Europe I Want**

A contest was organised to allow young Europeans to express their hopes for Europe's future through Instagram reels. The contest encouraged participants to showcase their creativity and ideas. As an incentive, three winners received two Interrail passes each, offering unlimited train travel across Europe and a chance to explore various EU countries and cultures.

- **Become an #EYYAmbassador at the LevelUp! conference**

An Instagram contest selected four winners to become EYY Ambassadors, rewarded with an all-expenses-paid trip to Brussels. During their visit, they attended workshops at DG EAC and the LevelUp! conference in the European Parliament, gaining insights into youth-related initiatives and engaging with key stakeholders. This opportunity allowed them to amplify their voices and contribute their perspectives as Youth Ambassadors.

- **#BeyondEYY2022 contest**

An Instagram contest encouraged young people to use pre-made templates on Instagram Stories to express their creativity and ideas. Prizes like a podcast kit, vlogging camera and a public speaking course incentivised participation and skills development.

- **Influencer activations**

The activation of 22 national influencers from 19 EU Member States during the communication campaign served several purposes, including the following.

- **Amplifying reach and engagement:** Influencers have a significant online presence and a dedicated following. By involving them in the campaign, the reach and engagement of the campaign messages were amplified. Influencers shared content related to the EYY with their followers, increasing the visibility and impact of the campaign.
- **Youth representation:** Activating influencers from different EU Member States ensured that the campaign represented the diversity and perspectives of young people across Europe. The influencers' involvement helped to reflect the interests and aspirations of young people from various cultural backgrounds and countries.

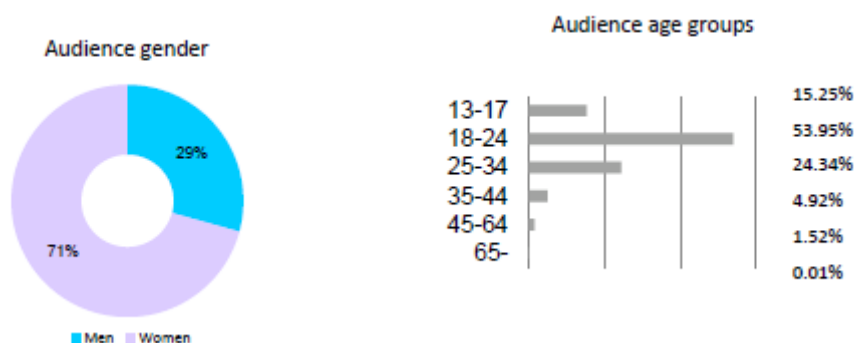


Figure 21. EYY audience per gender and age groups
Source: EYY Influencer report produced by ICF Next

- **Encouraging participation:** Influencers are known for their ability to inspire and motivate their followers. Their involvement in the campaign aimed to encourage young people to actively participate in EYY activities and initiatives, such as encouraging them to record their voices on the Youth Voice Platform.

The **results** of the influencer activation for the EYY campaign demonstrate its success in achieving the set goals.

- **Publications:** They published a total of 217 posts across various social media platforms, ensuring consistent visibility and engagement with their followers.
- **Impressions:** With 4.03 million impressions, the campaign successfully reached a wide audience, increasing awareness of the Year and its objectives.
- **Reach:** With a reach of 3.79 million, the campaign successfully reached a significant number of people, expanding the visibility and impact of the messages.
- **Engagements:** With 38 200 engagements, the campaign successfully promoted active participation and involvement from the audience, indicating that the content resonated with them and sparked their interest.

3.1.8 Solidarity with Ukraine

Many initiatives of the Year related to solidarity with the people of Ukraine were promoted through the digital media campaign.

- The **European Solidarity Corps**, through its volunteering projects, contributed directly to showing solidarity with the Ukrainian people.
- Other **DGs** were asked to keep DG EAC informed of any upcoming youth-related policy initiatives in support of Ukraine. The launch of such initiatives was featured and promoted in the policy section of the EYY webpage.
- In cooperation with Eurodesk, the **Pool of Young European Journalists** created content underlining solidarity and promoting democracy and European values. Two young journalists, living in Lithuania and Poland – two countries neighbouring Ukraine – reported from the ground on the situation and the needs of Ukrainian refugees.
- **NCs** were encouraged to dedicate some of their activities for the Year (as part of the grants) to assist Ukrainian youth.

- DG EAC was in close contact with the **Commission Representations in the Member States** regarding their activities to support Ukraine and the Ukrainian people.
- **National Agencies** were encouraged to promote relevant topics (integration of refugees, values, disinformation) in ongoing Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps projects and disseminate information broadly through their channels.
- **Youth stakeholders** were encouraged to organise activities, such as debates on European values, democracy and freedom, in response to the ongoing war and to help the Ukrainian people and refugees.

The remodelling of the EYY communication campaign sharpened the focus on the values at the heart of the EU: solidarity, peace, unity, democracy, justice, dignity, security, safety, rule of law, freedom and fighting disinformation.

An example of these initiatives in solidarity with Ukraine is the following:

- The **Network of Safer Internet Centres** (SICs – DG CNECT) rallied throughout 2022 to provide support for all those affected (including organising an online event with the participation of Ukrainian schools and inviting a Ukrainian non-governmental organisation (NGO) to the Safer Internet Forum). Moreover, SICs quickly responded with articles and resources on how to help children and young people deal with war-related content.

3.2 What was achieved? Meeting the objectives of the European Year of Youth

The EYY reached every corner of Europe: the Year had an estimated overall outreach that exceeded 150 million citizens, most of them young people⁴⁵. This was achieved through activities organised by public administrations, youth organisations and networks, universities and schools, civil society and intergovernmental organisations. The Commission welcomes these contributions from all institutions and organisations working together with and for young people.

The achievements of the Year are collective. In the feedback surveys⁴⁶, the EYY NCs, the national contact points⁴⁷ and the stakeholders agreed that the objectives of the EYY have been largely achieved.

This chapter aims to give a broad overview of the achievements of the Year, as reached by its various contributors: EU institutions, actors at national and regional levels and the Year's stakeholders. At EU level, the EU institutions engaged in a wide range of activities related to the Year. At national level, with the help of national coordination grants from the Commission (Erasmus+), Member States organised a wide range of events and activities and launched new

⁴⁵ This is an estimation based on what event organisers have provided as information on the EYY Activities map on the Portal. This estimate includes online and physical interactions.

⁴⁶ The feedback on the Year is analysed in Chapter 4 on the assessment of the Year.

⁴⁷ 29 EYY national contact points (NCs) were appointed by EU Member States (one for each EU country, except Belgium where three NCs were appointed). Six national contact points were appointed in non-EU countries associated with Erasmus+ (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, North Macedonia, Türkiye and Serbia). Full list of contacts is available here: https://youth.europa.eu/year-of-youth/national-coordinators_en.

initiatives, youth structures and strategies which will constitute a major legacy of the Year at national, regional and local level.

Nevertheless, all levels were involved in a wide variety of activities: training seminars, debates, interactive workshops, TED-style talks, conferences, lecture series, competitions, award ceremonies, cultural and artistic works and workshops, theatre plays, and school/university visits were but a few of the events organised. These events often strove to be interactive and dynamic in set-up; some engaged participants with – among other features – live music, photo booths, 3D animations and TikTok stations.

The objectives of the EYY were at the heart of these efforts. Young people, university students and graduates, government and European officials, policymakers, representatives of youth and civil society organisations and members of NGOs dealing with youth issues from across Europe and beyond came together to reflect on the challenges that young people – including those most vulnerable and marginalised – face. They also reflected on the future-proof skills that young people will need to exploit the potential of the green and digital transitions and to meet the demands of rapidly evolving economies, and the ways in which they can be empowered to become active and engaged EU and global citizens.

Remarkable diversity is to be observed in the participants and audiences that the EU institutions and Member States targeted with these activities. From pupils and students of all ages to soldiers and recent school-leavers, people with disabilities and from vulnerable groups as well as those engaged in lifelong informal and non-formal learning, the Year's general priority of inclusion was well-reflected in the organisation of events and activities.

This part of the Staff Working Document gathers evidence and input on the key areas of impact and the key results and achievements of the EYY, as they relate to the four objectives of the Year, which were:

- highlighting how the green and digital transitions, and other EU policies, offer opportunities for young people after the COVID-19 pandemic
- empowering and supporting young people, including those with fewer opportunities, to become active and engaged citizens and actors of change;
- promoting opportunities available to young people from public policies at all levels;
- bringing a youth perspective into policymaking at all levels.

DISCLAIMER

Please note that the sections below provide an overview of the key achievements during the Year – at EU level, at national and regional level and at stakeholder level. The list of initiatives at national and stakeholder level is not exhaustive.

At **national** level, the document provides examples of major and innovative achievements and results, but of course not all.

At **stakeholder** level, the document selectively highlights three to five exemplary initiatives per objective, specifically chosen from the diverse EYY stakeholders.

All initiatives follow the objectives of the Year, with many fulfilling more than one. When categorising the initiatives, we aimed to ensure a balanced distribution between the various objectives.

3.2.1 EYY Objective 1: highlighting how the green and digital transitions, and other EU policies, offer opportunities for young people after the COVID-19 pandemic

The Year's first objective was about renewing positive perspectives for young people after the COVID-19 pandemic and highlighting how the green and digital transitions and other EU policies could offer them new (professional and educational) opportunities.

Therefore, under this objective, this document focuses on the key achievements in three subject-specific sections: **mental health, the green transition and the digital transition**.

3.2.1.1. Key achievements at EU level

3.2.1.1.1 Mental and physical health

Introduction

The pandemic was a serious threat to mental health, especially among young people and those with pre-existing mental health conditions. During the pandemic, people in the EU affected by loneliness doubled compared to pre-pandemic years, reaching 26% across some regions⁴⁸. Increased loneliness and reduced social interaction, concerns about one's own health and that of loved ones, uncertainty about the future and anxiety caused by fear and loss all generated post-traumatic stress disorders⁴⁹. Children, adolescents and young adults have been extremely affected by disruptions of family and social ties, and the economic crisis provoked by lockdowns has hit young Europeans particularly hard⁵⁰.

At the outset of the EYY, improving mental and physical health and well-being was the fastest growing priority for young people in the EU. The Year therefore focused on re-establishing a positive outlook for young people and included a wide range of activities in the field of mental health and well-being.

More than 2 300 activities on mental health and well-being in 40 countries were uploaded to the EYY activities map for the EYY.

The policy initiative of the Year in the area of mental health was the [HealthyLifeStyle4All Youth Ideas Labs \(DG EAC\)](#), which was launched at the EU Sport Forum in June 2022 in Lille (France). The aim of the initiative was to encourage young people to explore new ideas collectively and to challenge them to come up with innovative proposals to entice all generations to change their lifestyle and promote inclusive approaches, in particular in the context of the pandemic recovery. The Youth Ideas Labs gathered young students, researchers, athletes, experts and other interested young people from fields contributing to and/or promoting

⁴⁸ New report: Loneliness doubles in Europe during the pandemic (europa.eu).

⁴⁹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a comprehensive approach to mental health. Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52023DC0298>.

⁵⁰ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy (2019-2021). Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0636>.

healthy lifestyles and well-being. During the Forum, the youth participants were asked to think of ideas and to identify challenges. Afterwards, they developed their ideas into fully fledged proposals and selected some to be presented during the European Week of Sport in September 2022. Entertaining and sport-inspired activities were organised and keynote high-level speakers were invited (EU Commissioner and French Minister of Sport, representatives from the European Parliament and international organisations, etc.).

School education is key to helping all children and young people reach their full potential and grow as responsible, engaged and active citizens. When all children and young people have access to a quality and inclusive education, societies become fairer, more inclusive, prosperous and economies stronger. Two new Commission initiatives, **Pathways to School Success** and the **Expert Group on enhancing supportive learning environments for vulnerable learners and for promoting well-being and mental health at school (DG EAC)**, were launched in 2022 as part of the Year and aim to make an impact on the learning experience of young Europeans.

- Based on a Commission proposal, the Council adopted the Recommendation on [Pathways to Schools Success](#) on 28 November 2022. The Council Recommendation aims to promote better educational outcomes for all learners, regardless of their socio-economic, cultural, or personal backgrounds, thereby making school education more equitable and inclusive. It aims to address EU-level targets on basic skills and early leaving from education and training simultaneously, ensuring that all learners develop the skills they need for learning and in life, including through promoting positive, safe and supportive learning environments. The Council Recommendation acknowledges the complex, multifaceted nature of the challenges and the close link between academic achievement, learners' well-being, and mental health. It recognises school success as a broad, systemic, and inclusive concept, considering not only academic results but also the learners' personal, social, and emotional development. Its policy framework outlines a systemic approach to school success and identifies key conditions and a wide range of prevention, intervention and compensation measures to develop a comprehensive response for better educational outcomes. The Commission is currently supporting the implementation of the Council Recommendation through monitoring, reporting, peer learning, information exchange, and funding opportunities.
- The call for applications for the [Expert Group on supporting well-being at school](#) was published in September 2022 and the expert group started work in March 2023. Comprised of 19 EU experts with a wide range of expertise (academics and researchers; teachers, school leaders and teacher trainers; school/child psychologists; experts active in organisations such as Learning4Wellbeing, ETUCE, ESHA, EUNI Well-Alliance, OBESSU), the expert group pays specific attention to well-being and mental health in a 'whole system, whole school' approach to build positive learning environments for all learners and their teachers. Expected to run for 15 months, the group is outlining policy guidance on developing supportive learning environments (with special attention to groups at risk), promoting mental health and physical and emotional well-being, and preventing bullying and violence at school, as well as proposals for effective uptake of successful practices in schools and recommendations for awareness-raising activities at EU and national level.

Both Pathways to School Success and the Expert Group on supporting well-being at school involve to some extent consultations and/or discussions with young people to hear their opinions and raise awareness of the policy initiative in the field of inclusive education.

The [Ethical guidelines on the use of AI and data in teaching and learning for educators \(DG EAC/DG CNECT\)](#), part of Action 6 of the Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027⁵¹, were published on 25 October 2022. They address the use of emerging technologies in education and support educators to understand the potential benefits and risks of artificial intelligence (AI) and data use. With this, they aim to ensure an innovative, engaging and safe educational experience for all learners. Developed by a dedicated Commission expert group, the Guidelines have been translated into all EU languages. They have been accompanied by a communication and awareness-raising campaign. More info: [Digital Education Action Plan – Action 6](#).

With the contribution of the [Youth Wiki Network \(EACEA\)](#), the Commission published an analysis report on ‘The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of young people: policy responses in European countries’, to identify the specific policy actions that have been implemented to mitigate the effects of the pandemic. The research is part of the Commission’s efforts to improve mental well-being and reduce the stigma of mental health issues.

It illustrates the pandemic’s effects on young people’s mental health. Based on the evidence provided and analysis conducted, the report can serve as inspiration for further action such as peer learning and exchange of good practice. The Youth Wiki is an online platform presenting information on European countries’ youth policies. The main objective of the Youth Wiki is to support evidence-based European cooperation in the field of youth. It does so by providing information on national policies in support of young people in a user-friendly and continuously updated way.

Several **activities on threats affecting youth well-being** were run by the JRC during the Year. An [online seminar](#) was organised to bring awareness to loneliness among young people and to discuss actions to be taken. The seminar’s main outcomes were summarised in a [report](#). A first research activity, investigating how schools can mitigate young people’s feelings of loneliness, was concluded in 2022 with a [policy brief](#). ‘Young people’s lives during COVID-19’ investigated the impact of COVID-19 induced school closures on learning outcomes in Europe. ‘Kids digital lives during COVID-19 ([KiDiCoTi](#))’ provided a better understanding of what happened in households during the pandemic.

The report on ‘[Artificial intelligence and the rights of the child](#)’ focused on how researchers, policymakers and industry should involve children and their caregivers when designing new policies and initiatives dealing with artificial intelligence. researchers, policymakers and industry should involve children and their caregivers when designing new policies and initiatives dealing with artificial intelligence.

In 2021, **DG REFORM** proposed an initiative to support the [implementation of the European Child Guarantee with the help of the Technical Support Instrument](#). In the context of this flagship initiative, which was reconducted in 2022 due to its success, DG REFORM offered a wider range of technical support measures to 10 EU Member States for implementing specific measures and policies that prevent and combat child poverty and social exclusion.

The support covered areas such as: reviewing or developing legislative frameworks to implement the European Child Guarantee; developing strategies and funding mechanisms for delivering better services for children; designing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and

⁵¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027, Resetting education and training for the digital age. Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0624>

tools to assess the effectiveness of child-related policies and measures; benchmarking exercises, capacity building and stakeholder engagement at local, regional and national level. The aim was to ensure that the most vulnerable children, such as the children of migrants, children with disabilities and children at risk of poverty or social exclusion, have access to basic rights like childcare, education, social benefits and healthcare.

In 2022, **DG REFORM** put forward, in the context of the Year, the [**YOUTH FIRST initiative**](#), supported by the Technical Support Instrument. The purpose of this flagship initiative was to help Member States design policies that improve children and young people's well-being, education, training/skills, social services, and access to finance and financial literacy. Under this initiative, DG REFORM is supporting seven EU Member States in the following areas: quality of education systems, healthy nutrition, healthy lifestyle and mental health, youth networks and voluntary engagement of youth in society, access to housing and social security schemes, and financial literacy.

Among these projects, the multi-country project involving Slovenia, Italy, Cyprus and the regional authority of Andalusia aims to strengthen the mental health and care of vulnerable children and young people. The project intends to enhance cross-sectoral collaboration on this topic and give extra training to professionals dealing with mental health issues, in close cooperation with youth and children. It is intended to consult and engage youth organisations during the project's implementation.

In 2024, **DG REFORM** will continue to support EU Member States in the context of a dedicated [**flagship initiative on mental health**](#). The flagship intends to help Member States strengthen the capacity of health, social and education systems to deal with mental health issues, including through increased availability, accessibility and quality of mental health services.

On 7 June 2023, the Commission adopted the [**Communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health \(DG SANTE\)**](#), after extensive consultation with Member States, stakeholders and citizens. It helps to implement a new approach to mental health that goes beyond health and includes areas such as education, digitalisation, employment, research, urban development, environment and climate.

The Communication has three guiding principles to help Member States:

- i. better access for all to adequate and effective prevention;
- ii. access to high-quality, affordable mental healthcare and treatment;
- iii. social reintegration after recovery.

The Communication has 20 policy initiatives, EUR 1.23 billion in funding opportunities and a focus on vulnerable groups, such as children and young people.

Four specific flagship initiatives have been identified in a dedicated chapter on 'Boosting mental health of children and young people':

- setting up a child and youth mental health network;
- developing a prevention toolkit, addressing key health determinants;
- developing tools, e.g. on healthy lifestyle and mental health resilience; and
- better protection for children in the digital sphere, online and on social media.

The **Promoting Mental Health project (DG SANTE)** provides support for stakeholders to implement best practices that promote the mental health of children and adolescents, with a focus on vulnerable groups such as children living in deprived areas. It helps give young people more and better opportunities for the future, in line with the activities of the EYY. Two projects, [“Ice hearts”](#) and [“Let’s talk about children”](#) started in 2023, each supported with EUR 4 million under the EU4Health programme.

In February 2022, under Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan (one of the Commission’s policy initiatives and a main priority in the area of public health) the Commission announced the launch of work on the [EU Network of Youth Cancer Survivors \(DG SANTE\)](#). The main aim of the initiative is to connect young cancer survivors, their families and informal and formal carers.

The Network strengthens long-term follow-up in cancer care plans at national and regional level. Children, adolescents and young adult survivors are nominated as network representatives in Member States. Two projects (EU CAYAS NET and OACCUS) kicked off the network in September 2022. In addition, the conference ‘Addressing the needs of young cancer survivors’ took place on 7 February 2023.

Over 50% of smokers start before age 18. To protect young Europeans from nicotine addiction, the Commission must enforce EU tobacco control and adapt to new trends, including introducing strict rules on emerging products. Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan has put forward a series of measures to help create a [Tobacco-Free Generation \(DG SANTE\)](#), where less than 5% of the population uses tobacco by 2040, compared to around 25% today⁵².

The initiative was launched in 2021 and will run until 2025. In June 2022, the Commission adopted a [Delegated Directive](#) on the withdrawal of certain exemptions for heated tobacco products. It extends, to heated tobacco products, the prohibition on selling tobacco products with a special flavour or containing flavourings in any of their components and removes Member States’ ability to grant exemptions from certain labelling requirements.

Under Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan, **DG SANTE** will also, at the beginning of 2024, present a prevention package consisting of a Commission proposal for a Council Recommendation on vaccine-preventable cancers, which aims to help Member States boost the uptake of vaccination against human papillomaviruses and Hepatitis B, and a Commission proposal to revise the 2009 Council Recommendation on smoke-free environments, which mainly aims to better protect people in the EU from exposure to second-hand smoke and aerosols.

A [study](#) on smoke-free environments and advertising tobacco and related products has been conducted and the report was published online to make the case for revising the Recommendation.

In December 2022, the [HEALTH4EUkids](#) joint action was launched (**DG SANTE**). This project aims to implement health promotion and prevention strategies for child obesity across European countries. It seeks to share best practice and research findings, particularly focusing on the initiatives Grunau Moves⁵³ from Germany and Smart Family⁵⁴ from Finland.

The project involves knowledge transfer, cooperation between Member States, policy development and the promotion of healthy lifestyles in families and communities. Its goal is to

⁵² Special Eurobarometer 506 – [‘Attitudes of Europeans towards tobacco and electronic cigarettes’, February 2021](#)

⁵³ [Verhältnisprävention bei Adipositas - Entwicklungsförderung für alle Kinder \(europa.eu\)](#)

⁵⁴ [Smart Family - What is it? \(europa.eu\)](#)

prevent childhood obesity, increase physical activity, promote healthy diets and ensure the sustainability and transferability of successful practices to other Member States.

The expected results of the joint action are:

- i. identifying specific challenges in the prevention of non-communicable diseases;
- ii. identifying policy solutions in the form of best practices and innovative solutions for collective action between Member States and the Commission
- iii. tackling the main public health challenges.

In the Western Balkans, the [Western Balkan Youth Labs](#) initiative (DG NEAR) was instrumental in strengthening formal and informal mechanisms for youth participation by mobilising and connecting young people and policymakers. Youth Policy Labs provide a safe space for young people to participate on an equal footing with policymakers and to engage meaningfully in policymaking based on the principles of co-management and co-production.

A Youth Lab on mental health was launched in Tirana in December 2021. Six working groups worked in each economy throughout 2022 to identify ways to raise mental health awareness and support measures to address mental health issues among young people. The solutions identified and the results achieved were presented at a mid-term conference organised in Pristina in November 2022. The final results and next steps for continued cooperation between young people and policymakers were presented at a final conference in Belgrade in June 2023.

3.2.1.1.2 Green and digital transitions

Introduction

When announcing the Year in her State of the Union address in 2021, the President of the Commission highlighted that Europe needs to give young people opportunities for the future, a future that is greener, more digital and more inclusive.

The Decision states that the Year should help to build climate- and nature-related action into all policies, implementing the objectives in the 2019 European Green Deal and the Fit for 55 package, and delivering the EU's 2030 Climate Target. All this should be done in a fair and inclusive manner. These goals reflect the importance of tackling climate and nature crises and are in accordance with the EU's commitments to implement the Paris Agreement.

In January 2022, the European Parliament and Commission released a joint Special Eurobarometer on the Future of Europe⁵⁵, which showed that 9 out of 10 young Europeans agree that tackling climate change can help improve their own health and well-being (91% of 15–24 year-olds) while 87% of all respondents also share this sentiment. Young people will be the most impacted by the effects of the climate crisis and biodiversity loss. Therefore, it is key to involve and prepare the new generations for the green transition. Young people are at the heart of climate action, engaging in a variety of ways, such as through street demonstrations and local beach clean-ups.

One of the objectives of the EYY was therefore to further increase the role of young people in the green transition. In this context, the Year focused on encouraging young people to

⁵⁵ [Future of Europe 2021 - January 2022 - - Eurobarometer survey \(europa.eu\)](#)

formulate their own initiatives and creative ideas to achieve relevant targets, thereby recognising the creative and innovative potential and abilities of young people.

Achievements on the green transition

In the context of EYY, the Commission proposed a range of opportunities under its **Green priority** for youth to exchange, act and learn about climate and environment-related topics. **More than 2 000 activities** on the environment and climate in **49 countries** were uploaded on the EYY Activities map.

The Commission policy initiative under this objective was the [Green Track Campaign \(DG ENV\)](#), launched in the run-up to the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15). The campaign invited young people to join the debate on the future of our planet through a series of events to be organised by young people, dedicated to nature and other environmental subjects. The Green Track events inspired projects across Europe that helped to make the deal for nature a reality. 37 youth events, which reflected the EYY principles of inclusiveness, co-creation and a bottom-up approach, were selected in January and announced in February 2022. They covered a variety of topics and themes and were well spread out across the EU.

The Green Track campaign was launched on 8 March 2022 and the events took place across Europe between March and June 2022. They included both larger events addressing wider audiences and more targeted measures engaging local communities, always empowering young people as the drivers of the process. One key component of the Green Track focused on the [new EU forest strategy for 2030](#) and the role that young people can play in contributing to the EU's commitment to plant at least 3 billion additional trees in the EU by 2030.

In June 2022, acknowledging young people's growing calls for action on the climate and biodiversity crises, Member States adopted a [Council Recommendation on learning for the green transition and sustainable development \(DG EAC\)](#). The Recommendation aims to strengthen efforts to embed sustainability in national education and training systems. It provides a clear roadmap of how Member States can support learning and teaching for the green transition at all levels. It also aims to boost the involvement of young people in teaching and learning for the green transition and sustainable development at EU level.

Linked to the Recommendation, the Commission has, together with academia, educators, youth representatives and Member States, developed a [Competence framework on sustainability for the development and assessment of knowledge, skills and attitudes for sustainability \(DG EAC\)](#). There is tremendous interest in the framework, which is now being used by schools, in teacher education programmes, curriculum design and in Erasmus+ and Horizon projects. In April 2023, the Commission launched a community of practice for ministries, schools and research and training bodies using the new GreenComp framework on sustainability competences. More than 100 organisations and individuals have signed up so far.

As part of the EYY, the **European Solidarity Corps programme (DG EAC)** contributed to the EU Forest Strategy and the [3 billion trees initiative \(DG ENV\)](#). Projects involving reforestation are already possible through the European Solidarity Corps and some forest and orchard projects (including cleaning up forests, planting new trees, etc.) already exist.

To encourage the integration of tree planting into more ongoing or planned environmental sustainability projects, further awareness raising by the Commission and the National Agencies was done in 2022. Action included identifying best practices, showcasing specific ideas and disseminating materials on the 3 billion trees initiative.

The National Agencies also undertook targeted outreach. The Commission is working closely with the National Agencies to promote the 3 billion trees initiative. They are promoting it to the National Agencies' networks and to organisations working with the European Solidarity Corps that are active on environmental issues. Since May 2022, there has been an online tree counter.

Farming's Got Talent! Vocational education and training (VET) for agriculture in transition (DG AGRI) was a successful event that brought together over 100 participants in person and engaged more than 1 200 online. The objectives were to promote networking among teachers, students, training providers, and EU and national level bodies and to emphasise the role of VET in preparing the farming sector for the green and digital transitions.

The event received significant attention on social media through AGRI's Twitter and Facebook accounts, using the hashtag #FarmingSkills. The outcomes of the event were reflected on in [a report](#) and contribute to the implementation of the common agricultural policy and its future development. The event was organised under the EYY with a focus on vocational education and skills, aligning with the priorities of the European Year of Skills 2023. AGRI is exploring potential follow-up initiatives in the context of the European Year of Skills.

The **European Climate Pact (DG CLIMA)** is a pact with and for citizens and civil society organisations with the aim of supporting existing initiatives on climate action and facilitating the creation of new ones. The Climate Pact was set up in December 2020 as part of the Commission's Green Deal. Youth organisations and youth activists often work on similar challenges and may also struggle to find partners to disseminate their work.

To attempt to remedy this, the Climate Pact facilitates the production and promotion of best practice models for communication, event formats and campaigns on climate action. This can be useful for the daily work of climate activists and organisations. In an attempt to not 'recreate the wheel' and to step up capacity building among young activists, the Climate Pact equips them with the right tools to communicate on climate issues to a wide audience.

If a young person is already a climate leader and familiar with all these proposals to become more sustainable, they are encouraged to take the ultimate step and become an official **European Climate Pact Ambassador**. The European Climate Pact Ambassador initiative is also mentioned in detail under **Chapter 3.2.4.1.1. EYY Objective 4: bringing a youth perspective to the EU's policies**.

An action toolkit called **Don't Look Up** was put together and published on 3 March 2022. The toolkit aims to assist young people in their action and support them in inspiring action in their community. The Don't Look Up toolkit is translated into all EU languages.

As a centrally organised EYY activity in Brussels, the European Climate Pact also co-organised a **Youth Summit (DG CLIMA)** around youth engagement and climate action on 1 February 2023, 'The European Climate Pact: Together in Action'. This summit organised by the Commission offered young participants the chance to learn about the interlinkages between social justice, the environmental crisis and the climate emergency. The interdisciplinary event featured inspiring keynotes, passionate debates and exciting participatory formats and spaces where the young audience and policymakers, youth and climate initiative leaders, Climate Pact business pledgers and others could exchange views.

A prominent section of the 2022 European Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW) was dedicated to young people and clean energy: the **European Youth Energy Day (DG ENER with DG CINEA)**, on 26 September 2022. It gave young participants (aged 18-34) the chance to

get involved in Europe's sustainable energy transition. A dialogue between Commissioner for Energy Kadri Simson and young representatives took place on that day, followed by a series of presentations of cutting-edge technologies, significant for clean energy advancement and young people.

Altogether 1 100 people participated in the European Youth Energy Day. In addition, the EUSEW Policy Conference hosted Youth Policy Labs, which were sessions involving youth organisations and/or addressing topics relevant for a young audience, proposed in an open call.

These workshops were designed to involve young people in policy conversations about the energy future of Europe. The labs facilitated connections between the different stakeholders, youth and non-youth, and created value for both. For its third edition, the EUSEW Young Energy [Trailblazer Award](#) was given to Timea Farkas, a young Romanian engineer advising small firms on the benefits of energy efficiency.

In partnership with the ILO, UNEP and UNICEF, under a cooperation agreement with the ILO, the [Green Jobs for Youth Pact](#) was launched in 2022 at COP27 in Sharm-El-Sheikh, Egypt.

Together with the ILO, **DG EMPL** is implementing a pilot project on supporting **youth employment initiatives** and capacity building, to close green skills gaps for young people as part of the Pact. This ambitious and unique partnership works with and for young people to take action to address the green skills gap, focusing on sectors that are vulnerable to climate change and pushing for systemic change that benefits people, the planet, and prosperity.

The main goal is to increase commitments and speed up action to create green jobs for young people and close the skills gap so we can reap benefits for the environment, society and the climate in a way that encourages more and better jobs for young people.

Two Youth Dialogues with Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, took place in the context of the EYY. The [first Dialogue](#) took place on 30 May 2022 as part of the youth segment of the 2022 edition of the [Green Week](#) (**DG ENV**). It gathered Green Track campaign events organisers, Climate Pact Ambassadors and other young activists from all over Europe for a debate titled 'Youth action for nature' ahead of COP15. The [second Dialogue](#) took place on 25 January 2023 as part of the EYY Policy Dialogues with Commissioners. It brought together a group of 12 young designers, content creators, Climate Pact Ambassadors and other environmental activists to discuss the topic of [sustainable and circular textiles](#).

Contributing to the legacy of the EYY, the dialogue was part of the launch of [ReSet the Trend – #ReFashionNow](#) (**DG ENV**). This campaign aimed to raise public awareness of the EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles, which is one of the policy initiatives of the Circular Economy Action Plan and the European Green Deal.

The campaign promoted the environmental, social, economic and health-related benefits of measures proposed in the Strategy. It invited citizens, in particular young Europeans, to become role models and to make fast fashion a thing of the past. The initiative, which ran until the end of April 2023, offered practical solutions available at all stages of the life cycle of textiles and accessible to individual consumers, all designed to help achieve the vision of the EU Textiles Strategy. The campaign was a contribution to the legacy of the Year of Youth, as it was empowering young Europeans to participate in transforming the sector.

The [New European Bauhaus](#) (**JRC**) creates the space to explore and test policy, funding and other tools for designing and building a better everyday life for all generations, where the role

of young people is fundamental. The New European Bauhaus expresses the EU's ambition to create beautiful, inclusive and sustainable places and lifestyles. Sustainability is a major focus for EU youth and education policy, allowing for many synergies with the New European Bauhaus initiative. Social inclusion and a better quality of life for all citizens are likewise key priorities.

In February 2022, the Commission also launched a Call for the Transformation of Places of Learning, which invited educators, activists, architects and artists to propose initiatives that i) transform a place of education and knowledge (such as public libraries, schools and community centres), (ii) introduce new teaching methods and (iii) involve local communities.

A [New European Bauhaus route](#) (DG EAC) was developed as part of the Erasmus+ DiscoverEU programme in 2022. DiscoverEU is for 18-year-olds travelling across Europe. The route aims to encourage young travellers to reflect on their future by taking them to sustainable, beautiful and inclusive places and projects throughout Europe.

Every year, the EU organises the [#EUBeachCleanup Campaign](#) (DG MARE), an ocean activism and awareness-raising campaign featuring events across the world. In 2022, a [Special Youth Edition](#) took place. The younger generations can turn activism into social and political change and help protect our oceans, rivers and beaches from plastic pollution. A **targeted toolkit with guidelines** was created for young people wishing to organise their own events and activities. The campaign finished at the end of October 2022.

The Youth4Ocean Forum encompasses a variety of activities. It offers connections and networking opportunities to young people interested in ocean sustainability. In general, the [EU4Ocean Coalition](#) (DG MARE), of which the Youth4Ocean Forum is part, offers many opportunities related to ocean literacy. Further to the work of the Coalition, DG MARE organised the [Hack4Oceans 2022 event](#) on 23 and 24 November. This hackathon enabled European university students to work with blue economy professionals and experts to learn, explore and co-create opportunities for prosperity through ocean conservation and the sustainable use of marine resources.

In November 2021, the [Union for the Mediterranean \(UfM\) adopted a Youth Strategy for 2030](#) (DG NEAR). The UfM Youth Strategy is fully in line with the 2030 UN Youth Strategy and the EU Youth Strategy. It identifies human development and sustainable development as two distinct yet interconnected dimensions for the inclusion of young people and their full participation in the region.

Each one of these two dimensions tackles various topics, including climate action and energy, environment, urban and rural development, economic development, education and training and social inclusion. The UfM Youth Strategy is operationalised through an action plan. The action plan is devised and formulated by the UfM Working Group on Youth and divided into priority areas. The first priority areas are youth, climate action and energy.

The Commission, in cooperation with young people, piloted a core group who further developed the Interreg [Youth Manifesto](#) (DG REGIO), a [manifesto for young people by young people to shape the European cooperation policy](#) by making 12 recommendations.

This was done by collecting their ideas on how to improve territorial cooperation, to make young generations feel heard by policymakers at EU, national, regional and local levels as well as by managing authorities, project beneficiaries and civil society organisations.

Based on the ideas collected by Commission staff, young people consider that macro-regional strategies and Interreg programmes can make a difference in five main fields: improving young

people's skills and increasing access to training opportunities; boosting employment for young people; simplification of rules and better communication via digital tools; addressing climate change, and boosting citizens' engagement in policymaking and implementation.

This youth-oriented and democratic exercise has been in progress since 2020. The aim is to debate and listen to top EU decision-makers' reactions to the manifesto throughout the current EU budget period (2021-27). Most of the 12 recommendations have been implemented and therefore the group is now exploring possible next steps. The core group of the manifesto has been meeting every month since its creation in 2020. It is possible to join the [LinkedIn](#) group to take part in the discussions.

Young people learn and act to tackle plastic pollution through the European Research Area's (ERA) [Plastic Pirates – Go Europe!](#) (DG RTD). In 2022, to support the EU Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030, the campaign was expanded to the whole of Europe. This was done with the support of the Commission's framework research programme – Horizon Europe.

The citizen science campaign involves young Europeans tackling the sources of plastic pollution, finding measures to mitigate the problem and raising awareness of plastic pollution in rivers, seas and oceans. Thanks to the initiative, schoolchildren can access sampling kits and educational material on plastic pollution, which helps them connect with science in action.

The Plastic Pirates – Go Europe! Initiative is part of the European Research Area action plan 'Bring Science closer to Citizens' for 2022-24. Germany, Portugal and Slovenia are actively participating in the initiative. Lithuania, Austria, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Malta, France, Belgium, Greece, Bulgaria and Croatia have been involved in coordinated and synchronised Plastic Pirates pilot samplings since autumn 2022.

The [All-Atlantic Ocean Youth Ambassador Programme](#) (DG RTD) supports young generations' engagement with promoting a healthy ocean while developing their professional skills. It actively contributes to the objectives of the Year. The summer school took place at the same time as the signing of the All-Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance Declaration.

The network has been enlarged by an Arctic Ambassador and an Ambassador from the Indigenous Communities. As part of the EYY, a Youth for a Healthy Ocean session was organised during the European Research and Innovation Days in September 2022. It brought together, for the first time, the Youth Ambassadors of the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Black Sea basins, as well as representatives from the Plastic Pirates citizen campaign. The All-Atlantic Ocean Youth Forum has promoted young people's skills and motivation, as well as increasing communication and outreach to young people on environmental topics that are of concern for them.

The [EUTeens4Green](#) (DG REGIO) is a unique Commission Technical Assistance resource that gives young people up to EUR 10 000 for climate initiatives in the Just Transition regions, which are regions with a high dependence on fossil fuels. In doing so, it promotes young people's participation in designing and implementing cohesion policy and in the fair transition towards climate neutrality and a greener Europe.

By March 2022, a beneficiary was selected to organise and manage **a call for projects dedicated to young people** who are willing to develop and implement ideas that enable persons with limited awareness and understanding of the impact of 'green transition' to benefit from it.

In June 2022, the grant agreement was signed with a consortium composed of the Startup Europe Regions Network (SERN), Youth and Environment Europe (YEE) and CEE Bankwatch Europe. More than 70 projects started in April 2023 and are running for 12 months until April 2024. Building on the EUTeens4Green project, REGIO also launched Youth4**OutermostRegions**, a grant scheme that enables young people in the outermost regions to develop projects tailored to their regions, to improve the quality of life there.

Achievements on the digital transition

More than 1 500 activities addressing digital issues in **50 countries** were uploaded on the EYY Activities map for the EYY. Moreover, **more than 800 activities** were uploaded on media literacy and disinformation issues, in **37 countries**.

The Commission's initiative for the EYY in the area of the digital transition was the [Communication on the new European strategy for a better internet for kids \(BIK+\) \(DG CNECT\)](#), which was adopted on 11 May 2022. The new BIK+ strategy aims to provide age-appropriate digital services, with no one left behind and with every child in Europe protected, empowered, and respected online.

Child participation is a key feature under BIK+: children and young people were extensively consulted during the design of the strategy and supported its launch. They are now actively involved in its implementation through the [BIK Youth Ambassadors](#) network (DG CNECT), youth panels, peer-to-peer activities, focus groups, campaigns and co-creation with industry.

They also help assess the implementation of the strategy. Youth participation featured high at the launch event of the new strategy, as well as in other main events such as Safer Internet Day and the Safer Internet Forum. For the 19th edition of the [Safer Internet Day](#), held on 8 February 2022 and celebrated around the world in 190 countries, young people were involved in a campaign on social media, including through videos with politicians at national level and with Vice-President Šuica and Commissioner Breton at EU level.

The [Safer Internet Forum](#), the annual international and multistakeholder conference on child online safety under BIK, held on 27 October 2022, was youth-led. Young people played an active role in the planning, preparation and delivery of the event. They were also active in the session on BIK+ at the Digital Assembly under the French presidency in Toulouse, and in preparing the child-friendly version of BIK+, which is now [available online](#) in all EU languages and more, including Ukrainian.

A wealth of resources and support is available to children and young people, their parents and educators – via the [co-funded network of the Safer Internet Centres](#) and the BIK portal (betterinternetforkids.eu) – to promote the creative and responsible use of digital services. This includes information and training on the risks facing children as young consumers, as explained below.

The new campaign [How to avoid becoming broke online? Know how to recognise online marketing traps](#) (DG CNECT and DG JUST) ties in with the consumer-related objective of the Single Market programme to increase awareness of unfair commercial activities targeting children and young people online. It also ties in with the above-mentioned aims of the BIK+ strategy to protect and empower children online.

These commercial practices are often not transparent: for example, influencers' blogs, targeted and manipulative recommendations, use of virtual currencies on social media and online games, etc. Furthermore the increased 'gamification' of online commercial activities, and

developments such as virtual reality, generate new fairness challenges, with both opportunities and risks.

In September 2022 there was a first roundtable on ‘Children and young people consumer protection in digital markets’ bringing together both child safety and consumer safety experts for the first time. Building on the round table, the upcoming campaign is run by DGs CNECT and JUST, in cooperation with the [Safer Internet Centres](#) and the [European Consumer Centres](#).

The latter provide free advice to consumers who are making purchases across borders and run information campaigns to complement the work of national consumer law enforcement authorities, who will pay particular attention to advertising practices targeting children⁵⁶.

Erasmus+ financed and continues to finance [Virtual exchanges in higher education and youth \(DG EAC\)](#) with the Southern Mediterranean, the Western Balkans, the Eastern Neighbourhood and Sub-Saharan Africa. The first 13 selected projects (based on a call for project proposals in 2021) started their activities in December 2022 and January 2023, and 15 projects were selected for funding under the 2022 call for proposals.

They will enable the creation of virtual exchanges that will promote intercultural dialogue, critical thinking, media literacy, digital and soft skills development, employability and citizenship. The geographic reach of the projects selected will strengthen the youth dimension in relations between the EU and countries not associated to the programme. They will also enable young people who otherwise would not have the possibility of participating in the Erasmus+ programme to participate in it virtually.

JRC has developed two tools, promoting inclusion and youth engagement. Firstly, JRC researchers implemented accessibility features into the creative edutainment [Happy Onlife](#). This tool promotes safe and responsible uses of ICT among adults and children (8-12 years old) and enhances dialogue among children and adults. [Happy Onlife](#) is now available for a larger audience, including people with low vision, people with various types of relevant disability/deficiency (colour vision deficiency, relying on screen magnification, relying on custom font settings, using screen readers and not being able to use a mouse).

Secondly, during 2022, the [Cultural Gems](#) platform was used in the context of the EU-funded project to engage young people with European cultural heritage ‘Behind the walls’. Additionally, [Cultural Gems](#) has been featured in a 2022 European Week of Regions and Cities session exploring the role of online platforms in engagement and sense of belonging with regions within and at the border of the EU.

The [EU Datathon \(OP\)](#) is the open data competition organised by the Publications Office of the EU. It invites people who are passionate about data to develop new, innovative apps that make good use of the EU’s numerous open datasets and demonstrate the power of open data. These apps should showcase opportunities for specific business models or social enterprises.

Young people are particularly encouraged to participate and display the potential that open data presents in today’s society and, of course, to show their creativity and talent. The 6th 2022 EU Datathon was launched in February 2022 and the announcement of the awards took place during a final event in Brussels in October. It featured **four challenges, one of which was specifically focused on youth issues**. The total prize fund for the winning teams was EUR 200 000. Of the 156 proposals submitted from 38 countries, 12 were selected for the final

⁵⁶ [Safer Internet Centres - BIK Portal \(betterinternetforkids.eu\)](#)

event pitch on 20 October 2022. A panel evaluated them and announced the winners. Around 80% of the finalists were under the age of 35.

3.2.1.1.4 Other institutions

On climate and sustainability, the EESC continued the work in 2022 that it started a few years before, actively engaging with young people through the projects [Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Tables](#), [EESC Youth Delegate to COP](#) and [European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform \(ECESP\)](#).

In June 2022, the EESC co-organised the partnership event [Towards a Circular Economy: Competences for Youth](#). This interactive conference brought together experts in circular economy skills, youth representatives, policymakers, academics and business representatives to explore the outcomes of the Circular Economy - Sustainable Competences for Youth (CESCY) project.

The event witnessed the participation of 40 individuals on-site, while many others joined online to follow the web stream. The conference produced several concrete deliverables, including a skills framework on circular economy and sustainability for youth work, a manual to help practitioners use the framework effectively and a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) focused on circular economy and sustainability skills. These resources were published on the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (ECESP) [webpage](#), ensuring accessibility and widespread dissemination.

Building on the previous successful **Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Tables**, the EESC, in collaboration with the European Youth Forum and Generation Climate Europe, organised the [third EU Youth Round Table](#) on 30 November 2022. Commissioner Wojciechowski actively engaged in discussions with the 15 youth representatives, focusing on the critical topics of food security and sustainable food systems. The event garnered significant attention as it was web streamed. As a concrete outcome, the youth representatives officially submitted an [outcome document](#) outlining specific policy demands to the Commissioner, eagerly awaiting his written response.

The **European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (ECESP)** held its **annual event** in February 2023. Its organisation and content were developed in the context of the Year with an active involvement of young people. The event promoted a meaningful intergenerational dialogue, with young people prominently driving the conversation on innovative solutions and practical implementation of the circular economy. The event saw a significant participation of 1 000 individuals online, while approximately 300 attendees were present on-site on the second day. Reports from the event are accessible on the conference [webpage](#), as well as a [compilation of video](#) interviews conducted during the event.

As the first **EESC youth delegate to the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP)**, Ms Sophia Wiegand, ended her mandate after COP27, the [new EESC youth delegate](#), Ms Diandra Ní Bhuachalla, was selected in March 2023 through a transparent process, organised in collaboration with the youth organisations European Youth Forum and Generation Climate Europe. The EESC youth delegate is a full member of the EESC delegation to COP meetings and is supported by a wide network of youth organisations to facilitate the inclusion of their insights in the EESC contribution to COP.

3.2.1.2. Examples of achievements at national level

To contribute to the first EYY objective, a few examples are presented that show the Member States' achievements at national, regional, and local level.

Belgium organised the **Go Strange event for youth workers and young people**: a large two-day event on 28-29 October 2022. It offered a mixture of inspirational training, networking workshops and community building to young people, youth organisations (cultural organisations, organisations working with young people who are neither in employment nor in education or training (NEETs) and organisations working with cultural minorities, partner network of international mobility organisations, etc.) and policymakers. The event aimed to support, in the light of the COVID-19 crisis, the 'relaunch' of international mobility. It also aimed to increase trust in European programmes and to help to mark 35 years of Erasmus and the EYY.

Bulgaria organised a **national contest for design of youth prize** from 16 September to 26 October 2022 with the objective to engage young people as active and committed citizens at European, national, and local level. Young participants had to use natural, recycled or environmentally friendly materials in their design. The prototype that won the contest was then produced and awarded to nominees during the National Youth Conference A Project for Future, which marked the closing of EYY in the country.

Additionally, **Bulgaria** encouraged young people to share their vision for Europe's future in 2050 through cultural and artistic expression by organising a **Youth Biennale** in three cities in the country: Burgas (1 October 2022), Plovdiv (8 October 2022) and Sofia (12 November 2022). Overall, the three events gathered more than 180 participants aged 15-29 years. The three events showcased visual and performance arts and provided an opportunity for young people to socialise and network after a long period of COVID-19 restrictions.

On 10 October, **Croatia** held the high-level conference **Take a Chance – European Year of Youth 2022** in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb. The choice of date was significant as it marked World Mental Health Day. The conference was attended by around 330 participants. Among the key speakers who delivered an opening speech was the Commission Vice-President for Democracy and Demography Dubravka Šuica. The topics of the lectures, panel discussions and workshops included entrepreneurship, acquiring knowledge and skills, and preserving mental health. The conference served as an auspicious occasion to introduce young people to EU opportunities such as the Erasmus+ programme, DiscoverEU and the European Solidarity Corps. The conference included an exhibition space where schools, ministries, public institutions, and agencies presented their work. To attract and entertain the young audience the organisers installed a photo booth at the event and included a dance performance, a concert, and a meet-up with eminent athletes in the conference programme.

In **Cyprus**, the **'Mind Your Mind' TedX-Style Talk**, which took place at the University of Cyprus on 1 November 2022 and was broadcast live on Facebook, well-known young Cypriots – including the Olympian Milan Trajković – addressed the negative effects of the C-19 pandemic on young people's mental health by speaking on the topic and sharing their own stories of overcoming difficulties to inspire other young people to do the same.

In April 2022, **Czechia** launched the competition **My Vision for Europe? This is what I want to change!** Its aim was to give young people the opportunity to share their opinion on issues

such as climate change, digitalisation, well-being, employment, and inclusion and to offer their solutions. Young people were invited to express themselves in two formats - an essay or a video. A committee was appointed to evaluate the best pieces and award the winners with a trip to the Year closing conference in December in Brussels.

In **Estonia**, the **Teeviit Youth Area** was organised at the 10th Opinion Festival in Paide on 12 and 13 August 2022. The Opinion Festival brought discussions and debates to life in the ideal environment, inspiring people to create new ideas and deeds and bringing them together. The festival aimed to develop a culture of discussion within society. Within the context of EYY, the festival had nearly 10 000 visitors. The Teeviit Youth Area aimed to inform and raise awareness of youth-related issues and young people's challenges after the COVID-19 pandemic and of young people's involvement and participation in society amongst different groups (regular visitors, decision-makers, politicians, people working with young people, youth service professionals, parents, teachers, hobby education and hobby workers, young people, etc.). The specific thematic priorities of the festival were related to the focus of EYY, such as education and training, unemployment prevention, mental health, digitalisation (including cyber security), environment, youth information, participation and involvement, youth mobility, the integration of non-formal and informal learning and its importance for the development of young people's independence and personality. Area discussions took place in cooperation with young people, youth agencies, organisations, and youth field experts. The most relevant and important discussions were saved in the form of podcasts.

Greece launched **four nationwide surveys** between May 2022 and January 2023: (1) Good practices of municipalities implementing European policies for young people living in their area; (2) Young people and Europe: how young people perceive Europe and their identity within it – Sustainable Development Goals and young people; (3) Perceptions of democracy in school decision-making; and 4) Mental health in the post-COVID-19 era.

Hungary launched a new electronic and offline youth book series the "Hungarian Youth" book series, edited by renowned experts, which presents the current situation of Hungarian young people from an aspect related to the goals of EYY.

In **Italy**, special attention was given to the promotion of debate to promote the potential of the green and digital transitions among young people, reflecting the Youth Goal #10 Sustainable Green Europe, the European Green Deal and the pillars of NextGenerationEU. In this sense, an important role was played by the new **National Youth Card** – an online card to facilitate the access of young people to benefits and opportunities, encouraging them to get involved in training and cultural and social activities, with a specific focus on digital transition and sustainability.

Latvia implemented a **well-being campaign** to promote public awareness of the importance of the physical and mental health of young people and to break some of the myths in society – especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaign lasted four weeks and each week of the campaign was dedicated to a specific topic: physical health, stress and how to manage it, panic and anxiety attacks and communication with parents and peers about psycho-emotional health.

In **Malta**, the Year was officially launched during a seminar aptly entitled **Reconnecting Youth Organisations: Building hope in a post-pandemic future together**. During this event, organised by Aġenzija Żgħażaġh, around 50 youth organisations got together to discuss youth policy priorities and work together to propose ideas for a strategy to develop further youth opportunities within the current post-pandemic context.

In June 2022, the **Netherlands** held the **Nature Dialogue** sustainability event. The event was co-organised by the Dutch Youth Representatives for Biodiversity and Food. Youngsters, academics and decision-makers in the fields of nature, food and biodiversity engaged in dialogues on these topics.

The **Netherlands** also ran events that brought young people together to talk about mental health. The event on stigma around mental health, **Stigmaatjes**, organised in July 2022, was co-organised by youngsters of the Mental Health Youth Panel (a project of the Youth Council) to raise awareness and break the stigma around mental health. The event consisted of workshops and panel discussions. In October 2022, the **International Day of Mental Health campaign** was launched and, for one day, active youngsters from Great Minds (a Youth Council project) initiated a campaign to talk with peers on the streets of Utrecht about their mental health. The youngsters who were interviewed got a postcard and stickers to share with a loved one.

The **Netherlands** organised the **National Youth Climate Conference** in November 2022. This event was co-organised by the Young Climate Movement, EU Climate Pact NL and Bildung Nijmegen. Young people discussed the challenges posed by climate change and followed interactive workshops on how they can make a positive contribution.

Poland created and ran the **Concepts for a Youth-Friendly Local Government** competition. The competition had several objectives such as advocating key themes highlighted during the Year, such as green and digital transformation, opportunities within the EU for young individuals, the career prospects of young people within the EU, active engagement in societal affairs, and mental well-being.

In **Poland** on 28 April 2023, a **Summary Conference** took place. The event focused on promoting volunteerism, adopting a green lifestyle, and environmental protection among young people. It provided a platform for young individuals to engage with NGO employees and volunteers, inspiring them to take action in assisting others.

During the EYY, **Slovenia** organised **13 regional events** to prepare the Resolution on the National Youth Programme and **10 local youth initiatives and dialogues** on the topic of a sustainable and inclusive Europe, in collaboration with the Representation of the Commission in Slovenia.

The central event in **Slovenia** was the festival **Sound of Youth**. On 27 May 2022, a full-day programme took place, stretching from the Square of the French Revolution to the main stage at Križanke. It included youth dialogues on sustainable development, climate change and digitalisation, plus educational content, interactive workshops and a culture and music programme. All activities at the event were presented with a focus on sustainability and ecology, delivered to young people in an interactive, informative, educational and entertaining manner.

Slovakia organised the **Climate Education seminar** between 24 January 2022 and 26 January 2022. The aim of the seminar was not only to obtain a theoretical basis of climate education supported by research, but also to experience practical methods and activities that can serve as inspiration for educational practice. Participants addressed various topics, such as how to work with the emotions that the climate crisis evokes in us, what are the different approaches to solving it and their starting points, how to talk about power, or to expand imagination, and last but not least – what can we do in times of climate crisis.

3.2.1.3. Examples of achievements at stakeholder level

DISCLAIMER

The following section contains a selection of key achievements forwarded by EYY stakeholders. It aims to give a snapshot of the types of activities organised by stakeholders under this specific objective. All achievements of EYY stakeholders can be found in the EYY Activities map.

The Federation of Young European Greens (FYEG) launched the **EU and You!** project, which involves offering grants to its member organisations. The purpose of these grants was to support the design and execution of campaigns and dissemination activities that aim to promote, analyse and raise awareness of EU-funded projects and actions at local, regional or national level. Besides learning about the impact of EU policies and plans on their daily lives, the awarded youth-led organisations also developed their capacities in project and volunteer management, networking, and financial management and reporting.

MeetEU organised **digital events and campaigns** promoting democratic participation opportunities for young Europeans from more than 30 countries. Following the association's goal of connecting Europeans across generations, countries, and political opinions, MeetEU's activities served a broader intergenerational dialogue on topics relevant to Europe's young people. MeetEU organised an event in collaboration with the Commission and ENER, aimed at promoting collaboration and addressing the issue of energy dependency on Russia.

The **UN in Brussels** organised a **youth-led event, Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals through the Global Gateway**. During the event in June 2022 supported by the United Nations and the European Union as part of the 2022 European Development days, youth representatives called for action to rapidly advance the SDGs and shared their recommendations to both entities.

Youth For Exchange and Understanding International (YEUI) organised **online workshops** for young people with fewer opportunities and **online Coffee With events** featuring prominent European-level politicians. They implemented KID_ACTIONS, a project aimed at addressing cyberbullying among children and adolescents through interactive education and gamification and spearheaded the 'Superheroes of Climate Change' project, which welcomed young people from all walks of life and across Europe to become leaders of climate in their local communities.

3.2.2 EYY Objective 2: empowering and supporting young people, including young people with fewer opportunities, to become active and engaged citizens and actors of change

The highest expectation of young people about the EYY was that society and decision-makers listened more to young people's opinions and needs⁵⁷. To address this demand, the EU and Member States gave utmost priority to the topic of **youth participation**. It emerged as the top theme of the Year, with the **largest number of activities (43%) on the EYY Activities map**.

⁵⁷ [Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth - May 2022 - - Eurobarometer survey \(europa.eu\)](#)

EU institutions, stakeholders and NCs launched **new formats, tools and networks for participation** to give young people space to speak up, to influence and inspire their peers, decision-makers and society at large.

In correlation with the 2019-2027 EU Youth Strategy⁵⁸, the empowerment of young people was a key objective of the EYY. It was seen as essential to equip all young people, including those with fewer opportunities, with the skills to become active and engaged citizens and participate in policymaking on every level.

The active participation of young people in democratic processes is crucial for the present and future of Europe and its democratic societies. The Year therefore aimed to boost 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 and by promoting civic engagement and volunteering initiatives. These actions raised awareness of EU values and fundamental rights and European history and culture, brought together young people and decision-makers at local, regional, national and EU levels and contributed to the process of European integration.

This section contains all measures targeting young people which have a lasting impact ('empower') on participants, an education/training element or request the commitment of young people. These include programmes, networks, learning hubs and young ambassador schemes, for example, the European Solidarity Corps' Humanitarian Aid strand, the Youth Talks and the Pool of European Young Journalists.

3.2.2.1. Key achievements at EU level

3.2.2.1.1. European Commission

Strengthening young people's democratic participation is key to maintaining an active civil society in Europe. This is what the Commission aims to do through **Strengthening Outreach and Inclusion of the EU Youth Dialogue** (DG EAC). It is also crucial for the present and future of the EU and its democratic societies. The EU promotes youth participation in policymaking globally, building on the experience of the EU Youth Dialogue – a mechanism that ensures that the opinions, views and needs of young people are taken into account when setting the EU's youth policies. The EU Youth Dialogue works as a tool to bring young people's voices closer to decision-makers by consulting them and passing on their recommendations. These efforts by the EU were further boosted by the Year in 2022. The dialogue with policymakers and other dialogue activities happened in 18-month work cycles. Each cycle focuses on a different theme set by the Council of Youth Ministers. The current one (from the beginning of 2022 to mid-2023) is 'Engaging together for a sustainable and inclusive Europe'. The Youth Dialogue aims to address all young people, including those with fewer opportunities and those currently not involved and active. In every Member State, the process is organised by national working groups that are in charge of conducting consultations and activities in their country with young people, youth organisations and policymakers. The Trio

⁵⁸ 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. Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A42018Y1218%2801%29>.

Presidency takes the lead in steering implementation of the EU Youth Dialogue, in close cooperation with the Commission and the National Agencies, as well as youth civil society representatives, within a coordination group.

Creative FLIP (DG EAC) is an EYY initiative and stands for Finance, Learning, Innovation and Intellectual Property Rights for the Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI). In 2022, the initiative has launched a call that was until 6 June 2022. The call encouraged cultural and creative organisations interested in setting up cooperation projects with schools, introducing students to creative professions and building ties with their local community. As part of this initiative, students explored creative and transversal skills through a co-creation project, while also discussing and learning about related topics such as the importance of protecting and respecting intellectual property and creations. 15 creative facilitators were selected to take part in this programme, receiving a support of EUR 7 500, and organised a minimum of 10 workshops each. The 15 Learning Labs – cooperation projects between cultural and creative organisations and schools - were implemented between September 2022 and May 2023. More info: [Open call for Learning Labs Programmes! | European Youth Portal \(europa.eu\)](#).

The Year included a unique initiative under this objective, namely a **‘Family of policy dialogues’: European Commissioners in conversation with youth** (SG, COMM, EAC, SCIC). Although some Commissioners regularly engage with young people as part of their portfolios, this cycle of policy dialogues was unprecedented. Under the guidance of the Cabinet of the President, all cabinets of the College of Commissioners organised policy dialogues on a chosen theme, identifying and inviting young participants, and organising information sessions and preparatory briefings. Each College member invited young people into the Berlaymont for a policy dialogue over the course of the Year. Each dialogue lasted approximately two hours and consisted of a meaningful conversation and exchange of views with young people on topics of interest and concern to them, within the remit of the respective Commissioner’s portfolio. The young participants were able to express views, raise questions, and share ideas and suggestions in a face-to-face meeting, often coupled with an online interaction. Providing a space for direct and meaningful interaction with College members across the policy spectrum has helped to embed youth concerns throughout the political agenda. All the policy dialogues can be viewed on the on the Youth Portal. In all, 26 policy dialogues took place from February 2022 to February 2023. The policy dialogues covered almost all of the Commission’s policy areas and generated active participation from young people from all over the EU, as well as from non-EU countries. There were almost 350 participants from over 40 countries, representing more than 50 nationalities. All Member States were represented, the gender balance was close to even and 5 participants with disabilities attended too. We were also able to bring across participants from Ukraine. The cabinets were supported by their DGs on the ‘substance’ of the dialogue and were also supported by the EYY team, comprised of the SG, DGs COMM, SCIC, EAC and EU Youth Coordinator.

The dialogues were very successful and demonstrated the enthusiasm and maturity of our young people, who not only came forward with questions and concerns particular to them, but presented ideas that could contribute to the broader society and economy. The dialogues brought together young participants from different countries and created an excellent networking opportunity for them, demystifying the Brussels bubble for the participants to a large extent. Moreover, the empathy shown by Commissioners when engaging with their groups went quite some way in building bridges between the Commission and our young people. The main takeaways from the policy dialogues were youth-related concerns about employment, sustainability and the cost of living. There was also concern that national

politicians present a distorted view of the EU, blaming Brussels whenever there was a wider problem. The DG COMM Visitors' Centre organised the information sessions that preceded the dialogues with the Commissioners. DG COMM also supported the youth policy dialogues as regards communication by providing a photographer to cover the events and through the social media corporate accounts of the Commission.

Date	Commissioner	DG	Topic
3 February 2022	Executive Vice-President Margrethe Vestager	DG COMP	Taking competition policy into the future
7 April 2022	Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans	DG CLIMA	Sustainable Consumption and Production
17 May 2022	Commissioner Didier Reynders	DG JUST	Right to repair initiative
24 May 2022	Commissioner Helena Dalli	DG JUST	Strengthening the role of equality bodies
13 June 2022	Commissioner Nicolas Schmit	DG EMPL	Social protection for all: minimum income and beyond
21 June 2022	Vice-President Margaritis Schinas	DG COMM	Our European Way of Life – the model of society we stand for
20 September 2022	Commissioner Thierry Breton	DG GROW	Entrepreneurship
21 September 2022	Commissioner Johannes Hahn	DG BUDG	Financing future EU priorities
26 September 2022	Commissioner Kadri Simson	DG ENER	How to ensure that Europe's future energy independence is sustainable
27 September 2022	Commissioner Elisa Ferreira	DG REGIO	Addressing brain drain: retaining and attracting talents in EU regions
28 September 2022	Maciej Popowski (Acting Director-General, Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations)	DG NEAR	Building bridges among communities
11 October 2022	Commissioner Mariya Gabriel	DG EAC	Research and innovation at school - the role of young people

25 October 2022	Commissioner Mairead McGuinness	DG FISMA	Future of finance, digital currency, sustainable finance, access to finance for vulnerable groups and finance literacy
9 November 2022	Commissioner Adina Vălean	DG MOVE	Jobs in Transport
15 November 2022	Commissioner Janez Lenarčič	DG ECHO	Climate change, and humanitarian action and International Humanitarian Law
29 November 2022	Commissioner Jutta Urpilainen	DG INTPA	Building partnerships as the way forward in geopolitically challenging times
30 November 2022	Commissioner Paolo Gentiloni	DG ECFIN	Measuring what matters: looking beyond GDP
5 December 2022	VP Dubravca Šuica	SG	Geography of Discontent
6 December 2022	Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič	DG CLIMA	Innovations for the Future of Europe – the voice of youth
8 December 2022	High Representative and VP Josep Borrell	EEAS	Engaging the Youth in Global Politics: towards a stronger Europe in a changing world
10 January 2023	EVP Valdis Dombrovskis	DG ECFIN	Supporting People Now & Repowering our Economy for the Future
23 January 2023	Commissioner Ylva Johansson	DG HOME	Protecting young people from organised crime
25 January 2023	Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius	DG ENV	Sustainable and circular textiles
31 January 2023	Commissioner Janusz Wojciechowski	DG AGRI	Young people in agriculture and rural areas
7 February 2023	VP Věra Jourová	SG	Media freedom and pluralism in the EU
22 February 2023	Commissioner Stella Kyriakides	DG SANTE	Towards a comprehensive approach to Mental Health

Table 5. Overview of Policy Dialogues with Commissioners

The topics of discussion and the main take aways of each debate can be found under the dedicated session of the Youth Portal⁵⁹.

The [**Youth Voice Platform \(DG EAC\)**](#) is an innovative digital 3D platform that was set up especially for the Year to connect and engage with young people, enabling them to record their voices and express their views and opinions on EYY policy areas. This innovative platform's umbrella message is 'Voice your Vision', enabling a digital journey into the young generation's visions of the future through their own voice recordings. Young people can interact and exchange valuable ideas, visions, comments and questions on topics such as employment, sustainability, social equality, education and mental health. The platform was launched on 25 April 2022. By 9 May 2023 (end of the Year), more than 1 700 voice messages had been submitted by young people on the platform. More information on the Voice Platform is available in **Chapter 3.1.4 European Youth Portal – EYY webpage**.

The [**Youth Talks \(DG EAC\)**](#), under the umbrella of both the EYY and the European Solidarity Corps, were originally devised as part of the European Solidarity Corps' General Online Training courses, with the Year in mind as well. In fact, the Youth Talks also boosted the Year, as they proved to be an excellent peer-to-peer exercise among young people: inspiring talks of 10-15 minutes by young people, on topics that matter to them, to spread ideas, activate engagement, and empower and inspire young people to become actors of change. They were a series of live talks delivered at large-scale youth events during the Year, which were live-streamed, filmed and now feature on the Youth Talks EU Academy website. The first round of Youth Talks was hosted in the Berlaymont on 7 May 2022, during the Open Doors Day. The first round of inspirational Youth Talks was on democracy, solidarity and interculturality. The second round of talks took place at the EU Youth Conference in Prague (10-13 July) on the topics of inclusion, sustainability and intergenerational solidarity. During the LevelUp! bootcamp on 28-29 October in Brussels, four more Youth Talks were held on the topics of on democracy and organisation, and democracy and communication. On 5 December, another round of Youth Talks was held as part of the EYY NCs/SH group meeting, on the topics of humanitarian aid, mental health and volunteering. The young speakers came from all across the EU, as well as from Ukraine. They were selected after a rigorous selection process that included training sessions on public speaking. Because of their success, the Youth Talks are being continued in 2023 and 2024 under a similar format and accompanied by promotional activities.

After the success of the 2022 edition, which started during the EYY a new [**Pool of European Young Journalists \(DG EAC\)**](#) was set up for 2023, with the aim of giving young people a voice as storytellers. Thirteen young journalists have been selected from across Europe through an open call and are now responsible for writing articles and creating videos, podcasts and photojournalism on themes of interest to young people. They choose the topics themselves and develop the content either alone or as part of a team. The Commission does not influence their position, as that is the responsibility of the respective authors. The journalists are also given the opportunity to cover key European events on the ground and report back, as well as receiving regular training with experts in the field of journalism. More information on the pool of European young journalists is available in **Chapter 3.1 The European Year of Youth communication campaign**.

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport. The Year coincided with the [**relaunch of learning mobility: the Erasmus+ programme celebrated its 35th anniversary – to be more inclusive, greener and digitally ready \(DG EAC\)**](#). The

⁵⁹ [What is the European Year of Youth? | European Youth Portal \(europa.eu\)](#)

COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on mobility activities, particularly in the context of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes. In 2020, 50% fewer learners started a learning mobility abroad than in 2019⁶⁰. Nevertheless, young people should rest assured that these EU programmes specifically dedicated to young people have returned, more enhanced than ever. The year 2022 marked 35 years of the Erasmus+ programme, and the EYY was a great opportunity to celebrate the more than 13 million young people who have taken part in that adventure since 1987, as well as to promote the programme's new generation in all its dimensions – covering education, training, youth and sport – which contribute to the Year's objectives. The 2021-2027 Erasmus+ programme has been strengthened, offering many new opportunities for young people, and is also greener and more inclusive. For the first time, the programme enables school pupils to complete an individual mobility period abroad. To use the full potential of the digital decade, new mobility formats are now being offered with blended mobility and blended intensive programmes. The European Student Card Initiative is helping to build a stronger European student identity and facilitates all stages of their mobility (through the Erasmus+ app). This initiative has been further developed during the EYY. Erasmus+ funds are also more accessible to smaller, grassroots organisations, such as youth groups and sports clubs. A 'Green Erasmus+' encourages participants to use lower-carbon transport as an alternative to flying and offers more opportunities for participants and organisations to develop sustainability knowledge and skills, along with environmentally friendly approaches, while promoting the incorporation of green practices into all projects.

A specific new action dedicated to youth participation, the **Youth Participation Action (DG EAC)**, was included in the new-generation Erasmus+ programme. The action provides young people from all backgrounds with a chance to engage and participate in civic society. These activities are youth-driven projects for young people to take an active role in civic and democratic processes and become active citizens. They are an opportunity for several thousand young people to design and implement their own projects with activities potentially reaching hundreds of thousands of young people across Europe and benefiting large communities by driving positive societal change. This action was supported with EUR 13 million in the context of the EYY and was considered one of the Year's policy initiatives. The total budget for 2022 was EUR 30 million, which could be awarded to 537 projects that year. The number of forecasted participants is 107 200, involving 1 387 organisations.

EU Alumni Engagement Initiative (initially launched by FPI, and since November 2022 managed by the EEAS), supports the long-lasting dialogue and cooperation between the EU and former participants of EU funded programmes and initiatives organised by both Headquarters or EU Delegations, allowing to multiply the positive impact of EU funded programmes and strengthening partnerships across the world.

With the relaunch of international mobility in 2022, the **Global Erasmus+ Alumni Mentoring Scheme (DG EAC)** has been putting young people in the spotlight, connecting Erasmus+ alumni with potential Erasmus+ participants. Erasmus+ supports global and regional students and alumni networks (in the Western Balkans and Africa), which promote activities at grass-root level – mainly with a focus on young people – through calls for project ideas published several times a year. Erasmus+ students and alumni in EU and non-EU countries aim to raise young people's awareness of the programme and mentor prospective participants, by providing

⁶⁰ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy (2019-2021). Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0636>.

them with inspiring testimonies and practical tips based on their own mobility experiences, as well as information on destinations, courses and institutions. During the EYY, 38 local projects proposed by students and alumni networks were selected. Of these, 12 were developed across the world by the [Erasmus+ Student and Alumni Alliance](#) (ESAA), 21 by the [Western Balkans Alumni Association](#) (WBAA) and 5 by the [African Students and Alumni Forum](#) (ASAF).

The Year also gave visibility to a series of initiatives that not only boosted higher education in Europe, but also put students and universities in the spotlight. The [European Strategy for Universities](#) (DG EAC / DG RTD) was one such initiative. It aims to equip students with the competences they need to succeed in their professional and personal lives, through opportunities to study abroad and be actors of change by cooperating with other students, professionals, and researchers from different countries and disciplines, to find solutions to the biggest challenges our society is facing. It provides support for students to start their course at one university and continue it at another one in Europe, following transnational joint programmes and getting a joint European degree that is automatically recognised within the EU. The Strategy also aims to address the underrepresentation of girls and young women in the STEM fields through a roadmap of activities including a manifesto from STE(A)M-oriented universities on gender-inclusive STE(A)M education, that is, integrating arts, social sciences and the humanities in STEM education as a transdisciplinary, inclusive and future-oriented approach to learning, to render STEM studies and careers more appealing to a diverse range of young people, especially girls. Several activities have been implemented in 2022 under this roadmap. Among these, the [ESTEAM Fests](#) and the EIT's [Girls go Circular](#) initiatives were organised to boost girls' and young women's STEM, digital and entrepreneurial skills across Member States. Furthermore, topics were added in 2022 to the 2023 Horizon Europe work programme, to [support the implementation of an EU Manifesto for STE\(A\)M education and research and innovation career paths](#), as well as to [develop cultural and creative approaches for gender-responsive STEAM education](#). The European Strategy for Universities was adopted by the Commission on 18 January 2022, and the [Council Conclusions on a European Strategy Empowering Higher Education Institutions for the Future of Europe](#) were adopted by the Council on 5 April 2022.

[European Solidarity Corps – Solidarity Projects](#) are a European Solidarity Corps initiative under the Year (DG EAC). These bottom-up local solidarity activities are set up and run by a group of young people with the aim of addressing key challenges within their communities. The objective is to give young people a chance to express solidarity and engage by taking responsibility and committing themselves to bring positive change to their local community. At the same time, through active participation and implementation of the solidarity project, young people experience non-formal learning that can boost their personal, educational, social and civic development. Involvement in their own project can empower them and make their voices heard on matters that they consider important. This action is part of the general call of the European Solidarity Corps. The reinforcement for the Year was EUR 3 million and the total available budget for 2022 was EUR 14 million. There were two obligatory deadlines and one optional deadline in 2022. The third deadline was on 4 October, with 1 045 projects submitted. In total, 1 313 projects were awarded in 2022 and the number of forecasted participants is 7 111.

With the first call for 2022, building on the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, the [European Solidarity Corps launched the first selection of projects for its Humanitarian Aid volunteering](#) (DG EAC) in 2022, offering volunteering activities in support of humanitarian aid operations. Participants aged 18-35 are able to participate, individually or in teams, in projects that, where relevant, facilitate the transition from the humanitarian response to long-

term sustainable and inclusive development; help to strengthen the capacity and resilience of vulnerable or disaster-affected communities; reinforce disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction; link relief, rehabilitation and development. Volunteers and organisations are able to rely on complementary support, e.g. involving more experienced coaches and experts. The aim is that, through these actions, young people would acquire essential competences that could contribute to their personal and socio-educational development, increase their self-empowerment and self-esteem, but also enhance their employability. The first Quality Labels for this new strand of the European Solidarity Corps have been awarded by EACEA on 22 March 2022 to 100 organisations. The new strand of the European Solidarity Corps kicked off with the first volunteers ready for selection to deployment in April 2023.

With the first call launched in 2022 by the 33 Erasmus+ National Agencies across Europe, the [DiscoverEU Inclusion Action](#) (DG EAC) supports organisations and informal groups of young people to carry out projects enabling young people with fewer opportunities to participate in DiscoverEU on an equal footing with their peers. DiscoverEU offers young people who are 18 years old a chance to have a short-term individual or group experience travelling across Europe by rail, or other modes of transport where necessary. The main objectives are to: give young people the chance to learn about Europe and discover the opportunities it offers for their future education and life choices; equip young people with valuable knowledge, life skills and competences; encourage connection and intercultural dialogue between young people; promote young people's sense of belonging to the EU; and inspire young people to embrace sustainable travel in particular, and environmental awareness in general. The DiscoverEU Inclusion Action aims to reach out to young people with fewer opportunities who would not apply on their own initiative. It concerns those facing accessibility and outreach barriers like disability, health problems, barriers linked to education and training systems, cultural differences, social or economic barriers, barriers linked to discrimination, or geographical barriers. The DiscoverEU Inclusion Action enables participants to receive extra support while travelling, such as the possibility to be accompanied, to receive extra budget for subsistence, organising mobility activities, mentoring and support for travel preparations. In total, 166 projects were submitted by organisations in the first round in October 2022, and 69 in the February 2023 round. The first projects started on 1 March 2023.

Under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) as part of Horizon Europe, the [European Researchers' Night](#) (DG EAC) brings research and researchers closer to the public, and particularly young people, with the aim of increasing awareness of research and innovation activities, and boosting public recognition of science and research education. It also showcases the role of researchers in society and helps increase young people's interest in research and scientific careers. The European Researchers' Night promotes EU values, including gender balance, diversity and inclusiveness in science. It is a well-established outreach activity across EU Member States and countries associated with Horizon Europe, which supports around 50 projects annually all over Europe and beyond. The [European Researchers' Night](#) took place on 30 September 2022 in 27 countries and 496 cities, attracting 1.5 million visitors. It covered a wide range of activities that were both educational and entertaining, including hands-on experiments, science shows, simulations, debates, games, competitions, demonstrations, enquiries and quizzes. In 2022, the European Researchers' Night also included a new initiative, Researchers at Schools. Activities under this initiative brought researchers to schools all year round and enabled direct interaction between pupils, teachers and researchers on challenges faced by our societies, reaching 2 147 schools and 112 472 pupils. Researchers at Schools activities focused on priority issues, such as the environment, oceans, health, the European Green Deal, sustainable development and climate change. Both initiatives conveyed the messages underpinning the EYY and engaged with young people.

On 10 October 2022, the Commission launched [Culture Moves Europe \(DG EAC\)](#), a new mobility scheme for artists in the EU. Its aim is to offer artists and cultural professionals the opportunity to go abroad for artistic or professional development, for international collaborations, to find new audiences, or to co-produce, co-create or present their work. The scheme is of particular interest for young people as it focused on emerging artists. Thanks to Culture Moves Europe, thousands of young and emerging artists will be able to travel, perform and work across Europe over the coming years. To support artists from remote regions such as the outermost regions, the initiative offers additional top-ups for persons travelling from or to an outermost region.

On 5 April 2022, the EU Council of Ministers adopted a [Commission proposal for a Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union \(DG EAC\)](#). The Recommendation intends to facilitate youth transnational volunteering; give guidance to enhance the inclusiveness, quality, sustainability and recognition of transnational volunteering schemes; address new trends (such as intergenerational solidarity and digital volunteering); encourage mutual learning and networking among organisations; and support complementarity between volunteering schemes in Member States and the European Solidarity Corps.

The newest Jean Monnet action, [Learning EU Initiatives \(DG EAC\)](#), enables schools in Erasmus+ programme countries to apply for funding to help shape their students into active citizens. Schools and networks of schools seeking solutions for teaching about the EU can now apply for grants of up to EUR 30 000 over a three-year period. In the same vein, [Jean Monnet Teacher Training](#) funds activities that strengthen universities' knowledge and skills, so that they can enable existing and future teachers to improve how they teach EU subjects in the classroom. The [Jean Monnet Schools Networks](#) also enable an exchange of good practices between schools and higher education institutions. These new Jean Monnet for Schools activities were fully rolled out in the latest Erasmus+ call.

Only 11% of all farms in the EU are run by farmers under 40 and persuading more young people to begin farming is not an easy task. In addition, rural areas where the agricultural sector plays a major role face significant demographic challenges, as young people tend to leave those areas to live in cities. The common agricultural policy (CAP) 2023-2027 provides [EU support for young people in farming \(DG AGRI\)](#), with the aim of attracting young farmers and facilitating business development in rural areas.

DG AGRI has approved **28 CAP Strategic Plans** to support young farmers and young people in rural areas, and to make rural areas more attractive for young people. Through a specific objective (8), Member States can promote employment, growth and local development in rural areas to improve working and living conditions, thereby preventing an exodus of skilled people. These are some examples of the rural development actions that Member States will implement under CAP 2023-2027 that will also benefit young people in the countryside: developing infrastructures and basic services in villages; developing local economy and business development in rural areas; and supporting community-led developments related to societal needs through LEADER and Smart Village strategies. The Smart Villages approach is a relatively new concept that many stakeholders are interested in (including local community representatives, national policymakers, researchers and civil society organisations), and its development across the European countryside could make a significant contribution to this objective.

Young people have been assigned a particularly important role in the [European Citizens' Panels \(DG COMM\)](#), as part of the Conference on the Future of Europe and its follow-up

initiatives. Both of these initiatives gave young people (as members of civil society or as citizens) the opportunity to make their voices heard and to provide input on the EU's priorities for the future. Young people between 16 and 25 represented one third of each panel set up in this context. For example, three European Citizens' Panels were organised in 2023 to discuss the Commission Proposal for a Council Recommendation replacing and repealing the existing one from 2011: 'Youth on the move – promoting the learning mobility of young people.'

In April 2022, the European Investment Fund, supported by the [InvestEU](#) (DG ECFIN), started deploying a guarantee and an equity product to financial intermediaries supporting microfinance, social enterprises, students and learners, as well as enterprises providing training to their employees. Young people are among the target groups expected to benefit from these products; for example, through funding to set up a microenterprise or to improve their skills. Other financial products under the InvestEU Social Investment and Skills policy window are aimed at financing student housing or other social infrastructure and services. One of the policy objectives is to provide support to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including young people with disabilities.

In the context of new challenges to youth employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic, among other factors, young people need better quality traineeships. The Commission therefore undertook a [Review of the Council Recommendation on the Quality Framework for Traineeships \(QFT\)](#) (a commitment in the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan) (DG EMPL), in response to calls from the European Parliament and various stakeholders. The review looked at whether traineeships outside education curricula offer young people a successful pathway into the labour market, and whether the QFT in its current form effectively guarantees traineeship quality. It concluded that traineeships continue to be a crucial pathway for young people to enter the labour market while learning on the job. Quality traineeships, that reflect the principles of the QFT help to increase young people's employability in terms of their skills and access to professional networks, as highlighted by the views expressed in the trainee survey. Quality traineeships also bring distinct opportunities and benefits for employers to attract, train and retain young talent. This is particularly relevant in the context of pronounced skills mismatches and shortages that are particularly affecting some sectors in the EU labour market.

[ALMA \(Aim, Learn, Master, Achieve\)](#) (DG EMPL) is an active inclusion initiative that aims to provide participants with a tailor-made approach. It consists of coaching and counselling, including a supervised stay in a public or private hosting structure in another EU Member State for 2-6 months. ALMA targets the most disadvantaged NEETs aged 18-29, who are most vulnerable with regard to their chances of accessing work or training for individual or structural reasons (e.g. disability, long-term unemployment, insufficient school performance/vocational skills, migration/marginalised background). The objective of ALMA is two-fold: to improve these young people's skills, knowledge and experience so that they can find their way into the job market and society once they are back in their home country; and to give them the opportunity to strengthen their self-esteem and to forge their future. The initiative offers a comprehensive project cycle structured into three phases: preparation, mobility abroad and follow-up. Participants are benefiting from continuous coaching, counselling and training for the entire duration of the project, and all incurred costs (e.g. travel, accommodation, insurance and social security) are covered.

On 16 June 2022, the [Council adopted a Council Recommendation on Individual Learning Accounts](#) (DG EMPL). These Learning Accounts could be a real step-change in helping Member States, and their education and training institutions, to develop an enabling environment in which all working-age adults can upskill and reskill, and develop personal and

professional skills, in line with the Skills Agenda and Communication on achieving a European Education Area by 2025. Individual Learning Accounts ensure that adults can access financial support for training whenever they need it, integrated in a user-friendly way with a registry of available training offers, certification and guidance, and paid training leave provisions. They incentivise the uptake of training in a joined-up way, by giving young people the means to pay for it, and by ensuring that it will be financially worth it for them. The initiative's target group includes young adults, who would benefit from individual Learning Accounts by developing the skillset they need to enter and make successful transitions in the labour market.

In line with the European Pillar of Social Rights, the overall objective of the [reinforced Youth Guarantee \(DG EMPL\)](#) is to support young people to gain work experience and develop the right skills for a changing world of work, particularly those that are relevant to the green and digital transitions. The year 2022 was crucial for implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee. Several Member States started implementing measures under their Recovery and Resilience Plans targeting young people, and youth employment-related measures included in their ESF+ programmes. Member States where the NEET problem is more serious need to devote at least 12.5% of their ESF+ funding to NEETs. All other Member States need to dedicate an appropriate amount to implementing the reinforced Youth Guarantee in line with the gravity of their youth employment challenges. The reinforced Youth Guarantee has no end date and will remain the EU's reference policy framework for fighting youth unemployment and inactivity. Beyond 2022, with the help of EU funds available under the EU's 2021-2027 long-term budget and NextGenerationEU, the reinforced Youth Guarantee will continue striving to achieve more and better: prevention of unemployment and inactivity; school-to-work transitions through tailored and individualised support measures; outreach to and activation of the more vulnerable; upskilling and reskilling; post-placement support; and integrated services. Monitoring of the reinforced Youth Guarantee's implementation also took place via a dedicated multilateral surveillance review in November 2023. The European Network of Public Employment Services contributed through a dedicated survey.

The [2022 Employment and Social Developments in Europe \(ESDE\) review \(DG EMPL\)](#), titled "Young Europeans: employment and social challenges ahead", provides key analysis on the labour market and social situation of young people in the COVID-19 recovery and in the context of the twin transitions.

In 2022, the first edition of [the European Employment and Social Rights Forum \(EESRF\) \(DG EMPL\)](#) took place. During the second day of the event, there were three youth-focused sessions featuring the ESDE report. The topics of discussion focused on labour market outcomes, learning losses, living conditions, and emerging opportunities for young Europeans.

In the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, the Commission committed to presenting an initiative to support social dialogue at EU and national level, which would include an [Information and visiting programme for young future social partner leaders \(DG EMPL\)](#). Preparatory work, including discussions with social partners whose buy-in is essential, is ongoing and continues in 2023.

The [Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 \(DG EMPL\)](#) aims to improve the lives of people with disabilities in the coming decade, in the EU and beyond. It addresses issues that are indispensable for young people with disabilities, such as accessibility; the promotion of independent living; quality social and employment services; accessible and inclusive housing; participation in inclusive education and lifelong learning; and adequate social protection. In 2022, the Commission launched a package to improve labour market outcomes of persons with disabilities, paying particular attention to young people with

disabilities. It provides guidance and supports mutual learning on strengthening the capacities of employment and integration services; promotes hiring perspectives through affirmative action and combating stereotypes; ensures adequate accommodation; ensures health and safety at work, and vocational rehabilitation schemes in the event of chronic diseases or accidents; and presents quality jobs in sheltered employment, as well as pathways to the open labour market.

On 14 June 2021 the Council adopted a [Recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee](#) (DG EMPL). Its objective is to prevent and combat social exclusion by guaranteeing effective access of children in need to a set of key services: free early childhood education and care, free education (including school-based activities and at least one healthy meal each school day), free healthcare as well as healthy nutrition, and adequate housing. To implement the Recommendation, the Member States have nominated their Child Guarantee Coordinators and have prepared national action plans, covering the period until 2030.

The [European Alliance for Apprenticeships EAfA](#) (DG EMPL) is a platform that aims to strengthen the supply, quality, image and mobility of apprenticeships. Since its launch in 2013, 39 countries have made national commitments under the alliance, including the 27 Member States, all candidate countries, all European Free Trade Association countries, and Moldova and Israel. In addition, almost 400 pledges have been made by various apprenticeship stakeholders. Since 2013, companies, employers and intermediaries have pledged to provide over 1.3 million apprenticeships and other training or first-job opportunities to young people. Apprenticeships are an effective form of work-based learning in VET that ease the transition from education and training into work. To ensure that apprenticeships are beneficial for both apprentice and employer, in 2018, Member States agreed on a [European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships](#) setting 14 quality criteria: 7 on learning and working conditions, and 7 on framework conditions.

The [European Apprentices Network \(EAN\)](#) (DG EMPL) is composed of apprentices, youth organisations and other bodies related to apprenticeships. EAN was established in April 2017 to ensure that young apprentices are involved in VET-related policymaking, particularly on apprenticeships. On 24-25 March 2022, the network was relaunched in Barcelona to give it a new impetus, as announced by the 2020 Youth Employment Support package.

The [European Vocational Skills Week](#) (DG EMPL) is an EU campaign to promote VET as an attractive learning and career pathway for young people and adults. In 2023, it is embedded in the European Year of Skills and mobilises VET stakeholders at European, national, regional and local level. The main event is organised during the week of 23-27 October, in coordination with the Spanish Presidency in Sevilla. The Commission is supporting Member States to modernise their VET systems to ensure they are attractive, flexible, agile and respond to labour market needs, in line with the [2020 VET Council Recommendation](#).

On 1 July 2020, the Commission announced its intention to support networks of young entrepreneurs (YES Communication). It also recommended to Member States to promote entrepreneurship in a post-COVID-19 context (EASE Recommendation). In this context, the Commission has set up a [Youth Entrepreneurship Policy Academy](#) (DG EMPL) in partnership with the OECD. This is one of the initiatives announced in the Action Plan on the Social Economy adopted by the Commission on 9 December 2021. The YEPA promotes youth entrepreneurship by working with national policymakers and youth entrepreneurship networks. The initiative puts a special focus on social entrepreneurship – as young people are increasingly looking for work that reflects their values – and on young women entrepreneurs, as the latter remain underrepresented in entrepreneurship. As much as possible, the specific challenges for

young people in each country are identified, as these vary greatly between countries. At the same time, an EU Policy Academy makes it possible to share best practices across borders and, where relevant, to promote cross-national initiatives. The kick-off Conference of the Academy took place on 9 and 10 March 2023. The first online capacity-building event dedicated to ‘Access to finance for young entrepreneurs’ was held on 19, 20 and 21 June (participants are divided into three groups to ease the debate). The second event on ‘Green entrepreneurship for young entrepreneurs’ and ‘Innovative and growth-oriented entrepreneurship’ took place in October 2023 and the third event on ‘Social entrepreneurship’ is taking place in February 2024. The online events are accessible also for non-members of the Academy on the webpage www.yepa-hub.org.

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs (DG GROW) is a cross-border exchange programme that gives new or aspiring entrepreneurs the chance to learn from experienced entrepreneurs running small businesses in other participating countries. The exchange of experience takes place during a stay with the experienced entrepreneur, which helps the new entrepreneur acquire the skills needed to run a small firm. The host benefits from fresh perspectives on their business and gets the opportunities to cooperate with foreign partners and learn about new markets. In 2022, the programme facilitated 1 063 exchanges between new and host entrepreneurs. The programme does not have age limitations and the new entrepreneurs are considered ‘new’ based on their entrepreneurial experience rather than their age. However, in 926 of these exchanges (87%) at least one of the participants was 35 years old or younger and therefore contributed directly to the objectives of the EYY.

In 2023, **DG REFORM** has put forward a **flagship initiative on skills**, meant to support EU Member States to address persistent skills mismatches, labour shortages and insufficient skills of the workforce for the green and digital transition under the **Technical Support Instrument**. In the context of this flagship, support will be provided to the EU Member States to design and implement reforms to prepare Europeans, including young people, for the green and digital economies and adapt the education and training systems to the needs of the labour market.

Through the **EU Youth Delegate programme (EEAS)**, two young people are selected each year to represent young Europeans at the UN. Youth delegates focus on increasing European youth participation in the UN’s work and reaching out to young audiences across the continent to promote and increase the EU’s visibility at the UN. The programme’s core objective is to connect young people with the goal of working together to empower young people and break down barriers, to secure stronger youth engagement in the UN’s work.

DG JUST implemented the comprehensive **EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child** during 2022 to better protect all children and promote their rights. The strategy contains major policy initiatives put forward by the Commission to help children exercise their rights and to place them at the centre of EU policymaking. The initiative was designed with children, for children. DG JUST received over 10 000 replies to an online questionnaire from children across Europe and beyond, as well as input from over 50 focus groups. DG JUST also met with children after the strategy was adopted to explain what was included and what was not, and why. Alongside the official version of the strategy, the team produced an illustrated version for kids. A guide on how to write for children was also produced and there were workshops on how to draft child-friendly and accessible documents..

The **EU Children’s Participation Platform (DG JUST)**, which is one of the main deliverables of the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child, works towards a more systemic, consistent, meaningful, inclusive and safe approach to child participation (all children under 18). It is a hub for existing child participation mechanisms (e.g. national children’s parliaments,

children's city councils, and children's boards advising international NGOs), and for exchange experiences or peer learning. It also contributes to involving children in EU decision-making processes. Alongside its offline work, the platform includes an online space for members, including children, to connect with one another. Vice-President Šuica officially launched the Child Participation Platform participatory process on 27 September 2022, during the European Forum on the Rights of the Child. The Commission set up the Child Participation Platform in close partnership with children, the European Parliament and child rights' organisations. The contract for the platform's management and implementation was signed in September 2022 and its first General Assembly took place on 26 and 27 June 2023. See the EU Children's Participation Platform for more information.

Aligned with the [EU Strategy on Combating Antisemitism and Fostering Jewish Life](#), the Commission supported the establishment of the **Network of Young European Ambassadors for Holocaust Remembrance (DG JUST)**. This initiative, funded through the Citizenship, Equality, Rights and Values programme, aims to engage schools, universities and vocational training institutions in promoting accurate information about the Holocaust among young Europeans. The network seeks to empower young people to access and share information on the subject both online and offline, promoting innovative approaches to Holocaust remembrance. The initiative was officially launched at the Civil Society Forum on combating antisemitism and promoting Jewish life, held in Brussels on 16 and 17 November 2022.

In March 2022, the Commission organised the **European Anti-Racism Summit (DG JUST)** as part of the [EU Anti-racism Action Plan](#). The summit brought together EU institutions, Member States, civil society, equality bodies, grassroots organisations and young people to discuss the impact of racism on racialised young people. The event emphasised the ongoing need to combat racism in the EU and highlighted the important role that all young people can play in this effort. The summit took place on 21 March 2022 in Brussels and online, featuring a high-level panel session on 'Enhancing participation of racialised young people in the fight against racism and discrimination.' Commissioner Gabriel set the scene in a video message, and the EU Youth Coordinator, Biliana Sirakova, also took part. In addition to the panel, the summit included discussions on national action plans against racism, as well as breakout sessions, including one focused on addressing the effects of racism in education.

The Commission's European Cooperation Network on Elections⁶¹ of Member State competent authorities on free and fair elections, has supported exchanges of good practices that help different groups of citizens participate in elections, **including younger persons**. On 25 November 2021, the Commission adopted a package of measures to strengthen democracy and protect the integrity of elections (**DG JUST**), with two recast legislative proposals laying down detailed arrangements regarding the electoral rights of 'mobile EU citizens'. It aims to ensure broad and inclusive participation in elections, support them in the exercise of their rights, protect the integrity of elections. It also puts forward measures facilitating access to electoral information, which could also entail the provision of information and the use of means of communication adapted to specific voter groups such as **young voters**. A high-level event on elections was organised on 23-24 October (DG JUST) with representatives of Member States' authorities responsible for the organisation of elections at director level. A session was dedicated to measures promoting inclusive political representation of different groups, **including younger persons**, sharing perspectives, experiences and strategies for increasing

⁶¹ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/eu-citizenship/democracy-and-electoral-rights/european-cooperation-network-elections_en

inclusivity in EU democracies. As part of the ‘Defence of Democracy’ package the Commission is also preparing a recommendation promoting high democratic standards on European and national elections and referenda. Among others, it will support broad participation in elections of different groups, including **youth participation in elections**. In view of the 2024 elections to the European Parliament, the Commission is going to conduct a mobile EU citizens campaign, which will complement the European Parliaments’ overall awareness-raising campaign ahead of the elections by specifically reaching out to EU citizens residing in another Member State, focusing on **young voters**.

Throughout the Year, the [Interreg Volunteer Youth Initiative](#) (DG REGIO) benefited more than 700 young volunteers, who were trained in project management and communication through an Interreg programme or Interreg projects. In the Macro-Regional Strategies, 2022 saw the creation of the **Danube Youth Council**, giving young people from the Danube Region a dedicated space in which to debate and be consulted on political decisions. Another Youth Council is in the process of being created through the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region. In parallel, the Youth Council in the [Alps](#) continues its activities, and young people in the Baltic have issued a [Baltic Sea Youth Declaration](#).

As part of the work on the [long-term vision for the EU’s rural areas](#), which identifies the need to empower rural young people to access greater opportunities, **DG AGRI**, together with **DG REGIO**, has also taken the essential steps towards the set-up of the [Rural revitalisation platform](#) launched in June 2023, as envisaged in the [EU Rural action plan](#). This is a one-stop shop for rural communities, young people living in rural areas, rural project holders and local authorities alike to collaborate. It predominantly supports rural areas affected by population loss, ageing and a lack of economic opportunities, by sharing information and best practices on tools and strategies and could be particularly relevant for young people living in rural areas or that may decide to move there. The website is embedded in the wider Rural Pact community platform and includes collaborative tools (creation of profile, user generated content, community groups) and a space enabling access resources (good practices, projects and other websites) alongside news and events. The dedicated session on ‘Rural youth as leaders of change’ organised at the [Rural Pact conference](#) on 15-16 June 2022, and the EU CAP Network workshop on ‘[Young entrepreneurs – Engines of innovation in rural areas](#)’ (30 November to 1 Dec 2022), contributed to the design of this platform and to a broader dialogue on the role of young people in rural areas and the Rural Pact, reflected in the inclusion of rural youth representatives in the [Rural Pact coordination group](#), the governance body of the Rural Pact.

The [EUSAIR4YOUTH Action](#) (DG REGIO) project aims to strengthen the sense of community in the Adriatic-Ionian region by empowering cities, young people, universities and organisations from countries included in the European Union Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR). The EUSAIR4YOUTH project seeks to stimulate the participation of young people in EU activities and increase their understanding of the EU policymaking process. Through a sports competition and engagement with policymakers, young people are having the opportunity to make recommendations and help to shape the response to the region’s future challenges. The project aims to harness young people’s potential as the driving force of society, promoting cultural understanding, social cohesion and inclusion, dialogue, awareness of EU policymaking, and interregional cooperation.

The **Youth NEXT project** (DG REGIO), carried out by three junior professionals, targeted the Interreg NEXT programmes, namely the Interreg programmes with the neighbouring countries of the EU. The main objective of the project was to understand how to better involve

young people in the policy shaping of the EU external programmes. This was particularly relevant in the times of crisis (post-COVID-19 pandemic) and war (Russian aggression in Ukraine) that have affected young people aspirations. The project included interviews with managing authorities of the targeted programmes and with young people coming from the neighbouring countries, to gather their feedback and impressions on the current youth involvement.

In May 2022, the Commission launched a call for applications for a [Bioeconomy Youth Ambassadors Network](#) (DG RTD). These Youth Ambassadors are now taking an active role and amplifying the voice of young people in bioeconomy over a period of two years. The call was a great success: 15 Youth Ambassadors were selected from all over the EU, based on the 325 applications received. Youth Ambassadors are between the ages of 18 and 32 and have expertise in various fields related to bioeconomy. They lead by example, inform and inspire others about the bioeconomy, raise awareness, and participate in various bioeconomy-related events and discussions. They also participated in the High-Level Bioeconomy Conference, which took place on 6-7 October 2022 by helping to design session content and take-away messages.

To make the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) better known among the public, and particularly young people, the Commission launched [EU Democracy in Action – Have Your Say with the European Citizens' Initiative](#) (SG) in 2023. It is a four-unit learning toolkit that introduces young people to the ECI while they are still in secondary school and encourages them to take an active role in European issues. Aimed at pupils in the last two years of high school, and using instruction, research, debate, project work and role play, the toolkit teaches how decisions are made in the EU, how those decisions affect their everyday lives and, most importantly, how the ECI enables them to help shape EU policy on issues that they care about. The toolkit is suitable for citizenship or civics classes but would also work as part of a project-based foreign language class. It is being promoted to schools through the Learning Corner and its newsletter; webinars for teachers; mailouts to schools, their networks and teachers' organisations; and relevant websites and social media. In addition, a video competition based on the toolkit is being organised for secondary school students in autumn 2023, and three winning teams are to be offered a study trip to Brussels.

The [Horizon Europe Young Observer](#) (RTD) 2022 policy initiative invites master's students to participate as young observers in the evaluations of proposals under the EU's research and innovation funding programme, Horizon Europe. The initiative enables students across Europe to witness the robust, fair and impartial evaluation process at EU level that contributes to Europe's cutting-edge research and competitiveness. Students currently enrolled in a master's programme in any discipline at a university in any Member State can apply. Students from disadvantaged and diverse backgrounds or belonging to vulnerable and marginalised groups are particularly encouraged to apply. This initiative provides a unique way to open up the Horizon Europe evaluation process to young people who are interested in research, and inspire them to pursue research-related careers and participate actively in EU processes. See [Become a Horizon Europe Young Observer for more information](#).

3.2.2.1.2. Other EU institutions

The **European Parliament** launched a specific **call for applications** dedicated to the Year. It awarded seven grants to pan-European organisations focused on capacity-building activities supporting young people to become advocates for democratic participation and active

citizenship. All seven projects awarded recruited a network of young advocates for democratic participation and active citizenship covering all Member States (the minimum was 7 I/project) and provided them with skills-based training on relevant topics as for instance: knowledge of EU institutions and especially the European Parliament; activism; campaigning; social media communication; non-formal education methods and so on. One example of such capacity-building programmes can be found here: [LevelUp! Activism training programmes | Activist Network](#).

The **CoR** worked with representatives of youth organisations across the EU and the European Youth Forum to draft a [Charter on Youth and Democracy](#) in a bottom-up, participatory process. Based on the input from the youth representatives, the charter makes concrete recommendations on how to build and consolidate a more youth-friendly democratic space to ensure that young people's voices are formally, continuously and permanently represented in the EU, in all Member States, regions and cities. The Charter was co-signed by the Presidents of the Youth Forum and the CoR as part of a high-level political debate at the closure of the Year. It can be found on a [dedicated website](#) created by the CoR to promote youth participation in democratic life.

The **CoR** also issued an own-initiative [opinion on the Future of EU youth policy](#), with policy recommendations building on consultations of youth organisations, including the European Youth Forum, and held several youth-related political debates with youth representatives and politicians from the local and regional as well as national and European levels, including also a conference at the margins of the closing event of the Conference on the Future of Europe in Strasbourg in May 2022. Most importantly, the biennial CoR [Summit of Cities and Regions](#) held during the French Presidency in Marseille, featured an entire morning of high-level events with and focusing on the young people, in particular in the recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic and in the context of discussions on the future of European democracy, strengthening youth engagement and European values.

The **CoR** also committed to ensuring the continuation of its successful [Young Elected Politicians Programme](#) for elected politicians under the age of 40, which enables them to visit the CoR and other EU institutions, and become familiar with their work and European politics. Where relevant, the programme also includes them in consultations that the CoR organises to incorporate the perspectives from young elected politicians in its work.

As part of the 13th edition of the [Civil Society Prize 2022](#), the **EESC** rewarded initiatives that aimed to create a better future for and with European young people by addressing the specific needs of young people, and helping to empower them and engage them in all spheres of economic and social life. The winning projects included three non-profit initiatives that contribute to the empowerment and participation of European young people: [Fundación Secretariado Gitano's](#) Learning by Doing, which addresses youth unemployment; [Movimento Transformers' Superpower School](#), which empowers at-risk young people; and [Associazione Agevolando's](#) Care Leavers Network, which supports young people with experience of the care system. The awards ceremony was attended by journalists from all Member States and received extensive social media engagement, with a potential reach of 18 815 000 on Twitter and 2 523 mentions of the event hashtag.

The **EESC** developed several opinions in 2022 to strengthen the voices of young people in different fields: [SOC/753 Young people's role in the green transition](#); [SOC/706 European Year of Youth 2022](#); [NAT/860 Empowering young people to achieve sustainable development](#)

[through education](#); [REX/556 Youth action plan in the EU external action](#); and [REX/553 Youth Policy in the Western Balkans, as part of the Innovation Agenda for the Western Balkans](#).

In the information report⁶², the **EESC interviewed two UK youth organisations**: the British Youth Council and Young Scot, and proposed consideration of ‘a future mobility scheme for young people between the UK and the EU.’ In addition, and at the request of the EU Delegation to the UK, the EESC proposed four young professionals for the 2024 [EU Visitors Programme](#): one from the British Youth Council (UK level), one from Young Scot (Scotland), one from the Human Rights Consortium (Northern Ireland), and one from the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (Wales).

Youth organisations actively engaged in various other activities organised by the **EESC’s** observatories and groups, thereby amplifying the range of youth issues, priorities and perspectives. The Labour Market Observatory held a public hearing in March 2022, focusing on [Youth participation in the EU labour market](#). This session examined the challenges, opportunities and trends related to youth employment through discussions involving civil society organisations and socio-professional stakeholders. The Permanent Group on Inclusion of the Roma organised a public hearing in April 2022, specifically addressing [Roma children and young people in public education: assessing the situation and the way forward](#). Another public hearing, organised by the Permanent Group on Disability Rights in April 2022, centred around the [Employment of young people with disabilities](#). These discussions, enriched by the participation of numerous youth organisations, will contribute to the official reports of the respective EESC observatories and groups. The Civil Society Organisations’ group (Group III) hosted a webinar on [Youth in the post-war reconstruction process](#) in June 2022. Several other events and public hearings also took place in 2022, such as [encouraging the engagement of young people towards achieving sustainable development](#); [empowering young people to achieve sustainable development through education](#); and [Youth Action Plan for young people worldwide: Next step – implementation!](#)

3.2.2.2. Examples of achievements at national level

A few examples of Member States’ achievements at national, regional and local level are presented to support the second EYY objective. Member States seized the opportunity to embed individual EYY events and activities within the context of ongoing, wider and longer-term efforts – at local, regional, national and European level – to empower young people as the driving force of Europe’s social, economic and political future. It must therefore be noted that coordination of the Year’s events at national level also gave EU policy initiatives and funding opportunities increased visibility and attention, especially when it came to supporting young people to become active and engaged citizens.

The French-speaking part of **Belgium** launched a call for applications for the designation of five *Coups de Cœur Jeunesse* (Youth Favourites in English) for projects to be led by young people in 2022 in the region. During the concluding event of the EYY organised by the French-speaking part, the winners were granted EUR 3 000 each to bolster their projects’ forthcoming endeavours. Furthermore, custom videos were created for each project, enabling the young winners to showcase their initiatives. Subsequently, these videos were shared across social networks and partner websites.

⁶² [REX/563 Implementation of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement](#)

The three Ministries of Youth in **Belgium** organised jointly the [Bel'J Day event](#). During the event young people had the chance to engage with Ministers in meaningful discussions about volunteering. Since 2009 the event has been the heart of collaboration for the Belgian Youth Ministries and enables three different tracks of collaboration: for individual young people, groups and also youth workers.

To ensure the inclusion of rural young people, **Bulgaria** held a series of events called the **Young Leaders Academy** in six small towns, from October 2022 to February 2023. The programme included practical tasks and lectures presenting the policy development and implementation processes for young people at national and local level and promoting active youth participation. The six academies were attended by a total of 180 young people.

Throughout the Year, **Czechia** cooperated with the Erasmus Student Network and held **84 workshops** in Praha, Brno, Ústí nad Labem, Ostrava and Zlín, mostly on **social inclusion, education and youth, skills and employability, and the green dimension**. Over 5 300 students, both local and with Erasmus+, were involved in the workshops. Each of the regional seminars consisted of two main parts: a simplified simulation of the European Council and European Parliament; and a debate with politicians, experts and other public figures. The Decide for Europe project continued in the following year and, as part of the legacy of the EYY, a four-day model meeting of the EU institutions took place in January 2023.

For **Czechia**, the EYY involved **cooperating in preparations for the Year's final conference**, held in Brussels in December 2022. In cooperation with the Trio Presidency, a call was launched for young people who wanted to be part of the preparations. As a result, a Youth Task Force group was set up, consisting of two Czech, two French and two Swedish students. They visited the European Parliament in October 2022 in preparation for the closing conference.

In November 2022, **Czechia** organised the **Art of Living Together conference** in Prague, aimed at giving young people who are actively involved in community life the opportunity to share their experiences and inspire others. The event was attended by approximately 200 people and consisted of workshops, inspirational speeches and a Youth Talks session with seven participants, followed by a panel discussion. An evaluation questionnaire was sent to all participants after the event. According to the answers, more than half of the participants are currently actively involved in changing society for the better, some of them with the help of European programmes.

In addition to this, **Czechia** hosted **training for NGOs on How to Support and Integrate Young Refugees** in Prague from 29 November to 2 December 2022. There were speakers from the NGO People in Need, who focused on the current refugee crisis caused by the war in Ukraine, and from the NGO Doctors without Borders, who discussed the psychological aspects of working with refugees. In addition to the training, there were also workshops with successful project implementers who had taken part in the extraordinary Erasmus+ Spring Call in response to the situation in Ukraine.

To support, promote and empower young people's active participation in democratic life, **Denmark** set up a **steering group** consisting of a wide range of relevant stakeholders. The steering group participated in most of the activities that took place during the Year, promoting them to their networks and encouraging their young members to apply for EYY Micro Grants. The steering group was highly successful and will continue its work after EYY.

In April 2022, **Finland** also set up a **Youth Steering Group**. It consisted of 11 members between 16 and 29 years old, 5 of whom were from disadvantaged backgrounds. All of them

were positively surprised by the amount of responsibility they were given, and the opportunities they got to impact the design and specific EYY activities. The Youth Steering Group model is one of the main legacies of EYY in Finland and has already been adopted by the EuroPeers Finland network.

In May 2022, **Finland** launched the **EYY Finland Awards competition**. A jury comprised of five Erasmus+ experts from the Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI) and one member of the Youth Steering Group selected 10 finalists. The winners were announced during the national final event on 19 January 2023. As part of their recognition, the finalists were invited on a study visit to Brussels from 6 to 9 February 2023, during which they had the opportunity to share best practices in youth participation with their Belgian counterparts. The finalists expressed that their models had gained visibility in the youth field, both in Finland and Belgium. The process also provided them with new ideas to enhance their work with young people, enabled them to set up networks, and increased their awareness of EU funding opportunities.

Finland targeted smaller, rural communities with the **EU Youth Goals Library Tour**, which exhibited European Youth Goals posters in public libraries in 10 municipalities. The posters were produced by a youth art club and presented the goals from young people's perspectives. Visitors voted for their favourite European Youth Goal, and six local newspapers wrote about the exhibition, the Youth Steering Group and EYY. The number of people reached overall was 1 000.

Germany organised the **Federal Youth Conference as a major nationwide event**. From 2 to 4 September 2022, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth invited young people from all over Germany to a Federal Youth Conference on youth policy and participation in Berlin. It was an event format that takes place every two years and was placed in the context of the EYY. The conference was a central participation format of the Federal Government's Youth Strategy and was closely linked to the objectives of the EYY in terms of its approach and objectives (e.g. strengthening youth participation, cross-sectoral youth policy, taking young people's perspectives into account in policymaking).

Between 23 May and 10 June 2022, **Greece** opened a **call to the National Youth Council** for the submission of proposals for actions under the objectives and subject-specific pillars of the EYY. The committee received five proposals, three of which were selected and funded by the Grant Agreement.

For **Greece**, introduction of the **National Youth Capital** is part of the legacy of the Year. The Honorary Title of the National Youth Capital for the Municipalities of Greece will be awarded annually to one of the country's municipalities. The selection procedure for the first National Youth Capital 2024 was announced at the EYY closing event in Athens.

To implement the policy on the promotion of cultural goods and contemporary youth artworks **Greece** launched the project **Art, a silent revolution: art as a dynamic tool for social transformation and change to address inequality, stereotypes, racism and manifestations of violence and abuse**. Consisting of a series of events and activities, the project included rural young people in two informative events: one in Orestiada in Evros (18 December 2022), and one in Heraklion in Crete (5 April 2023).

Hungary organised the **You Have a Say! Parliamentary Youth Day** on 2 December 2022. The event provided a platform for young people to express their opinions and learn effective communication skills to engage with politicians. Participants gained practical insights into the

voting process, as well as knowledge about political parties and the roles of the Hungarian Parliament and European Parliament. The event aimed to create a guided experience, enabling young individuals to exercise their right to speak up and familiarise themselves with European and national youth policies. Workshops also focused on informing participants about European mobility opportunities and how to access them. The event attracted 320 attendees – predominantly high school students – who had a valuable opportunity to interact and discuss with members of the Hungarian Parliament, as well as Hungarian representatives from the European Parliament.

Hungary launched a 220-hour youth support adult training. The training was nationally recognised, and is unique in the Hungarian youth profession, which provided a supply for the Hungarian youth profession in addition to the higher education community organisation educational major. Until this initiative, there was no independent youth professional training in Hungary according to the European Qualifications Framework, although the speciality of youth support appears in the field of higher education, formal training of professionals dealing with social groups covers only about one fifth of the Hungarian society. In the interest of the development of the youth civil sector, the National Youth Council launched this initiative under the EYY2022.

Hungary undertook research on the situation of entrepreneurship education in Hungary and recognition of Youthpass as a tool helping young people's employability. The main takeaways of the research state the importance of entrepreneurship education and its promotion is mainly justified by the need to create jobs, especially to reduce youth unemployment and address NEETs. The acquisition of entrepreneurial skills also fits in with the concept of lifelong learning. The need for entrepreneurship education is also emerging at an increasingly young age. In addition to entrepreneurship education courses and programmes in higher education institutions, entrepreneurship education in primary and secondary schools is also increasingly emphasised. This activity examined the applicability, relevance and impact of the YouthPass in Hungary.

Latvia conducted **feasibility studies for topics that need to be explored as part of youth policy** from December 2022 to January 2023. The study aimed to identify the current situation of research into the youth sector and youth target, and the research still needed in the areas of youth and youth policy was then carried out.

To empower rural young people to participate in or organise activities, **Lithuania** created **four civic youth spaces** in Rokiškis, Elektrėnai, Visaginas and Klaipėda. These spaces were open for at least five days a week. Young people engaged in activities on themes such as leadership, creativity, citizenship and the green transition. Active local young people were pleased to have a coworking and learning space, where they could engage with their peers in daily activities, work and interact with their organisations. In 2023, it was decided that the civic youth space in Visaginas would remain open, and that the Agency of Youth Affairs would continue working to expand the network of civic youth spaces in the coming years.

Lithuania also formed a network of Youth Ambassadors to motivate young people all over Lithuania, in an initiative called **Year of Youth Ambassadors**. During EYY, around 140 Youth Ambassadors helped communicate EYY activities and volunteered as part of the Travelling Year of Youth and other events. They worked with youth-affairs coordinators in municipalities to implement activities and engage young people. The initiative is being continued in 2023 with the name Ambassadors of Youth Policy.

Malta financed a piece of national youth research called **Mirrors and windows: Maltese young people's perception of themselves, their families, communities and society**, with the

aim of assessing the backgrounds, perceptions, values and behaviours of a representative sample (n=1 200) of young people in Malta between the ages of 16 and 30. It covered a wide range of issues, including their personal and social development, family and relationships, and health and well-being, as well as their views on religion, politics, the environment, their use of social media, their language skills, and their cultural and leisure pursuits.

In the **Netherlands**, the **Youth Participation Event Den Bosch** (28 May 2022) was organised in collaboration with European Youth Dialogue, the Dutch Youth Representatives to the EU, and local Youth Ambassadors from the city of Den Bosch (in the south of the country), to discuss how to involve more young people in local politics.

The **Netherlands** also organised a conference on meaningful and inclusive youth participation, **VER_ander**, which was held on 24 November 2022 in Den Bosch and involved 250 professionals in the youth domain. Workshops and inspiration sessions were provided by various parties, with contributions ranging from local best practices and active young people that were formerly imprisoned to successful international Erasmus+ collaborations and the Liaison Office of the European Parliament. It was co-organised with the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity National Agency.

In addition, the **Netherlands** set up a **Dialogue Dinner** for young people and politicians in the West-Friesland region, in January 2023. The event was co-organised with local young people and consisted of several brainstorm and dialogues with local youngsters and politicians, who discussed the region's colonial history and active role in the slave trade. They delved into questions about how to talk about that history, as well as how municipalities and local young people can collaborate and create opportunities for youngsters to be included and taken seriously.

In June 2022, **Norway** organised a **2-day conference** as a kick-off for the programme period 2021-2027, which was delayed because of COVID-19. Participants included beneficiaries, newcomers in the youth field and potential applicants, stakeholders, and other relevant people and organisations in the youth field. After the event, a call for funding opportunities under the EYY was announced. The conference had a lasting impact: it spread broader knowledge about the programme among relevant target groups, and 16 local EYY activities took place in the months following it.

Slovakia was very active in promoting information for young people and youth workers. For instance, the Slovak Youth Council for the National Institute of Education and Youth conducted [research on young people and labour markets](#). The results, which were presented to participants, focused on the experiences of young people when looking for work during the COVID-19 pandemic, but also on the skills and benefits of informal education for successful employment.

Furthermore, **Slovakia** organised different **thematic training sessions** during the EYY, among which summer schools had a prominent role. The Summer Schools that took place in summer (11-15 July 2022) and autumn (21-23 October 2022), consisted of simulation activities, as well as real-life visits to different departments and offices.

In addition, **Slovakia** organised a **Europe Day celebration in Košice** on 6 May 2022. During the programmes information about activities and the possibilities of EU programmes for young people, such as Erasmus+ for young people and the European Solidarity Corps was delivered.

Slovenia organised a **dialogue between young people and the Commissioner for Crisis Management, Janez Lenarčič**. Involving 150 active young people, it aimed to ensure that youth voices are heard at EU level.

In line with the spirit of the EYY, **Spain** followed a co-creation bottom-up approach in which Injuve performed a cross-programme, cross-field role in coordinating national activities. Injuve involved all the national relevant actors and, for example, created a **national steering group** including regional governments, the National Youth Council, the Creative Europe desks, youth organisations and other youth-programme coordinating bodies. Through regional stakeholders, Spain carried out a **consultation to identify relevant topics to promote among young people**, depending on the local, regional and national context. This consultation took place in July and August 2022.

During the EYY, **Sweden** organised **seminars for young people, young journalists and Youth Ambassadors about democracy and the media** at Almedalen Week 2022 – a democratic meeting place for dialogue and exchange between various actors. Almedalen Week itself was visited by 45 000 people and 2 000 organisations, while the seminars were attended by 90 participants on-site and 638 online. The seminars looked at different perspectives on why media literacy is important, especially during election times. Some younger participants also requested more information about the EU.

A **political panel debate** took place in **Sweden** at the Europaforum in Hässleholm on 25 May 2022, with the aim of inspiring young people to vote in Sweden's upcoming election and in the Mock School Elections. A total of 195 people attended on-site.

Micro Grant schemes – a major EYY initiative

In **Austria**, EYY Micro Grants of up to EUR 1 000 were awarded. Out of the 297 applications submitted, 181 received financial support, and a total of 434 activities and events have been organised. The biggest event was held on 11 November in Vienna with around 400 participants, including a number of high-level representatives from the EU, and representatives from the Western Balkans.

Just like in many other Member States, the EYY Micro Grants scheme was highly successful in **Denmark** too. Youth-led projects were pitched via video application, and this set-up was very effective in enabling the inclusion of applications from newcomers and young people with fewer opportunities. More than 40 proposals received funding overall.

Finland also recognised the effectiveness of the EYY Micro Grants scheme. Launched on 9 May 2022, this initiative specifically targeted youth-led groups. Over the course of five application rounds, a total of 24 mini projects run by young people received funding. The selection process involved special evaluating juries, which each included a member from the Finnish Youth Steering Group. The funded projects successfully reached 2 893 young individuals. Notably, the EYY Micro Grants project served as a significant component of the Years' communication activities. Local youth groups and national youth organisations have expressed a desire to maintain a similar, easily accessible funding mechanism beyond EYY.

In **Germany**, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth implemented the EYY Micro Grants scheme, enabling organisations to apply for up to

EUR 5 000 for small projects that are in line with the Year's objectives. The German National Agency, JUGEND für Europa, confirmed that there were 120 applications to the EYY Micro Grants scheme. Some of these were from organisations that were not previously part of Erasmus+ or the European Solidarity Corps, meaning they had managed to reach new target groups.

In **Iceland**, the EYY Micro Grants scheme was also highly successful, with 18 proposals selected for funding that amounted to EUR 24 000. The funded activities address a variety of societal challenges, such as racism, mental health and climate change, reaching nearly 1 500 young people. Participants expressed great appreciation for this bottom-up initiative, which emphasised the crucial role that young people play in shaping society's future.

In **Ireland**, the EYY Micro Grants scheme targeted local grassroots youth groups, providing funding of up to EUR 5 000 for youth projects aligned with EYY priorities. The scheme received an overwhelming response, with 263 applications, resulting in EUR 296 629.00 being awarded to 106 high-quality projects across Ireland. Notably, 81% of the beneficiary organisations were newcomers to Erasmus+ or the European Solidarity Corps, helping to promote new relationships. The scheme also offered feedback to unsuccessful applicants, leading to improved subsequent applications. The initiative had broad appeal to both youth organisations and marginalised groups, including efforts to reach rural and isolated communities through targeted promotions.

Table 6. Examples of Micro Grant Schemes allocation

3.2.2.3. Examples of achievements at stakeholder level

DISCLAIMER

The following section contains a selection of key achievements provided by EYY stakeholders, with the aim of giving a snapshot of the types of activities organised under this specific objective. All of the achievements of EYY stakeholders can be found on the [EYY Activities map](#).

To enable more young people to become active and engaged citizens, the French **l'Association de la Fondation Étudiante pour la Ville (AFEV)** ran a consultation about Europe and young people's perceptions of the EU, focusing particularly on students and children from disadvantaged backgrounds who are not familiar with EU matters. The consultation led to a policy brief and recordings of several young people who shared their ideas in a podcast format, which was streamed on a radio show in collaboration with [Euradio](#).

The **ERYICA Youth Ambassadors Commission (EYAC)**, a pilot initiative that began in 2022 as part of the YinfoPeers project and the European Year on Youth, is now a reality within the ERYICA structure. The commission consists of 8 young representatives from 6 countries who representing the larger Youth Ambassadors' community of 40 ambassadors across Europe.

In collaboration with ERYICA during EYY, **Eurodesk** released comprehensive guidelines on '[Youth Participation in Youth Information Services](#)'. The guidelines offer

recommendations on diverse models and formats that facilitate meaningful engagement of young individuals, as well as good practices from both organisations' networks.

Eurodesk also launched the [Pool of European Young Journalists](#) in January 2022, in cooperation with the Commission. The project ensured peer-to-peer information and the creation of a youth community behind the Year. Additionally, these young people are the ears and eyes on the ground, as they attended and reported on European events organised during the Year, such as the European Day of Languages, the Conference on the Future of Europe and the EYY summer festivals. The young journalists receive training from experts in the field of journalism and they publish their content on the Youth Portal.

During 2022, **YMCA Europe** was able to directly impact 3 339 young people and youth workers and an estimated 200 youth organisations through **training and education, capacity-building activities and youth policy work**, contributing to increasing youth participation, inclusion of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, strengthening the employability of young people through developing their soft and hard skill sets.

In the beginning of 2022 YMCA Europe quickly reorganised itself for **support and assistance to Ukrainian refugees** and internally displaced persons through their member organisations around Europe. Using the funds fundraised by YMCA Europe for these efforts, 116 projects were supported through the sub-granting scheme resulting in over 200 000 Ukrainian refugees and internally displaced people being assisted.

3.2.3 EYY Objective 3: promoting opportunities available to young people from public policies at all levels

The EYY's third objective was to raise young people's awareness about the opportunities that the EU provides for their personal and professional development. This aimed to help them navigate the post-pandemic period successfully. The Year focused on promoting these opportunities. The following chapters provide examples of initiatives organised during the Year that are aligned with this objective, highlighting how they supported young people to understand and access these opportunities for growth and advancement in a green, digital and inclusive world.

3.2.3.1. Key achievements at EU level

3.2.3.1.1. European Commission

The EYY was promoted through a series of **music and cultural events in 2022 (DG EAC)**. These included summer festivals, music concerts and artistic performances. They were organised at EU and national level in cooperation with Member States and stakeholders active in the [Creative Europe Programme](#). This brought Europe closer to its young people, while bringing them closer to Europe's vibrant culture and heritage. Music plays a fundamental role in young people's development and can often be a window into their social, psychological and cultural needs.

Throughout the Year, many music festivals adopted the EYY branding. On 21 June 2022, the Commission announced a partnership with the European Festivals Association (EFA) and

Yourope (both funded under the Creative Europe network scheme), endorsing the Year's objectives and adding a cultural dimension. A joint campaign by Yourope and EFA was launched on 12 August 2022 with the support of around 73 festivals and organisations across 24 countries. The European Festival Awards 2022 also set up a special Impossible without Youth Award, which was presented to the Danish festival Roskilde in one of the 16 award categories. Visit the [Impossible without Youth](#) and [European Festival Awards](#) websites for more information.

Learning about European culture is at the heart of DiscoverEU, the Erasmus+ action that enables 18-year-olds to explore Europe, mainly by rail. The EYY's policy initiative, [Youth discovers culture thanks to DiscoverEU in 2022](#) (DG EAC), aimed to increase connections and cultural dialogue among young people travelling with DiscoverEU. A [Culture Route](#) was published on the Youth Portal in May 2022 to encourage young people to embark on a cultural journey during their travels. The route highlights places of cultural interest, including cities that are European Capitals of Culture or home to European Heritage Label sites. Since summer 2022, DiscoverEU travellers have been given a [card](#) that gives them a discount on many cultural activities across Europe. The Erasmus+ National Agencies also launched the DiscoverEU [Meet-ups](#) initiative in summer 2022, enabling DiscoverEU travellers to get together and take part in a programme of activities, including exploring local culture.

The **Juvenes Translatores (DGT)** translation contest for schools brought together 2 883 students from all Member States to participate in a unique event, translating a text on the theme of youth, to reflect the spirit of the Year. The texts used for translation also reached many schools that did not participate officially in the competition, enabling even more students to engage with the content. [The EU Learning Corner](#) published several articles on the EYY in its [News and Competitions](#) section, available in all 24 official EU languages. Articles also featured in the January 2022 and October 2022 editions of *Learning Corner News*. This is a newsletter sent to approximately 146 000 schools throughout the EU, again in all 24 official EU languages.

The **European Day of Language (EDL) (DGT)** celebrations were linked to the Year and focused on reaching out to underprivileged young people across several EU countries. The events addressed pressing issues such as those fleeing Ukraine joining and multilingual classrooms. This underlined the importance of translation and language learning to help these people integrate. With a total of 70 events in 25 countries, the EDL also organised a conference, Languages at the Service of Youth, in collaboration with DG EAC. The conference featured live connections and interactions with various EDL events happening in Member States. It was supported by cooperation between DG EAC and the European Pool of Young Journalists initiative.

The [2022 eMT Challenge](#) (DGT) consisted of evaluating the quality of machine translations, providing an opportunity for students on translation master's programmes across Europe to demonstrate their linguistic and digital skills in a situation similar to their future profession. The winners (one per Member State) were invited to attend DGT's conference, the Translating Europe Forum, where they had the opportunity to network with translation professionals and potential employers.

One of the Commission's flagship economic events, the [Brussels Economic Forum 2022 – Focus on Youth](#) (DG ECFIN), took place on 17 May 2022, on the theme 'The future is now: which economy for the next generation?'. Youth was a common thread woven throughout the event. One panel was devoted specifically to youth-related economic issues and featured young speakers from institutions, academia and the private sector. All panels were opened by young

award-winning economists. Young people were specifically targeted as participants. Around 25% of the audience was made up of people under 30, including a delegation of youth representatives from national youth NGOs who were selected with the help of the Commission's Representations in Member States.

The Commission organised a **special one-day visit to DG ECHO for a group of young professionals**, providing them with a unique opportunity to engage in a discussion with Commissioner Lenarčič. The visit gave them insights into how DG ECHO works, and they shared ideas directly with the Commissioner in an enriching exchange.

The Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network organised the [Youth in Civil Protection and Disaster Risk Management](#) initiative (DG ECHO). It brought together 47 young people aged 18-35 with an interest or professional involvement in civil protection and disaster risk management from 25 Member States and Participating States of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM). A two-day study visit held in Brussels on 11 and 12 October 2022 welcomed up to two representatives per country, nominated by their national civil protection authorities. It was an interactive event that included hands-on sessions, presentations on different aspects of civil protection and disaster risk management, a visit to the Emergency Response Coordination Centre, a simulation exercise, and networking opportunities. The objective was to promote and develop knowledge of the UCPM, increase understanding of European civil protection, and promote an inclusive community that offers peer support and cooperation beyond formal structures.

A **Civil Society Dialogue Network Policy Meeting (EEAS)** was organised on 13 and 14 January 2022 with the participation of 14 young civil society experts. The theme was 'The EU's implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda: gathering young experts' recommendations'. The results of that meeting fed into the Youth Action Plan in the EU's external action for 2022-2027, as well as the High-Level Global Conference on Youth-Inclusive Peace Processes, which took place on 20-21 January 2022. This high-level conference was co-hosted by Qatar and the governments of Finland and Colombia and was organised with civil society and UN partners.

In autumn 2021, on **DG EMPL's** request, a network of independent experts published a study on '[Access to social protection for young people](#)'. The study covers 35 countries (the 27 EU Member States, the UK and the 7 candidate and potential candidate countries) and is made up of a synthesis report and 35 national country reports. It provides an overview of young people's access to social protection schemes in five categories of cash benefits (unemployment benefits, maternity/paternity/parental benefits, sickness and healthcare benefits, guaranteed minimum income benefits and housing benefits).

The study also includes an overview of the main gaps and obstacles that young people face in accessing these benefits. According to the report's findings, the main gaps relate to age and activity status, including the over-representation of young people in non-standard work and the shorter time they have been working. Activity status-based criteria hinder young people's access to contributory benefits more often than age-based criteria, which are important mainly for minimum income schemes. Non-standard workers, trainees and apprentices are in reality most often excluded because of their activity status. The report also proposes a series of specific measures to be considered at national and/or EU levels to address these barriers.

A captivating endeavour to promote a social Europe and advocate for social rights among young Europeans was the [#MySocialRights video competition](#) (DG EMPL). This spirited competition served as a vital part of the broader campaign to amplify the visibility of the

European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan. With an aim to engage and inspire, the competition attracted many talented young people who sought to convey the essence of social rights through their creative videos. The winning entry, [by Patryk from Poland](#), was the video liked and shared the most. The campaign to promote the competition published posts in all EU languages triggering around 33.7 million impressions and 3.8 million engagements. The competition proved to be a resounding success, captivating the attention of thousands across Europe and igniting discussions on the significance of social rights in contemporary society.

Another poignant video took centre stage with a compelling portrayal of the **Pillar principle 4 (DG EMPL)**, showcasing the transformative power of the Youth Guarantee's Digital Transformation Programme in Spain. Through an immersive narrative interwoven with testimonials from three participants, the video artfully captured the programme's profound impact. Released on YouTube between 6 and 23 October 2022, this stirring production garnered considerable attention, attracting approximately 31 000 views and leaving a lasting impression on over 260 000 viewers. Through its compelling visuals and personal anecdotes, the video succeeded in conveying the immense value of the Youth Guarantee's Digital Transformation Programme, inspiring viewers and emphasising the vital role it plays in empowering young people to navigate the ever-changing digital landscape and shape their own future.

The [Film for Energy challenge \(DG ENER\)](#) brought together 90 schools from 16 countries to showcase their creativity and passion for energy through videos. Out of the impressive submissions, six outstanding videos were awarded and shared on various platforms, such as the Commission's audiovisual portal, YouTube, Twitter and other social media channels, supported by several Commission departments. The event attracted significant attention on social media, particularly in Greece, generating wide coverage and engagement. These videos not only captured the essence of the challenge but also sparked conversations about energy in an innovative and visually captivating way.

The **7th EU China Literary Festival (FPI)**, a vibrant celebration of literature, was organised in collaboration with Member States on the theme 'Explore, imagine, inspire – science fiction, fantasy and worlds beyond'. It was attended by many people, and there were many activities showcasing European cultural and literary talent to an audience of more than 9 million Chinese readers and book lovers. There were engaging discussions between 22 EU and Chinese authors, delving into the realms of imagination and captivating audiences. In addition, four masterclasses gave aspiring young writers valuable insights. There was also a writing competition on the theme 'Between here and there' (推此及彼), aimed at the generation born after 2000. The festival actively engaged with the EYY and garnered significant attention on Chinese social media platforms, attracting the participation of young people. The festival had a particular focus on Chinese young people and students intrigued by the rich tapestry of EU culture and literature. This marked the third time that the festival embraced a fully online format, adapting to the changing times.

A thought-provoking event, titled **Building a Youth Community to Prevent Violent Extremism – Lessons from South and Southeast Asia (FPI)**, took place in Brussels on 19 May 2022. Hosted by the esteemed Kofi Annan Foundation, the event sought to shed light on effective strategies for countering violent extremism, drawing inspiration from the experiences of South and Southeast Asian nations. Among the distinguished participants was Marc Fiedrich, the FPI's Acting Director and Head of Service. This gathering of influential minds aimed to promote dialogue and exchange valuable insights, ultimately working towards

creating a resilient and empowered community of young people capable of combating the rising threat of violent extremism.

EU Industry Days (DG GROW) is one of the EU's flagship annual events, highlighting industrial frontrunners and ongoing industrial policy discussions, while improving the European industry knowledge base. It serves as a collaborative platform for stakeholders to address industry challenges, co-develop opportunities and shape policy responses. [The 2022 edition](#), held in Brussels from 8 to 11 February, had a hybrid format and focused on the green and digital transitions of industrial ecosystems to increase the resilience of EU companies, including SMEs. Aligned with the Year, the event featured discussions on how young people can influence the future of EU industry. These discussions were part of a dedicated Special Youth Programme, which addressed pressing concerns, such as social equality, youth unemployment, precarious work and the need for sustainable and socially responsible business models.

The **7th European Migration Forum (DG HOME/EESC)**, on the theme 'Youth inclusion: key to successful integration', took place on 20 and 21 October 2022. With 220 attendees, the forum produced valuable outcomes, including setting up a network and producing a comprehensive report covering best practices. Extensive outreach efforts were made through social media, with a potential reach of 3.2 million people on Twitter alone.. The event was an opportunity for young people, both from migrant and non-migrant backgrounds as well young migrants and migrant-led organisations, to take part in discussions on policies that directly concern them.

The first [Africa-Europe Week ahead of the EU-African Union Summit](#) in February 2022 brought people from both continents together in various events, **including a youth-led Youth Track (DG INTPA)**. Young people from Africa and Europe and the diaspora actively helped to shape the future of the EU-Africa Partnership, and the outcome of their work was presented to European and African leaders. The Youth Track saw the active participation of 40 individuals in person and 1 000 online, highlighting the inclusive nature of the initiative.

Following the success of the Youth Track, the **EU-ASEAN Youth Summit (DG INTPA)** took place in December 2022. It acted as a side event to the EU-ASEAN Commemorative Summit, bringing together EU and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) youth representatives, officials from EU Member States and ASEAN countries, and representatives of business and academia. As 2022 was the Year of Youth for both the EU and ASEAN, the Youth Summit was an opportunity for young leaders from both regions to exchange views and agree on key messages to present to leaders. More information: [EU-ASEAN Youth Summit](#).

A [judicial training conference for young professionals under the Justice Programme \(DG JUST\)](#) was jointly organised by the Commission and the French Presidency of the EU. Held on 22 and 23 February 2022 in Bordeaux and co-hosted by the French national school for the judiciary (ENM), the conference aimed to increase the European aspects of initial training for the judiciary and lawyers. It focused on improving the inclusion of the EU body of law on the rule of law and fundamental rights in training curricula and promoting a European legal and judicial culture based on the rule of law from an early stage. The conference involved 125 in-person participants in Bordeaux and 70 online from all Member States. The outcome was a report outlining specific measures for national and European training providers to improve training for future and newly appointed judges, lawyers and prosecutors.

The **New European Bauhaus Prize for Rising Stars (DG REGIO/JRC)** recognises and celebrates achievements and supports young people in developing emerging concepts and ideas on how to build a sustainable and inclusive future in living spaces and experiences. It gives

visibility to examples and concepts that illustrate that beauty, sustainability and inclusion already exist in countries, communities and practices, paving the way for the future. The prize is for concepts and ideas submitted by young people under 30. The 2022 winners were announced at the [New European Bauhaus Festival](#), held from 9 to 12 June 2022 as a hybrid event. See [New European Bauhaus Prizes 2022 for more information](#).

The [4th Public Participation and Deliberative Democracy Festival \(JRC\)](#) was an engaging and inclusive event bringing together people from diverse backgrounds with a shared interest in citizen engagement in science, policymaking and deliberative democracy. Participants included representatives from Member States, institutions, civil society organisations, academia and the arts. The festival featured various activities, such as expert panels, workshops, discussions, artistic presentations and an exhibition showcasing participatory and deliberative democracy projects. It was the primary networking event for the Community of Practice of the [Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy](#).

In line with the EYY, the festival's theme focused on youth participation. The goal was to reflect and gather insights into how young people can become more engaged in policy and scientific research processes. The festival examined different questions to gain a better understanding of often-overlooked aspects of youth participation. These included the role of local and indigenous young people in sharing traditional knowledge and the use of virtual and physical spaces for effective participation. The highlight of the festival was a panel discussion between Commission Vice-President Dubravka Šuica and citizen representatives from a series of intergenerational conversations on the future of civic education. This was organised jointly by the Competence Centre and the Commission's Representations in Denmark, Croatia and Slovakia.

The youth dimension of the **Connecting Europe Days (DG MOVE)** – a conference that took place between 28 and 30 June 2022 – involved over 400 participants, with a specific focus on young voices and views as part of the Year. Although the conference welcomed participants of all ages, young people, including trainees, were actively encouraged to attend. The programme included a youth panel organised by Commission trainees, featuring youth representatives and Commissioner Vălean, and a bike tour in Lyon. Another panel centred around aviation. The event drew significant social media attention: the hashtag #ConnectingEurope was mentioned 416 times on Twitter during the event.

In September 2022, **DG MOVE** published a '[Study on the social dimension of the future EU transport system regarding users and passengers](#)', assessing the impact of its modernisation on different user groups. It specifically focused on challenges and opportunities related to affordability, reliability and accessibility. The study gives valuable insights into these issues and makes recommendations on how to address them effectively, ensuring a user-centred and inclusive transport system for all individuals, including young people and children. It found that young people and children face challenges in accessing transport, relying on adults because of their limited autonomy and financial resources. Barriers, such as high fares and safety issues, can also hinder their access to education and opportunities. Access to schools varies, with rural areas particularly affected. Initiatives addressing safety and school transport connections have been implemented. The rising use of digital payments and the need for adult assistance further affects accessibility for children and young people. Overall, the transport network serves young people inadequately, leading to social and educational isolation.

European Mobility Week (DG MOVE) in 2022 involved young participants from 2 989 towns and cities across 51 countries, serving as a platform for delivering tangible results and promoting positive change in urban mobility. The week's impact can be explored on [the official](#)

[website](#), which includes valuable resources, toolkits and success stories. European Mobility Week actively uses social media to reach a wider audience, share its achievements and promote sustainable transportation solutions.

The **Urban Mobility Days (DG MOVE)**, held from 20 to 22 September 2022 in Brno in Czechia, featured a dynamic youth dimension in a hybrid format. The event had over 500 in-person attendees and more than 900 online participants. As part of the dedicated ‘Mobility powered by the youth’ session, six young transport researchers showcased their work. Youth rapporteurs played a vital role, distilling key insights and presenting conclusions at the closing plenary. The event also included the prestigious CIVITAS Young Champion Award ceremony.

The **Excellence in Road Safety Awards 2022 (DG MOVE)** introduced a special category for young people in celebration of the EYY. The winner of the youth category, recognised for an outstanding contribution to road safety, was Preventiedienst stad Leuven, a Belgian public authority, for its innovative VRKeer virtual reality initiative aimed at young people.

The **EU4Youth Days (DG NEAR)** took place on 11 and 12 October 2022 as a series of events that showcased inspiring youth action and shared knowledge and good practices from EU-funded youth programmes. The 2022 edition was a major success as it brought together young people, youth workers, policymakers and researchers from various regions, including the Eastern Partnership, the Western Balkans, Türkiye and the Southern Neighbourhood. The event aimed to advance the strategic priorities of EU action on young people through conferences, knowledge sharing, and promoting dialogue between young people and policymakers. With 1 000 participants, the EU4Youth Days was a valuable platform for engaging with young people across European neighbourhood regions. The event included a virtual knowledge-sharing session and a social media campaign highlighting opportunities for young people, as well as the involvement of Young European Ambassadors, EU Goodwill Ambassadors and EU Jeel Connectors. As part of the EU4Youth Days, a [TAEIX workshop on youth participation in enlargement and neighbourhood regions](#) was also held in Brussels, involving participants from ministries and institutions in charge of youth policies, along with experts from Member States.

In addition to the EU4Youth Days event, **DG NEAR** implemented various communication activities in the Southern Neighbourhood. One of these initiatives was to **set up the EU Jeel Connect youth network**, which organised small events called Coffee Talks for around 25 young participants. These Coffee Talks took place in eight countries: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia, and they involved over 130 EU Jeel Connectors. A group of **EU Goodwill Ambassadors** (influencers) also visited Brussels to participate in the Europe Day celebrations on 7 May 2022. Another notable initiative was the **InTheirEyes contest** – a competition for content creators, organised by DG NEAR’s EU Neighbours South regional communication project.

In the context of the EYY, **DG NEAR** also ran a major [regional communication campaign, ‘Made of us – an EU-Western Balkans road trip’](#), as part of the WeBalkans regional communication programme. The aim of this campaign was to show how the EU, the biggest donor in the region, invests in a number of major areas, especially in the future of young people. The campaign also sought to highlight how close the Western Balkan partners already are to the EU. The format featured a 6-week road trip that showcased the Western Balkans region through the eyes and words of 12 young vloggers from the EU and the Western Balkans. The call for the vloggers was launched in December 2022, with the target audience being young people aged 21 to 30 in the Western Balkans and EU. It was designed specifically to mobilise young people and offer them a new and exciting opportunity to travel and meet each other after

2 years of COVID-19 restrictions. In March 2023, after a careful selection process, 12 vloggers were divided into 6 EU-Western Balkan pairs. Each pair travelled and vlogged for one week in one of the 6 EU-Western Balkan partners. The road trip took place in April and May 2023, and audiences had the chance to follow the young vloggers' journey through Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo⁶³, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. The vloggers recorded their content and shared it in real time, highlighting special moments from their journey. This helped promoted the EU's enlargement policy by showing the real impact that EU projects have had on people's lives in the Western Balkans.

The [Youth4Cooperation](#) umbrella initiative (**DG REGIO**) brought together several youth activities and projects as part of the four Macro-Regional Strategies and 86 Interreg programmes that operate across borders. The primary aim of Youth4Cooperation is to raise awareness among young people about Interreg programmes and Macro-Regional Strategies and encourage them to get involved. To support this objective, a Youth4Cooperation Road Show was organised in the Thessaloniki region in Greece, including visits to youth Interreg projects with Members of Parliament staff and Commission staff. A second edition of the Road Show is planned for 2023.

During the EYY, the **Interreg programmes and Macro-Regional Strategies (DG REGIO)** organised over **100 events** across Europe, focusing on children, youth inclusion, education and young adults. More than 300 Interreg projects across Europe from the 2014-2020 programmes include these groups in their activities' scope. The events took place either online or in person, including those held as part of the [European Cooperation Days](#). This momentum will continue in the 2021-2027 programmes, with several Interreg programmes launching calls for projects specifically targeting young people. More information: [Interreg Volunteer Youth](#) and [EUSALP](#), [EUSBSR](#), [EUSAIR](#) and [EUSDR](#)

The **Youth for reviving EU territories (DG REGIO)** project aims to gather the perspectives of young people in different EU regions. This will be used to devise a set of policy recommendations for regional and local decision-makers to increase the attractiveness of their region for young people. The project was launched against the backdrop of the Commission's Communication on harnessing talent in Europe's regions, launched in January 2023. The project ends in January 2024. It is in line with both the EYY and the European Year of Skills. The Communication includes [a talent booster mechanism](#) to help regions train, retain and attract the people, skills and competences needed to address the impact of population change. One of the eight pillars of the mechanism is dedicated to supporting selected EU regions affected by the departure of young people aged 15-39 with targeted analysis and technical assistance activities.

In 2022 the [Youth4Regions programme for aspiring journalists](#) (**DG REGIO**) celebrated its sixth edition. It provides training, mentorship and work experience to young journalists and journalism students. The programme included the [Megalizzi-Niedzielski prize](#), which rewards aspiring journalists who show a strong commitment to the EU and its values. From 8 to 14 October 2022, 45 journalism students and young journalists joined the programme in Brussels. Following the 2022 edition, the Youth4Regions programme reached 173 alumni, some of whom now cover EU affairs for media organisations in Brussels and Member States.

⁶³ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

The first **European City of Science (RTD)**, which took place in Leiden in the Netherlands in 2022, provided for a structured and expanded dialogue among all societal individuals and organisations (researchers, the public, policymakers, business and third-sector organisations, including all social groups). It aimed to promote mutual learning, scientific integration and interest in science among young people and develop a borderless European research community across the continent. It had four main youth components: (i) a year-long science activity targeting young people; (ii) the EU Contest for Young Scientists (EUCYS) targeting 14-20-year-olds with a passion for STEM; (iii) the EU TalentOn contest for young and early-career researchers (21-35 years old); and (iv) the Euroscience Open Science Forum (ESOF), including the Young Researcher award. The activities organised under the first component gave an extensive European platform to local, national and international pioneers in science and culture. This was developed in close collaboration with a multidisciplinary network of artists, researchers, designers, scientists, students and individuals. Each day addressed a different theme, creating an extensive and wide-ranging programme to encourage as many people as possible to participate. The European City of Science 2024 will be in Katowice (Poland), which will host the next edition of ESOF, the European Talent Fair, EU TalentOn and EUCYS.

The Commission also launched an initiative called [The bioeconomy in my life – creative competition for youth](#) (DG RTD) for young people aged 14-35. This art competition aimed to encourage young people to show how the bioeconomy is, or could be, part of their daily life; raise awareness of the bioeconomy; engage with young people; and broaden horizons on different forms of bioeconomy across Europe. The selected artworks explored the variety and opportunities that exist in the bioeconomy, as well as its meaning, importance in daily life, and potential.

3.2.3.1.2. Other EU institutions

The **European Parliament** organised several events to reach out to young people in 2022. These included the **Youth Network Event 2022** with around 100 participants and the **Educators Event 2022**, also with around 100 participants. **Local European youth events** were also held in Santander (Spain) with around 800 participants and in Varaždin (Croatia) with around 600 participants.

In addition, the European Parliament, along with the Commission, was a major partner in the **LevelUp! Event** organised by the European Youth Forum in the Parliament in Brussels in October 2022. The European Parliament made a major contribution in shaping the event's capacity-building focus. This aimed to equip young people all over Europe with the skills needed not only to participate fully in democratic and political life but also to lead change in their communities. This contributes to all four objectives of the Year.

The European Parliament also launched the [Youth Hub website](#) in 24 languages, a dynamic platform that engages and empowers young people in Europe. It provides a range of resources, information and interactive tools tailored to their needs, promoting youth participation and amplifying their voices in the democratic process. A pan-European awareness campaign to promote the Youth Hub was launched on Meta (on the European Youth Event Facebook and Instagram accounts) and YouTube (on the central European Parliament account), achieving 12 328 203 video views and 1 042 038 impressions.

The Youth Hub and other EYY events were promoted organically on the European Youth Event social media accounts (174 000 followers on Facebook, 48 000 on Instagram and 19 000

on Twitter) and through several ‘action letters’ (newsletter-type of communication sent to young people who joined the Parliament’s together.eu community) and other services’ social media channels.

The **CoR involved young people as speakers and participants at several events**, including its 9 May celebration in Strasbourg in 2022 (linked to the Conference on the Future of Europe’s closing event). The CoR also hosted several local events across Member States, which highlighted the role of young people in consolidating strong European democracy and democratic practices on the ground. The CoR also invited young people and organisations to participate in its **plenary sessions**. The **CoR** also supported the participation of youth representatives across the EU in the **LevelUp! Event** organised by the European Youth Forum at the European Parliament in October 2022. At this event, some of its members spoke at sessions on local democracy and political participation together with the young participants.

Young people were at the heart of many events of the **EESC**. [Your Europe, Your Say!](#) is its annual youth flagship event. The 13th edition took place on 31 March and 1 April 2022 and was flagged as one of the main EYY events. A total of 99 teenage students and 44 teachers from EU Member States and candidate countries and a Brussels-based European school took part in a discussion on ‘The Truth about Lies: Youth Challenging Disinformation’. They then presented their recommendations to Commission Executive Vice-President Věra Jourová. In workshops, the students developed disinformation campaigns and learned to counter disinformation and fake news as reporters using accurate information. The event had a significant social media presence, with a potential reach of 1 827 000 people and 1 979 engagements. The youth plenaries were streamed online, and there was additional outreach through the EU institutions and press coverage.

As part of the 14th Your Europe, Your Say! event on 24 March 2023, the **EESC** organised a **performance of Svit za ochi (There, Out of Sight)** by the Polish theatre company Theatre Navpaky. This cultural activity highlighted the importance of listening to and empowering young people. The play featured nine stage songs in Ukrainian with English subtitles, portraying young people’s experiences of current events in Ukraine. The event took place at the EESC’s premises and was attended by 105 students and around 40 teachers from EU Member States and candidate countries.

The **EESC’s** [Western Balkans Civil Society High-Level Conference](#), held in Prague on 16 September 2022 under the Czech Presidency, focused on youth policy as a crucial element for the future of the region and Europe. The conference successfully brought together many young participants from the Western Balkans, Czechia and Eastern Partnership countries. In close cooperation with the Commission (DG NEAR and DG EAC) and the Regional Cooperation Council, the event opened with a high-level session and proceeded with discussions on the pathway to EU membership for the Western Balkans. Three breakout sessions looked at different aspects of youth policies, with an emphasis on developing human capital and combating youth unemployment. With over 100 on-site participants from organised civil society in the Western Balkans and the EU, and many more [joining online](#), the conference generated several scenarios for how young people could contribute to regional cooperation and European integration. The conference conclusions were distributed to stakeholders, including national authorities and EU institutions, and published on the EESC event [web page](#). The event was streamed online, promoted through the EESC’s newsletters and social media, and live-tweeted on the EESC’s REX Section Twitter account.

3.2.3.2. Examples of achievements at national level

To contribute to the third EYY objective, all Member States made sure to **communicate EYY** both to the target audience and the general public.

The table below shows that at least 13 Member States have set up dedicated webpages promoting EYY.

Member State	Web page	Social media platform
Bulgaria	A section dedicated to the EYY was created on the Ministry of Youth and Sport's website: https://nism.bg/bg/evropejska-godina-za-mladezta-2022	
Cyprus		European Year of Youth – Cyprus Nicosia Facebook
Estonia	Euroopa noorte aasta Haridus- ja noorteamet (harno.ee)	
Finland	Euroopan nuorison teemavuosi Opetushallitus (oph.fi)	
Germany	Europäisches Jahr der Jugend	
Greece	#2022 Ευρωπαϊκό Έτος Νεολαίας – Youth Dialogue	
Ireland	A dedicated EYY space on the appointed NC (Léargas) website European Year of Youth 2022 – Léargas	
Italy	2022 Anno Europeo dei Giovani Giovani2030	
Latvia	Eiropas jaunatnes gads Latvijā	
Lithuania	https://jauni2022.lt/en/european-year-of-youth-2022/	
Portugal	Ano Europeu da Juventude (ipdj.gov.pt)	
Slovenia	https://www.mlad.si/	
Sweden	https://www.mucf.se/europaaret	

Table 7. Examples of EYY web pages in Member States

Tirana, the capital of **Albania** and its largest city, was the European Youth Capital for 2022. Throughout the Year, under the slogan ‘Activate Youth’, Tirana worked for the active participation of young people focusing on their needs while helping them shape their future. Tirana has prepared a rich programme, that featured more than 100 events that aimed at promoting volunteerism, empowering youth organisations, and creating networks and synergies among young people from all over Europe! The European Youth Capital is a title

awarded by the [European Youth Forum](#) which aims to empower young people, boost their participation and strengthen European identity in European cities.

In **Belgium**, a **photo competition** was organised using diverse channels including press releases, email invitations, social networks, newsletters, and websites to engage young people aged 18 to 35. The prizes were awarded by a jury of five members from the youth sector, including a Youth Department representative, assessed the entries, with a second Youth Department member serving as the panel's secretary. At the end, there were 34 entries, resulting in 11 winners who received an individual Interrail pass.

In collaboration with the European Youth Forum and the International Youth Bureau, the French-speaking part of **Belgium** organised a **closing event for** the EYY on 9 March 2023. The event had three main activities: an interactive discussion between 30 young people and the Minister for Youth, focusing on youth engagement and commitment; the announcement of the top 5 'Coup de cœur' youth projects selected by the Youth Department; and a captivating performance titled 'VIVANTS!'

Bulgaria disseminated information through its **national youth information system, the [Bulgarian Youth Portal](#)**, on which a dedicated EYY section was created. The country aimed to strengthen young people's sense of belonging to the EU by promoting volunteering and solidarity, and created a dedicated Facebook page on which all activities and initiatives were published. It also launched an electronic and print version of a [White Book on Youth Volunteering](#), including information on the topic, as well as 50 good practices related to volunteering in Bulgaria. These were collected through an open call, which received hundreds of responses from stakeholders.

The Year's closing event in **Bulgaria** was the **National Youth Conference: A Project for Future**. The conference took place on 17 March 2023 and brought together young people, youth organisations, active citizens, experts and high-level representatives of institutions to summarise the work and results achieved during the EYY.

To raise awareness of the Year, **Croatia** planned and executed a **European information services campaign**, appointing multipliers – including Eurodesk and the Croatian Youth Network – to promote the Year. As part of this, grassroots organisations ran more than 45 activities, which targeted young people with fewer opportunities and ranged from exhibitions and discussions to conferences and human libraries. They reached over 1 500 young people directly, while the social media reach amounted to over 10 000.

Croatia arranged a **series of celebrations with the title Europe Day and Beyond – Culture and Creativity**, which promoted young people's cultural and creative development, inspired a sense of belonging to the EU and promoted youth participation. The Europe Day celebration on 9 May 2022 was co-created with young people who had submitted their proposals for the celebration through an open call. There were around 600 participants in various workshops, panels and quizzes on EU mobility programmes, mental health, solidarity with Ukraine, green practices and the euro as Croatia's new currency. The City for Youth initiative was also presented during the event, with the aim of encouraging municipalities that are working to improve young people's quality of life. DJs, youth influencers and TikTok stars entertained the young audience.

The **Street Art Festival** was another Europe Day celebration in **Croatia**. It took place in Zagreb and Osijek, and consisted of three parts: an educational graffiti workshop

(17 May 2022), the launch of the European Solidarity Corps mural (19 May 2022), and the launch of the Erasmus+ mural (31 January 2023).

The third event in the series of celebrations targeting young people **in Croatia** was organised in partnership with the Croatian Writers' Society, and took place during the Festival of the European Short Story (5-10 June 2022). It took the form of a **short-story writing competition** for young people from Croatia and the Western Balkans. The winning stories were translated and published on the Youth Portal.

The final event in the series **in Croatia** was the **Our Shared Future photography competition**, in which the jury awarded 3 winners out of 116 entries.

Some of the other most notable activities organised by **Croatia** were the **European Youth Event in Varaždin** (winner of the European Charlemagne Youth Prize 2023); the **Croatian Scout Jamboree**; the nationwide **Croatia Volunteers campaign**; **Dubrovnik EXPO 22**; and the **Leap Summit 2022**. High-visibility public relations activities included significant social media presence, media coverage and public transport ads in Zagreb, Osijek, Split, Zadar and Dubrovnik.

In **Cyprus**, the '**Access4ALL**' festival took place at the old Limassol port during September 2023. The festival had the primary goal of raising awareness among the public, policy makers, and professionals regarding the needs and fundamental rights of persons with disabilities. This event also seeks to increase the accessibility and social integration of individuals with disabilities in the city's social, economic, and cultural life. Notably, the event was open to all and offered activities that enabled attendees to gain insights into the daily challenges faced by disabled individuals.

Another noteworthy initiative was organised in **Cyprus**. It engaged 150 students, aged 9 to 18, hailing from Dali, Larnaca, and Kyperounta, in **Collage Art Workshops**. These workshops were conducted in collaboration with the renowned Cypriot visual artist Vassilis Vassiliou, also known as Twenty Three, celebrated for his contemporary artistic expressions rooted in Cypriot tradition. The primary objective of these workshops extended beyond promoting an understanding of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their relevance to the lives of these young participants. Simultaneously, the initiative aimed to inspire these students to embrace ownership of the SDGs and broader societal change through artistic expression, as exemplified in the accompanying image.

The main event of the EYY in **Czechia** was the **Next Station World festival** held in Prague on 20 September 2022. Over 300 young people attended the event, which featured various workshops, including: 'Study. Internship. Go!', for students interested in studying abroad or interning; 'Is Erasmus+ for University Students Only? Not Anymore', for those interested in studying abroad or interning; 'Into the World despite the Obstacles', on inclusion; 'Don't Drain Your Soul', on mental health and coping with challenges abroad; 'Solidary Project – How to Turn Your Idea into a Successful Project', for participants with ideas for improving their communities; and 'Alone in a Foreign Country?', on making lasting friendships. The festival also included lectures and discussions on civic activism, choosing universities, eco-friendly travel and the potential impact of young people. The aim of the event was to inspire young people and inform them about how to set off on an international experience, how to successfully submit a project for EU funding that will help them achieve their dream, and how to travel in an environmentally friendly and responsible way.

Czechia also organised a **seminar for municipalities** in April 2022 with the aim of strengthening their cooperation with young people and local youth workers. The seminar informed municipality representatives about the purpose of the EYY and the various opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes.

To show that the Year has a legacy that lasts beyond the end of the Year itself, **Czechia** dedicated the **spring issue of *Mozaika*** magazine to young people. It featured articles on how the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes help to build a more democratic society and support active participation by young people in local community and European issues. The **summer issue of *Mozaika*** was dedicated to the EYY, with information about the Year, how young people can get involved in public life, what youth exchanges are, where to get funding for solidarity projects, and what the Erasmus+ programme offers youth workers. A total of 4 500 printed copies were distributed at various events, and 1 500 subscribers received a digital version.

In **Denmark**, the EYY continued with the **Youth Activism and Youth Communities** conference on 21 September 2020, which focused on the relationship between activism, performance culture and youth communities. After the main event, programme and network staff from Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps and Eurodesk invited the audience to a networking event. More than 130 people representing the youth sector participated in the conference.

Greece held the **EYY 2022 – Adult Apprenticeship in Greece** conference in Athens, on 14 and 15 November 2022, in the context of EYY and the country's participation in bench learning. Participants presented good practices and proposals for making apprenticeship more attractive.

The **Year's closing events** in **Greece** took place in Thessaloniki (21 February 2023) and Athens (28 March 2023), with the Commission's former Director-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Themis Christophidou, among the key speakers. These events enabled the EYY to be more relevant as it promoted: (i) institutional recognition of youth work as one of the top priorities in the country's youth sector; (ii) nationwide survey results and the drafting of a policy paper on updating school student-council legislation; (iii) introduction of the National Youth Capital; and (iv) some artistic creations by young people, which were shared with the public and will serve as enduring visual references for the Year's values and principles.

To celebrate 18 years of Hungary's accession to the European Union, in cooperation with the Commission Representation in **Hungary** the event a 2022 Europe Day focusing on the EYY was jointly organised. In light of this, a brochure was published featuring 18 projects for young people covering topics such as social integration of disadvantaged children, art pedagogy, science and technology or modernisation of infrastructure of educational buildings. The objective of the celebration was to call the attention to the results Hungary has achieved during the last years and to celebrate the EYY.

Hungary organised an international partnership meeting and flagship event with National Youth Councils from the European Union. National Youth Councils represent and support the interests of voluntary youth organisations and act on issues that affect young people. Therefore, the Hungarian national coordinator of EYY2022 together with the National Youth Council of Hungary and other relevant Hungarian youth policy stakeholders, organised a coordinating event where the youth councils of Ireland, the Benelux 11 countries, Central and Eastern

Europe could exchange information on issues concerning the European Year of Youth and the current state of youth policy in the EU.

What is more, **Hungary** organised three big conferences in the framework of the Youth in Hungary – Youth Professional Programmes Series. The Youth Work Conference aimed to bring together young people with professional stakeholders; Digital Realities Conference discussing technical innovation; and finally, the Roma Youth Conference which focused on the inclusion of young Roma people.

Iceland launched a **PR campaign to promote the Year** in May 2022. A website was created for the campaign and social media channels focused on EYY activities. In August and September, adverts were also run on some of Reykjavik's public buses using the EYY key visuals. The social media campaign reach was 577 629 and the website had over 2 500 link clicks and 1 044 visitors. The campaign received positive feedback from the education and youth sectors, which praised the diversity that characterised the EYY promotional materials. The campaign resulted in more awareness and recognition of the support and empowerment that the EU provides to young people. This was reflected in the first application rounds for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps in 2023, when the demand was as high as it had been for the whole of 2022.

In **Iceland**, the highlight of the EYY activities was a **festive summer party held in Laugardalslaug** – the country's largest swimming pool – on 18 August. The event was a joint celebration of the Year and the 3⁵th anniversary of Erasmus+. Around 200 guests attended the celebratory event and there was strong feedback from the education and youth sectors on how visible the Year and the EU programmes were.

Key to the Year in **Ireland** were the **events that took place across the country** to promote the Year and its priorities, and to raise awareness of the wider EU opportunities available to young people, both nationally and internationally. The main events that took place were:

- 22 May 2022: Connect with Europe (EYY launch)
- 17 May 2022: All Aboard 1 (youth event on a chartered train)
- 30 September 2022: All Aboard 2
- 10 November 2022: The Gathering (annual flagship event)
- 3 December 2022: YouthFest (EYY national closing ceremony)
- 28 February 2023: follow-up event for EYY Micro Grant beneficiaries.

Ireland officially welcomed the EYY at the **Connect with Europe event**. It explored how young people can access opportunities in Europe through information and support initiatives, such as Eurodesk and Youth Wiki, and there were a number of stands offering information on the opportunities available.

Ireland also hosted the **All Aboard 1 and All Aboard 2 youth events on a chartered train** on 17 May and 30 September, respectively. The aim was to raise awareness of local, national and EU opportunities available to young people in Ireland. Over 200 young people were welcomed aboard on the train, which departed from Heuston station in Dublin and travelled to Kent station in Cork. It stopped along the way at Kildare, Portlaoise, Thurles and Limerick to pick up young people between the ages of 16 and 20, from schools and youth groups, who had been invited to join the journey. Each carriage hosted a different workshop on topics such as sustainable travel, inclusion and equality, and climate change.

The Gathering event, held at Croke Park in **Ireland** on 10 November 2022, was a cross-sectoral celebration of EU education and mobility partnerships in Ireland, marking 35 years of Erasmus+ and providing an opportunity for participants to reconnect and reflect on their experiences post-COVID-19. The conference attracted more than 200 attendees representing organisations participating in EU-funded programmes.

On 3 December, **Ireland** hosted its national EYY closing ceremony, **YouthFest**, at the Dublin Convention Centre, celebrating young people who participated in activities funded by EU programmes in 2022. Attendees included people from organisations that had received EYY Micro Grants; Erasmus+ Youth participants; current and past European Solidarity Corps volunteers; Eurodesk Ambassadors; organisations that were newly accredited with Erasmus+; and people who had returned from their DiscoverEU travels. A key objective of the event was to ensure a pathway into Erasmus+ and other EU opportunities for organisations and young people who had not engaged with European initiatives before EYY.

To ensure that different regions were targeted effectively, **Ireland** also coordinated several regional events, mobile information sessions and online sessions.

Italy set up the initiative **‘The Truck tour’**. The Department for Youth Policies and the Universal Civic Service also promoted, in collaboration with the Erasmus+ Youth Agency, an itinerant information campaign targeting young people, in particular NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training). The Truck tour campaign started from 11 April to 21 May 2022 involving 11 cities identified on a regional basis among those with the highest percentage of NEETs. The inauguration ceremony was held in Torino by Minister Fabiana Dadone but the tour also visited other cities in Italy. In each city the Department for Youth Policies and the Universal Civic service played an active role by promoting the Giovani2030 website and all the initiatives of the EYY (Carta Giovani, NEET Plan). A one-day long event was organised in each of the cities and it was the occasion to deliver, through an informal context, a wide range of services and provide information on opportunities available at local, national and European level. Social moments and cultural entertainment activities were also organised and a dedicated communication strategy was developed through social media to be attractive and to better outline to the targeted audience the value of participating. Overall, the Truck tour reached out to young people with fewer opportunities, promoted their participation in initiatives and programmes at national and European level.

In line with European Youth Goal 9 – Space and Participation for All – **Italy** decided to promote and strengthen young people’s democratic participation and autonomy through the creation of ad hoc participation spaces for young people. The most important initiative was the [**YES Forum**](#), held on 25-27 May in Lucca (Italy). The event provided an opportunity to strengthen social and political awareness of the importance of involving young people, as well as to increase awareness of existing European opportunities and the European youth scenario. The European Youth Strategies and European Youth Policies 2019-2027 were also presented, and there was a specific focus on EYY and how to implement it, bearing in mind the existing strategies.

Latvia organised a **youth stage at the LAMPA conversation festival** in July 2022. The festival is a large-scale initiative and an open platform, involving more than 300 organisations and active individuals working together to create a place to exchange opinions. The talks at the youth stage were organised and led by young people and youth organisations, and volunteers were recruited to ensure the programme ran smoothly. The activity served as an opportunity

for young people to set the scene, learn new skills and create the content they wanted to be discussed.

Furthermore, **Latvia** organised a **Youth Day at the KOPUMS festival** in August 2022. The purpose of the festival was to bring together young people from more distant regions; introduce them to youth organisations and opportunities to spend their time in useful, interesting ways; and inspire them to participate in co-creating a better future. The winner of the Latvian Youth Capital competition was also announced at the festival, which was visited by more than 1 500 people, with 70 youth volunteers taking part in its organisation and preparation.

Lithuania organised the **Lithuanian Youth Forum** (23-25 September 2022) in Vilnius, which created opportunities for young people to meet face to face and discuss topics that are important to them. There were six discussions: Challenges and Everyday Life of LGBTIQ Youth; Gen AB(Z); Nightlife – to Control or to Help; It Was Better in Our Time – How the First Leaders Imagined the Youth Organisations of the Future; Empowered Youth – Catchphrase or Foundation of a Democratic State?; and Lithuania of the Future – What Role Will the Youth Take? A total of 22 speakers contributed to the different discussions, including members of the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, the head of the Commission Representation in Lithuania, public figures and experts in various fields. The event attracted around 500 young people from Vilnius and other Lithuanian cities.

The **EYY closing event in Lithuania** was held on 18 November 2022 in the city of Marijampole, which was selected as the 2023 Youth Capital of Lithuania.

To reach young people from all regions, **Lithuania** also organised the **Travelling Year of Youth event series**. These events took the form of one-day youth fairs promoting EU opportunities and national programmes and activities for young people. The Living Library took part and almost every event was attended by the Commission Representation in Lithuania. Participants were happy to engage with their peers and youth organisations, and to find out about local and EU opportunities. Participating organisations and National Agencies found these events to be a practical platform through which to learn about each other's work and strengthen connection and cooperation.

Lithuania launched an **online publication for young people, *I Know Everything about Everything (Žinau viską apie viską)***. Targeting teenagers in the process of becoming young adults, the publication was used to inform young people and engage with disadvantaged young people. It was presented in schools and youth centres, and career-planning workshops enabled young people and youth workers to strengthen the competences needed in the job market with the aim of helping them to get a job.

Malta launched a **national promotion campaign** around the question, 'What kind of Europe do you want?' The campaign used information on bus shelters and roadside billboards to target young people, as well as placing adverts on national television. It also used social media to promote the Year and the work of the youth sector in general.

EYY activities in the **Netherlands** reached over 3 000 participants. Below a few examples that fit with Objective 3.

- **Breekjaar X EYY Festival** (28 April 2022): 30 young people from the festival Breekjaar (meaning 'gap year') organised the A Break from Reality festival in Amsterdam to inspire young peoples to take a year out to work on their self-development and practise service learning.

- **Brussels By Bike** (18 May 2022 to 1 June 2022): Dutch Youth Representatives travelled by bike from rural areas in the east of the Netherlands all the way to Brussels, with the aim of connecting with and gathering input from young people along the way. They discussed subjects such as European citizenship and democracy, inclusion, self-development and a future-proof society, recording all of the needs and ideas that were voiced. They then shared this input with politicians and policymakers in the EU and the Netherlands.
- **Local Youth Council events** (18 June 2022 and 17 September 2022): two events organised specifically for and with young people who are active in local youth councils all around the country. The aim was for them to connect and learn from each other, share best practices and lessons learned on local youth participation, and explore EU opportunities for young people.
- **Day of Europe** (24 June 2022): a day dedicated to Europe and participation in society for students at the SUMMA vocational school in Eindhoven. The programme included a panel discussion with an MEP and workshops, the EU Climate Pact, Erasmus+ Youth and the European Solidarity Corps, among others. The event was organised in collaboration with students from SUMMA and the European Parliament's liaison office in The Hague.
- **Youth Festival: You're Young and You Want Stuff (*Je Bent Jong En Je Wil Wat*)** (13 October 2022): a youth festival in Amsterdam, organised with several partner organisations to create a space for young people to learn about social challenges and what role they themselves can play. The programme consisted of workshops, panel discussions and interactive activities, and over 600 young people came together to learn, speak up and connect with each other.

Poland organised a **European Forum of Young Leaders** and a **EuroPeers Annual Network Meeting**, hosting 60 participants, including 15 from National Agencies. The outdoor Voice Your Vision campaign also ran from 16 December 2022 to 15 January 2023, with light posters placed in Warsaw's most popular sites showing EuroPeers and their quotes on EU values, as well as their experience of being ambassadors for Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps.

In addition, **Poland** organised several major conferences with around 250 attendees each. On one hand, on 19 September 2022, a **nationwide conference** was held at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister in Warsaw, organised under the patronage of the Government Plenipotentiary for Youth Policy. The primary objective of the conference was to promote the integration of youth communities and facilitate discussions on increasing young people's engagement in public life, particularly as part of activities in local government youth councils. On the other hand, on 15 and 16 December 2022, the Chancellery of the Prime Minister hosted a **Youth Congress** as part of the EYY. One of the highlights of the conference was the presentation of awards to the winners of three competitions organised as part of the EYY, including competitions such as the 'Idea for the Youth Initiative of the Year' competition, which consisted in developing a plan and idea for the implementation of the youth initiative of the year, which will be implemented mainly by young people and based on selected areas of EYY.

Furthermore, **Poland** conducted **promotional campaigns on social media** to publicise activities aimed at young people, including meetings with young people, training and youth congresses/conferences organised by the Government Plenipotentiary for Youth Policy and the Council for Dialogue with the Young Generation, and events organised as part of the EYY. Content posted on social media is the fastest and most effective way to reach young people, who are the most frequent users of social media from all age groups.

The **Portuguese Awards EYY2022** stand out as a significant initiative in **Portugal** and comprised three distinct award categories that were aimed at promoting youth engagement and supporting policies related to the EYY. These awards included the ‘Research on Youth EYY2022’ prize, encouraging research and publication of scientific articles within the scope of young people’s priorities; the ‘Europe for You’ Award, recognising outstanding Youth Organisations and Federations for their contributions to youth participation and empowerment; and the ‘Criarte EYY2022’ prize, stimulating creative literary and artistic works related to EYY. Notably, the ‘Research on Youth EYY2022’ category received 33 applications, resulting in three winners and an honourable mention. The ‘Europe for You’ Award garnered 59 applications, leading to eight prizes distributed across different regions of Portugal. Meanwhile, the ‘Criarte EYY2022’ prize received 207 applications and awarded 14 prizes, with two winners in each of the seven regions, divided by age categories of 12-17 years and 18-25 years, thus showcasing the diversity and creativity of young participants.

Portugal organised a **roadshow** that hosted a set of EYY activities and initiatives throughout all the country, reaching around 20 000 young people and directly involving 7 356 participants in more than 21 000 pedagogical interactions. The roadshow was an opportunity to highlight the important role of young Europeans in building a better future, and to share visions, meet people, engage in activities and find out more about Erasmus + and other youth programmes. It helped to promote the competences of young people, Increase knowledge about EYY and youth issues, promote cooperation and the exchange of experiences and practices, as well as improving quality in youth work.

In line with both the EYY and the European Year of Skills 2023, **Slovakia** organised the **Youth Skills Conference** on 22 February 2023. The Conference aimed to provide young people, youth organisations, educational institutions and stakeholders from the public, non-profit and private sectors with an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the importance of youth skills for their employment, dignified life and future.

Spain presented a communication plan and **two communication campaigns** were approved: European Solidarity Corps and European Youth Card, given the high European component of the two initiatives. The first consisted in dissemination of volunteer opportunities in the European Solidarity Corps, while the second one aimed at disseminating information about the European Youth Card and recruit new users for the youth card. Both campaigns were helping to promote their own mission, values and principles, most of which are in line with the EYY objectives.

In **Slovenia**, the **Youth Festival, regional workshops, and the mlad.si portal** served as platforms to inform, educate and engage young people and the wider public.

In **Sweden**, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) **worked actively to inform the public about the Year and communicate the different activities**. MUCF released five different press releases about EYY in Sweden and the main activities taking place during the year and posted information about the activities on social media. A national EYY website also presented the ongoing activities planned by the actors involved in the Swedish EYY network.

EYY NCs in **Sweden** planned two main events, consisting of 2-5 different panel discussions. Due to new collaborations and opportunities, the coordination team decided to create one event per panel discussion across five different cities. As a result, the events had a wider geographical reach.

- **EYY at a three-week city expo** in Helsingborg. On 16 June 2022, EYY coordinators in Sweden hosted an event as part of the expo's official programme, in collaboration with the Commission Representation in Sweden and the National Council of Swedish Children and Youth Organisations (LSU). The event consisted of the Swedish EYY coordinator taking part in a podcast hosted by LSU about European Youth and EU Youth Dialogue. Young people also had the opportunity to 'voice their vision' at the event. There were 30 on-site participants and 61 online views.
- **EYY at the Annual MUCF Conference** in Stockholm. On 1 December 2022, a seminar at the MUCF annual conference focused on the Year and the opportunities that Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps offer young people. The first panel discussed Erasmus+ Youth and Discover EU, and the second focused on Erasmus+ Education and the European Solidarity Corps.

3.2.3.3. Examples of achievements at stakeholder level

DISCLAIMER

The following section contains a selection of key achievements provided by EYY stakeholders, with the aim of giving a snapshot of the types of activities organised under this specific objective. All of the achievements of EYY stakeholders can be [found on the EYY Activities map](#).

From 7 to 10 April 2022 the **Erasmus Student Network (ESN)** organised the first edition of the [Erasmus Generation Meeting](#), a celebration of the EYY and the 35 Anniversary of the Erasmus+ programme. The summary of the event can be found in [this link](#)⁶⁴, and in this [short video](#). This young people and student-led conference gathered more than 800 young people from all over Europe in Porto. Through more than 80 sessions, participants came up with proposals and ideas to improve international opportunities for young people. The event promoted collaboration with other youth organisations and relevant stakeholders to organise sessions and participate in an active way.

The 2022 edition of the **European Day of Persons with Disabilities** co-organised by the **European Disability Forum (EDF)** included a large delegation of young people with disabilities; the opening panel was on challenges faced by young people with disabilities. The two-day event discussed various forms of violence against persons with disabilities including bullying of young people in school environments, and young people fleeing Ukraine. The event was well attended by various strategic decision-makers within the EU infrastructures ensuring that youth voices were carried to the top.

[MyEU50](#) is a joint initiative of the **Government of Ireland** and **European Movement Ireland** to commemorate 50 years of Ireland's EU membership. The competition aimed to encourage young people across Ireland, from primary to post-primary school levels, to express their creativity and share innovative ideas about Ireland's relationship with Europe. The competition focused on topics such as life in other EU countries, the impact of the EU on schools and communities, working for the EU, and the future direction of the EU.

⁶⁴ [EGM 2022: The future belongs to youth. Take it.](#)

Think Young ran the [Hidden Inventors campaign](#) which focused on youth outreach in schools in Belgium and Italy. The primary objective of the #HiddenInventors campaign was to honour European inventors throughout history, seeking to inspire the upcoming generation and encourage them to play a significant role in shaping the future of Europe.

3.2.4 EYY Objective 4: bringing a youth perspective to the EU's policies

More than 70 million people in the EU are between 15 and 30 years old⁶⁵, yet their representation in policymaking is limited and young people express the need to have their views considered. A Eurobarometer survey conducted in 2022 on young people's opinions about democracy revealed that they expect decision-makers to listen more to their needs. Furthermore, youth participation was the topic most addressed in activities organised during the EYY – a clear sign of the interest of many young Europeans in having their opinions included in policymaking in all relevant fields, including employment, health, climate, education and mobility. Many policy initiatives and decisions have an impact on the lives of young people. Taking better account of the youth dimension in other policy areas and ensuring that young people have a say in the policy areas affecting them has therefore been a priority of EU youth policy cooperation since 2001, with the white paper on a new impetus for young Europeans.

Consequently, mainstreaming youth policy is essential to ensure that young people are considered among the target groups of all policy measures, not only those pertaining to the youth field. Youth mainstreaming is upheld by the establishment of formal mechanisms ensuring that youth priorities are not confined to youth-specific policies, but rather integrated in a multi-sectoral approach across all policy areas. This includes mechanisms for assessing the impact of policies on young people to address potential challenges preventively and avoid negative effects. Policies not directly targeting young people, or that are not part of the conventional youth policy field, can still have a strong impact on young people's lives.

Mainstreaming youth issues across all relevant policy areas is a key principle in the 2019-2027 EU Youth Strategy and its 11 Youth Goals. Several instruments under the strategy contribute to this principle, such as the EU Youth Dialogue, the EU Youth Coordinator and the mutual learning activities.

The Commission will build on the strong momentum of the Year and propose to continue and strengthen the instruments linked to youth mainstreaming, such as the EU Youth Dialogue, Commission Youth Network and the EYY NCs/SH Group. The aim will be to disseminate outcomes and recommendations of the Youth Dialogue, as well as to exchange views on policies and identify how these can better reflect the needs of young people.

In addition, as a follow-up to the commitments made in the Conference on the Future of Europe, citizens' panels will become a permanent part of public participation and young people will continue to play a major role in them. This was the case in the recent citizens' panel on learning mobility.

Only by mainstreaming youth as a priority among different policy areas is it possible to ensure that the specific needs or impacts for young people in envisaged policies or programmes are

⁶⁵ Eurostat, Child and youth population. Available from: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/yth_demo_010/default/table?lang=en.

taken into account. Youth mainstreaming can only be effective when it also guarantees a say for young people in all possible policy areas that affect them. Cross-sectoral cooperation should be increased at all levels of decision-making, striving for synergies and complementarity between actions, and with greater youth involvement.

Bringing a youth perspective into policymaking at all levels was one of the main objectives of the EYY, which gave rise to new partnerships and connections. It also strengthened cross-sectoral cooperation on youth issues, with the objective of mainstreaming the youth perspective across policy fields⁶⁶. It was a European Year fully co-designed by EU institutions, Member States, youth stakeholders and young people, with the co-creation process kicking off in October 2021⁶⁷, with the first meeting with the EYY NC/SH Group, and a survey targeting young people.

Within the Commission, the Year has led to the largest ever interservice mobilisation. More than 30 departments and services contributed to the Year, with over 130 policy initiatives for young people, all published on the Youth Portal.

EYY NCs have also confirmed that the Year resulted in new partnerships and cooperation between ministries at national level.

Although mainstreaming is a complex and challenging process, there are some examples that demonstrate that progress has been made, and that the youth perspective is being increasingly included in policies. The Commission will continue to implement the EU Youth Strategy (2019-2027) to achieve better mental health and well-being, and end stigmatisation.

The Commission consulted young people on this topic and took into account their opinions, which were submitted through the Youth Voice Platform and Youth Policy Dialogue with Commissioner Kyriakides. Consultations specifically with young EU citizens were carried out through: (i) voice recordings uploaded by young citizens (aged 18-24) on the Voice Platform in 2022, about their perception of mental health; (ii) workshops and a conference for young cancer survivors, which took place in Brussels on 7 February 2023, providing an opportunity for them to speak about the main challenges they faced after treatment; and (iii) the Youth Policy Dialogue on a comprehensive approach to mental health, held on 22 February 2023 in Brussels. During this event, and as part of the EYY, 15 young people met with Commissioner Kyriakides and discussed the mental health needs of young people living with and beyond cancer. Children, adolescents and young adults were often specifically mentioned as a target group for action. Most recommendations related to the promotion of good mental health and prevention of mental health problems, especially in relation to children and young people. Participants often referred to the importance of early detection, especially among children and young people, and the need for specific attention to their mental health featured heavily in all consultations. It was often mentioned that young people's mental health was heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and had also deteriorated over the past decade.

However, young people's mental health is a complex multidisciplinary issue that requires a collaborative approach, involving educational, healthcare and social care settings; the cultural sector; and youth welfare actors. A mental health policy that delivers for all needs to work across relevant policy areas. Policies in areas such as education, youth, arts and culture,

⁶⁶ The Year was structured around nine policy areas of special interest to young people: European learning mobility; employment and inclusion; policy dialogues and participation; green; digital; culture; health, well-being and sports; youth and the world; and solidarity with Ukraine.

⁶⁷ Decision (EU) 2021/2316 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 December 2021 on a European Year of Youth (2022). Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2021/2316/oj>.

environment, employment, cohesion, research and innovation, social protection, sustainable urban development and the digital world are therefore needed to improve mental health and support mental health resilience.

The EYY focused on re-establishing a positive outlook for young people and included activities designed to support their mental health and well-being.

In June 2023, the Commission developed a Communication on comprehensive approach to mental health⁶⁸ and addressing the interlinks between mental and physical health and key health determinants. Special attention will be paid to the risks of bullying in educational settings. Furthermore, in 2023, the Commission will develop tools to address issues such as healthy lifestyles and the prevention of mental health problems, in close cooperation with children and young people.

In 2024, the Commission will support the creation of a mental health network for children and young people, to exchange information and provide mutual support and outreach via Youth Ambassadors.

Moreover, the Commission will support: (i) continued implementation of the Better Internet for Kids strategy; (ii) practical guidance for authorities on improving child protection in the digital world, in addition to monitoring the impact of the digital transformation on children's well-being through the Better Internet for Kids portal; (iii) a code of conduct on age-appropriate design that builds on the new rules in the Digital Services Act; and (iv) continuation and reinforcement of work done under the code of conduct on countering illegal hate speech online, under the Digital Services Act⁶⁹.

The Commission promotes a comprehensive approach, encouraging Member States to collaborate on policies and initiatives that target the specific challenges related to children and young people's mental health, and to address the links between mental health problems, health determinants and the use of digital tools.

The Communication invites Member States to implement innovative approaches and best practices identified in the Healthier Together initiative on the mental health of children and young people. It also invites them to participate in the initiative's collaborative work to address the impact of health determinants, including economic, commercial, social and environmental determinants, and the impact of the digital transformation on children and young people's mental health and well-being.

This strategic Communication lays the foundations for sustained action at national and EU level for a comprehensive, prevention-based and multistakeholder approach to mental health.

Cooperation between DGs on youth policy

There has been remarkable cooperation between various DGs to implement initiatives related to youth policy, and those coordinated jointly by more than two DGs undeniably have a significant effect on mainstreaming youth policy. The subsequent sections give a comprehensive overview of exemplary initiatives accomplished throughout the Year,

⁶⁸ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a comprehensive approach to mental health. Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52023DC0298>

⁶⁹ The Digital Services Act package. Available from: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/digital-services-act-package>.

showcasing collaboration at EU level, as well as at national, regional and stakeholder levels. Among other things, these demonstrate the outstanding outcomes achieved through cross-DG cooperation, contributing to the achievement of Objective 4 and further supporting the integration of youth policy across various domains.

One particular aspect that contributes to the mainstreaming of youth policy, and therefore the selection of exemplary initiatives in this chapter, is the emphasis on youth initiatives centred around data and evidence. These initiatives play a pivotal role in providing a solid foundation for decision-making processes and policy development. By leveraging data-driven insights and evidence-based research, these youth initiatives promote a more comprehensive and informed understanding of the needs, challenges and aspirations of young people.

3.2.4.1. Key achievements at EU level

3.2.4.1.1. European Commission

The EU has shown its commitment to empower and engage young people worldwide in global challenges, through the adoption of the first **Youth Action Plan in EU External Action (EEAS/DG INTPA/DG NEAR, DG ECHO, FPI)** for 2002-2027 being one of the main EYY initiatives. The EC-EEAS Joint Communication and **Council conclusions** in 2022 aim at putting in place a strategic partnership with young people, supporting them to drive change for a greener, fairer, more peaceful and equal planet. Youth organisations and the Youth Sounding Board for International Partnerships contributed to the preparation of the Youth Action Plan. DG INTPA, DG NEAR and EEAS are now actively involved in implementation and monitoring. EU Delegations are contributing on this process of institutional youth engagement, with the appointment of youth focal points, the creation of youth advisory structures and the inclusion of youth organisations in their process of consultations for country programmes and actions. Additionally, the EU launched the EU@UN Youth Delegates Programme to increase youth participation in the United Nations and set up a network of youth contact points within the Integrated Approach to Security and Peace Directorate after the EYY.

As soon as the Year was announced, the Commission set up the **EYY NC/SH Group (DG EAC)**, as requested by Article 5 of the Decision. A network of 29 EYY national coordinators from EU Member States⁷⁰, 6 national contact points in Erasmus+ associated countries, and more than 120 European-level youth stakeholders was set up and managed by the EU Youth Coordinator⁷¹. This network met nine times before and over the course of the Year and had regular exchanges on an online platform. The European Parliament, CoR and the EESC contributed to these meetings, and this cooperation will benefit interinstitutional relations on youth issues in the long term.

In 2022, **the EU Youth Coordinator**, Biliana Sirakova, has helped to bring the EU closer to young people. She has amplified youth voices in the Commission and contributed to cooperation among services working on youth issues. The EU Youth Coordinator coordinated the Commission Youth Network and the EYY NCs/SH Group, and moderated most of the youth policy dialogues with Commissioners.

⁷⁰ As youth policy is a competence of the three Communities in Belgium, three NCs have been appointed.

⁷¹ Decision (EU) 2021/2316 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 December 2021 on a European Year of Youth (2022). Available via: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2021/2316/oj>

The **Commission Youth Network** enables continuous exchanges between the DGs on youth-related initiatives and was a key enabler of the Year's strong cross-sectoral dimension. 10 meetings took place once it was set up (see *Table 1. Meetings of Commission Youth Network*).

The Commission (**DG EAC**) also participated in the **Youth Working Party** in 2022, in which specific innovative examples with a youth element were presented at meetings, along with new initiatives and updates from the Commission on programmes and activities. In each Presidency, the EU Youth Coordinator presents their role and actions to support the mainstreaming of youth issues in other policies, and vice versa. Emphasis is placed on the objective of mainstreaming youth policy (fourth EYY objective), which is also in line with the role of EU Youth Coordinator.

With regard to mainstreaming youth policy in other sectors, and vice versa, **thematic sessions** were held with presentations on fundamental rights and social affairs, by **DG EMPL** and **DG JUST**; mental health and well-being, by **DG SANTE** and **DG EAC** (on education/culture/sport); and a green and sustainable Europe, by **DG CLIMA**, **DG MOVE** and **DG EAC** (on education). These presentations highlight initiatives of other services that have a direct or indirect impact on young people and enable delegations to interact with representatives of other services and discuss the benefits of each initiative for young people. This helps initiatives such as the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) 2023 project, Youth First – a policy initiative put forward in the context of EYY by DG REFORM, which provides expertise and capacity building – become more widely known in Member States.

As a follow-up to these thematic presentations, the Swedish Presidency and the Commission (**DG EAC**) hosted the **EYY Legacy event on mainstreaming youth policy** in Brussels on 19 June 2023. There were between 80 and 100 participants, including Commission officials, members of the Youth Working Party, youth representatives and representatives from the permanent representations working as advisers in relevant policy fields (namely employment, education and training, environment and health). The event reflected on the lessons learned during the Year and focused on how youth policy can be mainstreamed in a sustainable and rational way. The EU Youth Dialogue, including its structures and methods, was presented to participants from other policy fields as a good example.

The purpose of the mainstreaming event was to take stock of lessons learned on mainstreaming during the Year, and to secure a more sustainable legacy for EYY by bringing representatives from different institutions and policy areas together to discuss the mainstreaming of youth policy based on relevant examples at European, national and regional levels. Member State and Commission experts from four policy areas – climate, monitoring and evaluation, the labour market, and mental health – shared their knowledge and perspectives from outside the youth policy field. This promoted an interactive discussion on how youth policy can be mainstreamed in a more sustainable and rational way, and highlighted good practices and lessons learned during the implementation of EYY and the EU Youth Dialogue, whose structures and implementation methods were presented to colleagues working in other policy fields.

With the [Joint Communication on the Arctic Policy](#) (EEAS and **DG MARE**), and through the [Arctic Youth Dialogues call for proposals](#) (FPI), the EU stresses the importance of prioritising people living in the Arctic. The Joint Communication underlines that the EU will 'involve women and young and Indigenous Peoples more in relevant decision-making processes.' The global objective of this call for proposals is to increase young people's contribution to implementing the updated EU policy on the Arctic, bringing the Arctic to the EU and the EU to the Arctic. The specific objective of this call for proposals is to promote

dialogue between young people in the Arctic and in Europe to strengthen their engagement, empowerment and participation in policymaking processes address the challenges that the Arctic faces.

The initiative [Young Climate Pact Ambassadors: Launch of Youth Climate Pact Dialogues and Forums in 2022](#) (DG CLIMA/JRC) involved the Climate Pact Ambassadors, who are young people committed to climate action through engagement with their communities and networks. With regard to youth engagement, the Ambassadors are essential multipliers and connectors with youth organisations and young people on the ground. To illustrate the close links and interactions between climate change and environment under the EU Green Deal, the Commission is collaborating closely on the Young Climate Pact Ambassadors scheme to help young people raise awareness of nature, biodiversity, circular economy and reducing pollution in their communities. There are 350 young Climate Pact Ambassadors implementing the Youth Engagement Strategy across all Member States, with the support of tools such as Peer Parliaments. They collaborate with European decision-makers through Youth Climate Pact Dialogues, and the Climate Pact Ambassadors Forum promotes further collaboration and exchange. DG CLIMA also organises dialogues between Ambassadors and EVP Timmermans on various topics. DG CLIMA made contributions to the Conference on the Future of Europe with specific guidance and toolkits developed as part of the European Climate. Additionally, DG CLIMA aims to continue youth inclusion in international climate negotiations such as COP28. More info: [Climate Pact Ambassadors](#).

On 26 April 2023, under the EYY, the **Permanent Representation of Belgium to the EU – Delegation of Flanders (DG COMM)** organised an exchange and information sharing session on youth impact-assessment initiatives. Representatives from Austria, France, Germany and Belgium (Flanders), as well as youth organisations, and the European Parliament and Commission, discussed examples of the ‘Youth Tests’ that are being done in Member States and at EU level.

The EYY initiative to [launch the e-Guidelines for educators and teachers to tackle disinformation and promote digital literacy](#) (DG CNECT/DG EAC) is part of the Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027⁷². It focuses on promoting digital literacy and developing skills to tackle disinformation among young people. The guidelines are targeted at teachers and educators and aim to raise awareness across the European education and training community. They were developed by a dedicated Commission expert group and launched on 11 October 2022. The initiative contributes to enabling education and training as a space in which to empower young people to benefit from and contribute to the world of online debate and discussion, engaging critically with information, as well as creating and sharing their own. The guidelines are available in all EU official languages. More info: [Digital Education Action Plan – Action 7](#).

The European Council adopted a [Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials](#) (DG EAC/DG EMPL) for lifelong learning and employability in June 2022. The recommendation was based on a proposal from the Commission, which was adopted on 10 December 2021. Micro-credentials certify the learning outcomes of short-term learning experiences, such as a short course or training. They offer a flexible, targeted way to help young people, and people of all ages, to develop the knowledge, skills and competences they need for

⁷² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027, Resetting education and training for the digital age. Available via : <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0624>

their personal and professional development, in line with the Skills Agenda and the Communication on achieving a European Education Area by 2025. The European approach to micro-credentials offers key resources and guidance to support their value, quality, recognition, transparency, portability and uptake in a consistent and rational way. It thereby contributes to a lifelong learning culture and increases the number of flexible learning opportunities available for young people. The proposal was adopted together with a proposal for a Council recommendation on Individual Learning Accounts that can support the development, use and uptake of micro-credentials. More info: [Q&A: Individual learning accounts and micro-credentials](#).

The **Education for Climate Coalition (DG EAC/JRC)** initiative is the European participatory community to support teaching and learning for the green transition and sustainable development. Its event, the [2nd edition of Education for Climate Days](#), took place from 7 to 9 November with the theme ‘Climate resilience: co-creating learning for sustainability.’ Students, teachers and education stakeholders can connect through the open collaborative community platform to co-create innovative education actions and initiatives on climate education issues around awareness raising, bridging education with science, developing green skills and competences, training teachers and changing behaviours. Several participatory challenges were launched as part of the Year in 2022, including young people in co-creating specific learning tools for the green transition. The coalition’s Youth Climate Lab was launched as an outcome: each year, a peer-learning world café co-designed with young people is set up, where young participants can engage with their peers, explore an existing climate-related issue with scientists and policymakers, and propose practical solutions that interested stakeholders can implement. The 2023 topic was (un)sustainable fashion, and in 2024 it will be either ‘sustainability and AI’ or ‘sustainability and tourism’. The coalition also brought young people from across the EU to the EU [Regions Week 2022](#), offering them the opportunity to share climate action stories from their own neighbourhoods with education stakeholders in a co-innovation lab on local sustainability education activities. More info: [The Youth Climate Lab](#).

The EYY initiatives [Council Recommendation on learning for the green transition and sustainable development](#) and **GreenComp: highlighting the role of education and training for the Green Deal (DG EAC/JRC)** were established as part of the European Education Area. The Commission adopted a proposal for a Council Recommendation on learning for environmental sustainability for learners of all ages and at all levels of education on 14 January 2022, at the start of the Year. This Recommendation emphasises the importance of education and training in achieving the goals of the European Green Deal. It was adopted by the Council on 16 June 2022 and is accompanied by a handbook of examples and best practices. This initiative aims to promote cooperation among EU countries in developing policies for sustainability education and training, and the competences needed for the green transition. In addition, the Commission released the European sustainability competence framework for lifelong learning, GreenComp, on 14 January 2022, describing sustainability competences consisting of knowledge, skills and attitudes for lifelong learning. More info: [Press release ‘Commission calls for environmental sustainability to be at the core of EU education and training systems’](#); [Learning for the green transition and sustainable development](#); [GreenComp](#).

To address gaps in gender equality, the Year was an appropriate time to shine the spotlight on girls and young women who are making a difference in their communities and on their way to becoming successful in sport, culture, education, science or innovation. The [#SHEU leads social media communication campaign](#) (DG EAC/DG RTD) had two goals. The first was to highlight the support the EU gives young women and girls in sport, culture, education,

research and innovation through its different funding programmes, including Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, Creative Europe, Solidarity Corps and the Recovery and Resilience Facility. The second is to showcase young women and girls across the EU who are rising stars in science, education, culture and sport. The one-year campaign was launched on 8 March 2022 at the EUwomen4future event in Strasbourg. [A dedicated section](#) was also launched on the Youth Portal on 28 March 2022, where the Commission publishes all relevant videos. A total of 32 video contributions were published.

[The European instrument for temporary support to mitigate unemployment risks in an emergency \(SURE\)](#) (DG ECFIN) helped keep young people in their jobs during the COVID-19 crisis. SURE was adopted in May 2020 to provide up to EUR 100 billion in loans to Member States to finance short-time work schemes and similar measures. In addition, SURE indirectly helped dependent young people (e.g. students) by sustaining household income. Participation of women and young people in short-term work increased during the COVID-19 crisis. This primarily reflects the change in the focus of support away from manufacturing and construction towards services and retail – sectors that employ a relatively higher share of women and young people. In December 2022, the Commission made a final payment of EUR 6.5 billion under SURE, providing a total financial assistance of EUR 98.4 billion to 19 Member States. More info: [SURE | European Commission](#).

Eurostat (ESTAT) engaged in the EYY by improving the youth-dedicated section and updating its youth database and list of specific indicators in line with more recent policy developments – **[Youth Indicators](#)** (ESTAT). In addition to the data, the Commission (Eurostat) prepared a dissemination package dedicated to the Year, featuring online articles, a statistical booklet and an updated [visualisation tool](#). This enables better presentation of the situation of young people across Europe in different areas of their lives. This action is now complete: the revised dashboard and database have been updated, and the interactive tool is available on the [Eurostat website](#). The [statistical booklet](#) was also finalised and published in October 2022.

The **[Bringing Young People into Statistics](#)** (ESTAT) initiative aimed to involve young people in statistical analysis. The annual [European Statistics Competition](#) was held alongside the communication package on youth indicators as part of this initiative. The 2022 edition of the competition attracted participation from over 3 000 teams and 17 000 students aged 14-18, along with their teachers. The main objective of the competition is to improve statistical literacy while encouraging students to explore significant EU topics through data and statistics. The 2022 contest followed a multi-stage process consisting of national competitions in the different participating countries, and a European final in which the national winners submitted their video projects on the Green Deal and the environment. An international jury then assessed the entries and selected the top videos. The competition winners were announced on 3 June 2022. To recognise their achievements, the winners were invited to attend a prestigious award ceremony in Madrid on 27 June 2022. The [latest edition \(2022-2023\)](#) reached an even bigger audience, with over 19 000 students from 19 countries taking part. The winners were awarded their prizes at the Eurostat headquarters in Luxembourg, on 26 June 2023.

With the **International Data on Youth (JRC)** initiative, efforts have been made to strengthen the EU's engagement with young people in external action based on various [reports](#). One report focuses on mapping international data on young people, providing valuable insights to support youth-related activities. Another report aims to increase consistency and coordination between policies and programmes relevant to young people in the EU's external action and has been used by DG INTPA to ensure that the principle of evidence-based policymaking in designing

and implementing the Youth Action Plan in EU external action. These initiatives will help create a more comprehensive approach to addressing youth-related issues globally.

The [Youth Guarantee for the Western Balkans](#) (DG NEAR), aims to ensure that young people in the region receive quality offers of employment, education, apprenticeship or traineeship opportunities within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. This multi-year initiative focuses on strategic reforms and collaboration with stakeholders, including youth organisations, to support the integration of NEETs into the labour market. The Commission, in cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the European Training Foundation, has set up an EU-ILO Technical Assistance Facility to help Western Balkan partners implement the Youth Guarantee. The Western Balkan economies have appointed Youth Guarantee Coordinators and expert groups, and most economies have developed their national Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans, with some planning to pilot the Youth Guarantee in 2023 and 2024. More info: [Declaration WB labour market integration young people](#).

Youth focal points (DG NEAR and DG INTPA) have been set up at EU Delegations. In the enlargement and neighbourhood regions, they support the organisation of regular coordination meetings, to help raise the visibility of initiatives in the different regions. The EYY has enabled more cross-fertilisation between DG NEAR regions.

A good example of mainstreaming was the [Communication on the comprehensive approach to mental health](#), which was launched on 7 June 2023 (DG SANTE). The Communication promotes a comprehensive, prevention-based and multistakeholder approach to mental health and will support Member States' efforts to address the many policies – as well as socio-economic, commercial and environmental determinants – that affect mental health. It calls on national and regional actors, health and non-health policy sectors, and relevant stakeholders to implement this new strategic approach to mental health. The Communication also calls for the best and most promising practices focusing on mental health promotion, and on the prevention and early detection of mental health problems, as well as early intervention. It also includes a **chapter on Boosting the mental health of children and young people**. The Commission will continue to implement the EU Youth Strategy (2019-2027) to achieve better mental health and well-being, and end stigmatisation.

3.2.4.1.2. Other EU institutions

On 24 November 2022, the **European Parliament** adopted a [Resolution on the European Year of Youth 2022 legacy](#), highlighting the importance of establishing and implementing European Years, while ensuring meaningful youth engagement and involvement in policy and decision-making processes. The resolution emphasised the need to prioritise measures that cater to the well-being of young people, combat precariousness, and provide a quality start to their working lives. It also called for increased investment in the next generation through education, recognising its significance in shaping their future. By setting these conditions, the resolution aimed to create a lasting legacy for the Year and pave the way for increased support and opportunities for young people across Europe.

The **CoR** adopted a [Resolution on the European Year of Youth](#) and held a related political debate at its December 2021 plenary session, highlighting the role of the local and regional authorities in delivering on forward-looking youth policies, and the urgency to improve access to quality employment, housing, education and training as well as mental healthcare, and

committed to including a youth-mainstreaming approach where possible as well as to involving young people in its local and other events. Moreover, the CoR together with the European Youth Forum (EYF) drafted [The Charter on Youth and Democracy](#), which makes 49 concrete recommendations on how to build a more youth-friendly EU. The CoR also invited the President of the EYF to represent the youth perspective in the workings of the [CoR High-level Group on European Democracy](#), chaired by President Emeritus of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy, stimulating discussions on innovative ways to strengthen the democratic legitimacy of the common European ‘House of Democracy’ at all levels of governments in the EU.

In line with the Year’s objective to bring a youth perspective to the EU’s policies, the EESC gave prominence to the European Youth Forum’s proposal on the EU Youth Test, dedicating an own-initiative opinion to this tool⁷³. [The EU Youth Test opinion](#) sought to further promote discussions aimed at encouraging EU institutions and Member States to implement measures and mechanisms that ensure that the youth perspective is taken into account in every policy field, and to create space for young people to provide consistent and expert input on the challenges they are facing. This followed the suggestions developed during the Conference on the Future of Europe.

In this context, a dedicated **coordination group** was set up in 2022 to ensure EYY representation and visibility in the EESC. The group coordinated legislative activities related to the Year, monitored their implementation, and liaised and cooperated with the different sections, categories and observatories within the EESC to ensure interconnection and consistency among the different initiatives. It also sought to strengthen cooperation with the other EU institutions, youth organisations and representatives both during the EYY and beyond.

As a follow-up and at the suggestion of the EESC coordination group for the EYY, in December 2022 the EESC also adopted a resolution on [The long-lasting legacy of the European Year of Youth: youth mainstreaming and empowerment](#), which proposed a definition of structured and meaningful youth engagement; highlighted the next steps needed in terms of future policy objectives to build a greener, digital and more inclusive future together with young people; and served as a roadmap for the EESC on how to follow up on EYY deliberations to ensure a long-lasting and fitting legacy. A **webpage** was also created on the EESC website to present past, ongoing and future activities related to [youth engagement at the EESC](#).

3.2.4.2. Examples of achievements at national level

To contribute to Objective 4, efforts at national level often described themselves as global in nature, seeking to connect young people across Europe and beyond. They also demonstrated a keen desire to empower young people for the future and to mainstream EU youth policy, specifically the youth policy promoting a stronger Europe in the world.

In **Cyprus**, a **final national EYY event** took place at the Presidential Palace in November 2022. This event provided an opportunity for government officials to reflect upon and celebrate the year. During the event, these officials took the opportunity to present the National Strategy on Active Citizenship and Participatory Governance 2023-2030.

⁷³ [SOC/728 The EU Youth Test](#)

Among the events held in **Denmark** was the Member State's biggest youth festival, the **Democratic Youth Festival**, which serves as link between young people and decision-makers. For its 2022 edition, participants from Greenland were invited to share their hopes and visions for the future, in a tent branded with the EYY tagline 'Voice Your Vision'. A Create a European Citizen workshop was also hosted as part of the festival, in which 30 high-school students discussed youth rights and facts about three European countries.

As part of the **German** participatory campaign '**Your Europe - Your Year!**', the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) engaged with various political stakeholders, including the Federal Cabinet, parliamentary groups of the German Bundestag, young people and family ministers from federal states, local government representatives, and German members of the European Parliament. They extended invitations to participate in the campaign, and many esteemed figures from various levels of government responded positively. These participants included individuals such as the Federal Government Commissioner for the Acceptance of Sexual and Gender Diversity, a State Councillor from the Social Welfare Authority of Hamburg, a Member of the Bundestag, and several other Members of the Bundestag, each contributing their expertise and perspectives.

One of Greece's first and most important activities was the online event **Youth Work: the Roadmap to Recognition**, involving experts in the field. More than 100 young people joined the meeting, which resulted in steps being taken towards institutional recognition of youth work.

Latvia organised a **Discussion cycle on the EU Youth Goals (11 discussions) in the post-pandemic period**, from March 2022 to June 2022. To reach out to rural young people, these discussions took place in different regions of the Member State and involved young people, specialists in the field, decision-makers and NGOs. The purpose of the discussion cycle was to gather key conclusions and proposals on how to achieve the Youth Goals effectively in a post-pandemic period at local and national level, as well as at EU level, with a view to having a long-term positive impact on young people. A total of 413 people, including 338 young people, took part.

In June 2022, **Latvia** organised the working seminar **Step into the Young Man's Shoes**. It brought together 50 NGOs, sectoral ministries, institutions subordinate to ministries, young people and other major partners to promote mutual understanding, discuss EYY, jointly agree on the next steps in its implementation, and provide support to young people. A key focus of the seminar was to emphasise the mainstreaming of youth policy by bringing together various stakeholders and young people to discuss and jointly agree on strategies for implementing and supporting the EYY.

In November 2022, **Latvia** also organised the largest international conference dedicated to the field of youth: **Latvia through the Eyes of Young People**. It brought together more than 160 participants from government, municipalities and NGOs, who looked back at what EYY has accomplished and outlined the next steps in achieving its priorities.

Hungary involved informal communities and organisations of young people and youth organisations in addressing raising issues. As a result, the National Youth Council of Hungary launched an open call for ideas for informal communities and organisations of young people and youth organisations to address the objectives of the European Year of Youth through a local event. The call for proposals stated that the event should focus on the needs of local young people as well in addition to the goals of the EYY. They wanted to allow organisations to realise their idea based on mapped local problems to create solutions, therefore we can reach a

wide range of development and promotion activities for young people in different regions of Hungary. In total 50 local and 10 national events were organised.

Poland appointed **16 Youth Ambassadors** from all over the country who will monitor matters related to the creation and functioning of youth councils and volunteering, in close cooperation with the Civil Society Department and the Government Plenipotentiary for Youth Policy. The ambassadors were to demonstrate experience in the activities of NGOs that are involved in activities supporting young people and the development of civil society, with particular emphasis on youth issues. The ambassadors became members of the working group, which will continue to work actively after the completion of the project.

In addition, **Poland** prepared a **64-page report on youth activity** during the European Youth Year in the form of an electronic publication. The report contains information on the activities of young people in NGOs and public institutions in the field of youth policy as part of the EYY.

Slovakia organised a **meeting with high-level politicians**, young people and youth organisations mainly the Student Advisory Committee. The topic of the meeting was mainly the discussion about ongoing changes in the state educational programmes. In the second part of the event, the young members of the advisory committee talked to MEPs and Member of the National Council of the Slovak Republic and representatives of the Youth Parliament of the Bratislava Self-governing Region about opportunities for young people, internships, working life after school and other topics that they touch the lives of students.

Sweden organised a **panel discussion on the rights of young LGBTIQ people** on 2 September 2022 following the publication of a report by Örebro MUCF on the situation of young LGBTIQ people in Sweden. In addition to one of the report's authors, the coordination team also invited two MEPs and a local organisation active with Erasmus+, Awesome People, to take part in the panel and contribute additional perspectives. The discussion looked at what is needed to improve the situation of young LGBTIQ people at EU, national and local levels, and in different policy areas.

Sweden's EU Youth Dialogue in Lund, on 21 September 2022, showcased a notable commitment to mainstreaming youth policy as part of the EU Youth Dialogue initiative. In collaboration with the National Council of Swedish Children and Youth Organisations (LSU), the EYY coordinators in Sweden were invited to oversee a seminar on youth policy during the EU Days in Lund. The aim of the seminar was to disseminate information about the EU Youth Dialogue in Sweden, report back to young participants from the consultation phase, and inspire young people and youth organisations to engage more in future dialogues. Presenting the results of the consultation phase emphasised the importance of incorporating youth perspectives and encouraging their active involvement in shaping policies that directly affect them.

3.2.4.3. Examples of achievements at stakeholder level

DISCLAIMER

The following section contains a selection of key achievements provided by EYY stakeholders, with the aim of giving a snapshot of the types of activities organised under this specific objective. All of the achievements of EYY stakeholders can be found in [the EYY Activities map](#).

As part of the Year, **Europa Nostra** has strengthened and enhanced its partnerships with other youth organisations, specifically ESACH and the European Heritage Tribune. In 2021 they collaboratively created a youth-oriented programme called the **European Heritage Youth Ambassadors (EHYA)**. This programme within the EYY has evolved into a growing network of young individuals who are actively engaged in the heritage sector and are residents of Europe. The EHYA enthusiastically share their personal stories, experiences, and passion for heritage through various online platforms. They play a pivotal role in connecting students, young professionals, and European heritage organisations, thereby facilitating the realisation of youth-driven heritage initiatives. As emerging professionals and students, EHYA members also serve as representatives and advocates for their communities and societies, championing the preservation of cultural heritage and leveraging heritage as a means for achieving social, digital, and green transformation in Europe.

The **European Network of Social Integration Enterprises** organised a **stakeholder session** on ‘The attractiveness of the social entrepreneurship for young people: innovative and inclusive way to do business’ as part of the 2022 EU Industry Days. In this session, the main focus was on youth social entrepreneurship and its appeal.

4. Feedback on the results of the European Year of Youth

4.1 Introduction

The Year was co-designed and co-implemented with a vast range of institutions and stakeholders at both EU and national level. The Commission conducted targeted consultations to collect experiences and feedback from institutions and stakeholders to complement the general public's opinion of the Year. In total, four separate assessments were conducted: three targeted surveys and one call for evidence. The three surveys were subsequently examined in a comparative report, which shed light on the primary accomplishments, shortcomings and viewpoints expressed by the respective target groups.

The surveys have been adapted to address the specific needs of, and collect targeted feedback from, NCs, stakeholders and young people in an effort to conduct a relevant assessment based on input from all of the different actors involved in co-creating and co-implementing the Year. The survey encompassed a mix of open-ended and multiple-choice questions, along with a rating system that ranged from 1 to 5 stars (with 1 being the lowest value and 5 the highest). This enabled respondents to rank their chosen options, providing positive viewpoints and a visual representation of the overall sentiment among the specific groups targeted.

DISCLAIMER

Please note that the data for questions asking the relevant group of respondents to provide internal outreach statistics has come straight from respondents and does account for different variables. This means that the information on outreach statistics cannot be compared.

4.2 Call for evidence

A call for evidence on '2022 European Year of Youth – achievements and way forward' was published in all EU languages on the Commission's Have Your Say Portal on 17 March 2023. The aim of this consultation was to collect views from all interested parties, including young people and the main EYY stakeholders, as well as the general public and any parties affected by, or with an interest in, EU youth policy. The aim was to collect their feedback and ideas to feed into the final report on the EYY and help shape the Year's legacy.

The call for evidence remained open for 4 weeks and closed on 14 April 2023, having received a total of 29 contributions from 13 EU citizens, 10 NGOs, 3 public authorities, 1 trade union and 2 other organisations (the German National Agency for the EU programmes Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps; and the United Nations office in Brussels).

By category of respondent

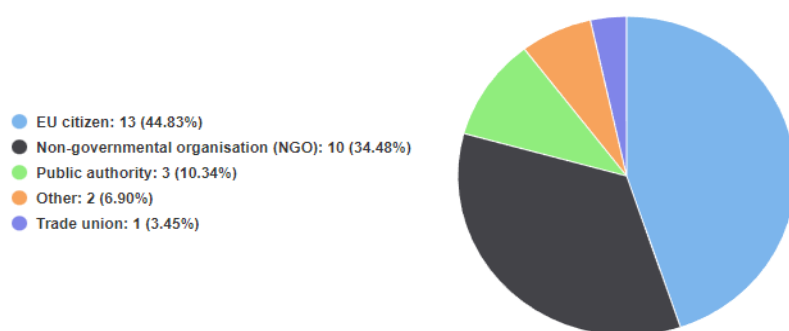


Figure 22. Graph by category of respondents

Source: Call for evidence on '2022 European Year of Youth – achievements and way forward'

Participants of 10 different nationalities responded to the call for evidence. Respondents from Belgium, Germany and Italy were most active and raised points relating to realities in their home countries. For instance, 2 of the 4 Italian responses related to the island of Sardinia, where young people are seeking better higher education and European exchanges, which would create greater European cultural awareness. The other 2 responses related to lowering the voting age to 16, which is perceived as essential for engaging young people.

By country

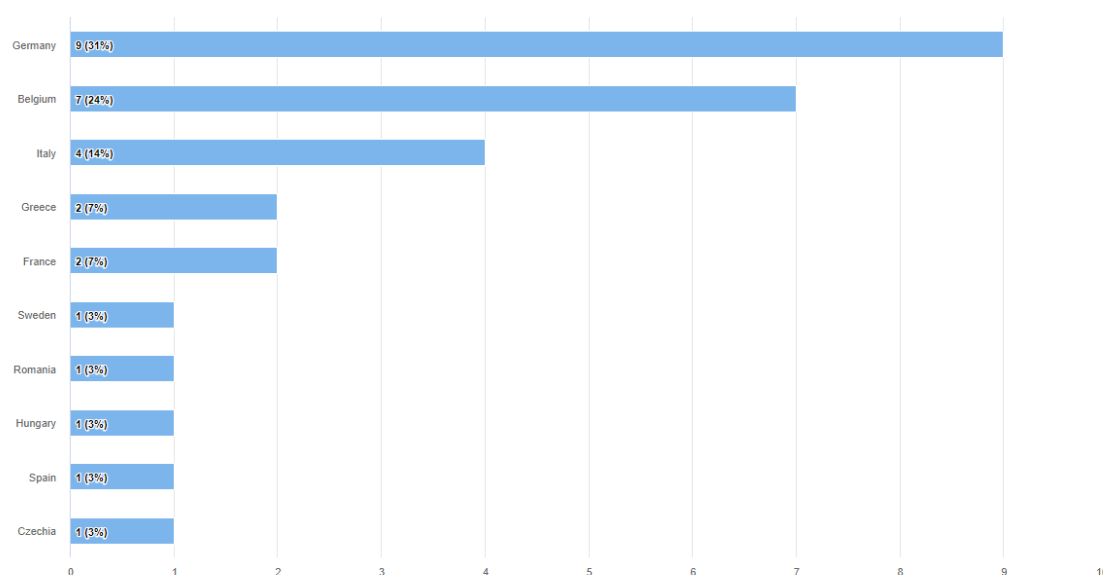


Figure 23. Graph by country of respondents

Source: call for evidence on '2022 European Year of Youth – achievements and way forward'

4.2.1. Overall feedback

The feedback was predominantly positive across all responses received. Among the Year's top achievements, responses highlighted the creation of more spaces for youth participation, as well as the greater visibility given to EU youth policy and mainstreaming youth to new actors.

Two of the respondents also appreciated the well-prepared communication packages for stakeholders, which were available on the EYY webpage. Moreover, one of the respondents noted that the Commission had successfully addressed the needs of young people with disabilities by adding detail about the accessibility of events on the EYY Activities map.

Most respondents considered that the Year had succeeded in drawing attention to the issues faced by young people, and that making youth the focus enabled them to work with young people directly and understand their concerns. For instance, young people need career guidance and many still lack proper access to digital facilities. Some organisations also stressed the need to have better communication on initiatives that are relevant to youth, and to ensure they are equally accessible.

However, a few respondents did not think that the EYY achieved any concrete changes in EU youth policy: for example, banning unpaid internships or increasing youth employment. In addition, the respondents also mentioned the short time span between the announcement of the Year and its implementation, which left organisations with little time to plan their activities. Many of the activities were therefore concentrated in the second half of 2022.

4.2.2. Recommendations

The three recommendations most often voiced by the respondents were: (i) to further embed a youth perspective in policymaking at national and EU levels; (ii) to make youth activities more inclusive by involving minorities; and (iii) to promote equal access to mental healthcare. Stakeholders also highlighted the need to work directly with young people at local level and to enhance their involvement in decision-making processes, thus promoting collaboration with national youth councils. This would allow policymakers to share their perspectives at EU level and make policies more inclusive and accessible to citizens locally. Better implementation of the EU Youth Guarantee was also suggested, along with binding social and employment policy measures, such as a minimum training allowance and easier access to education and educational funding.

4.2.3. Sharing good practices and initiatives

The call for evidence also provided opportunities for respondents to share their key achievements, good practices and initiatives as part of the Year.

Notably, on 28 and 29 October 2022, the Youth Forum organised the LevelUp! Festival in the European Parliament. This brought over 1 300 young people together (for more information, see Point 2.6.2 on the **Level Up! Accelerating change festival**). Other organisations also created networks of youth ambassadors to represent young people at events and bring policymaking closer to them.

Some respondents had sustainability and green policies on their agenda. European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation Youth (ENGSO Youth), for example, implemented the ‘You(th) for Sustainable Development’ initiative, which trained and supported young people so that they could initiate sustainable change in their communities. This included running youth exchanges in Dakar and Tokyo, and a closing conference in Paris. ENGSO Youth believed this was a very effective practice, which would serve as a great example of actions that could help

implement the Youth Action Plan for EU External Action. Following the green policy line, Youth for Exchange and Understanding International (YEU International) also adjusted its 2022–2025 strategic plan and strategic priorities to align them more closely with the green cause.

Some of the respondents set up initiatives that focused on including young people from different backgrounds. These included YEU International and its projects Brave New You – reloaded, and Kid Actions; and Hungary’s National Youth Council and its Roma Youth Conference.

Respondents also focused on the importance of putting young people at the centre of the Year and providing them with a space to gather and exchange perspectives, as a key element in breaking down stigmas and building links. For instance, Hungary’s National Youth Council implemented local and regional programmes that involved informal communities and organisations of young people. Barcelona’s provincial council, the Diputació de Barcelona, highlighted the importance of working directly with young people and involving them in the decision-making process to improve policies, make them more inclusive and bring them closer to citizens.

The trade union perspective was shared by the European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions. Its main initiatives included work to improve mental health and well-being in the workplace and finding ways to relieve the financial burden on young people during their time in education and training.

4.3. National coordinators

The survey targeting NCs (e.g. ministries, National Agencies and national youth councils) and national contact points was released on 7 March 2023 and remained open until 14 April 2023. It invited them to assess activities and new initiatives delivered at all levels (national, regional and local) as part of the Year.

4.3.1 Sample composition

A total of 26 responses were received from NCs and national contact points. Respondents were asked to specify the organisation they represented. Most represented ministries (14 responses, 54%), followed by agencies (11 responses, 42%) and one national youth council (4%). Three responses were received from outside the EU (from National Agencies in Liechtenstein, Serbia and Türkiye).

4.3.2. Executive summary

Key findings

- 77% of NCs agreed that most of the activities had taken place because 2022 was designated as the EYY.
- 81% collaborated with ministries other than those responsible for youth policy.
- The Year was considered to have helped young people to become active and engaged citizens, and actors of change.
- The Youth Policy Dialogues with Commissioners were highlighted as a unique opportunity for young people to get closer to policy initiatives and decision-makers, by involving them in decision-making processes and in making their voices heard.
- The themes of skills, education, and training were prominent during the Year, especially in relation to environmentally friendly and digitally transformed societies.
- The inclusion of vulnerable groups (young NEETs, young people with fewer opportunities, and young people from devalued ethnic minorities such as the Roma community) was prioritised.
- Highlighted topics included youth becoming more familiar with opportunities at EU, national and local levels, and being more prepared to take up such opportunities through capacity building, networking and engagement.
- There was a clear emphasis on participation by young people, particularly in decision-making. Networking was a central theme, with more young people than before being able to develop new networks and connections, and thereby contribute to the participation and engagement of young people in democratic life.
- NCs considered that EYY activities that were coordinated at national level had contributed to these three objectives the most:
 - promoting opportunities available to young people to support their development (96%);
 - helping young people to become active and engaged citizens, and building capacity for youth participation and civic engagement (88%);
 - bringing a youth perspective to EU policies through mainstreaming (64%).
- With regard to the Year's implementation, NCs supported the continuation of more dialogues between young people and high-level decision-makers beyond 2022 (68%) and requested more efforts to mainstream youth perspectives in all policy areas (68%).
- Some NCs expressed their view that the Year did not fulfil its potential because of its late announcement and the late availability of budget.

Recommendations

- Ongoing information campaigns to promote young people's involvement in decision-making processes further at EU, national and local levels.

- Continuing dialogues between politicians and young people to promote youth in all policy areas.
- Providing networking opportunities for NCs and broader stakeholders, and creating accessible online platforms to easily communicate opportunities in the EU.
- Directly involving young people in the preparation of various initiatives and proposals.
- With regard to recommendations to be continued at EU level, respondents highlighted the importance of continuing to support the EYY NCs/SH Group; providing more opportunities for young people's voices to be heard at all levels; disseminating good practices; integrating recommendations into policies; and creating more targeted activities based on young people's needs as voiced throughout the EYY.

4.3.3. Survey results according to the European Year of Youth's objectives

4.3.3.1 European Year of Youth objectives

Using a ranking system on a scale of 1 to 5, with the additional option to respond with *I don't know*, NCs were asked to agree or disagree with whether the EYY's overarching objectives were achieved through the activities organised.

As shown in Figure 24, NCs considered that the EYY activities had led to the achievement of the following three EYY objectives to the most extent: promoting opportunities available to young people to support their development (96%); helping young people to become active and engaged citizens and building capacity for youth participation and civic engagement (89%); and bringing a youth perspective to the EU's policies (65%).

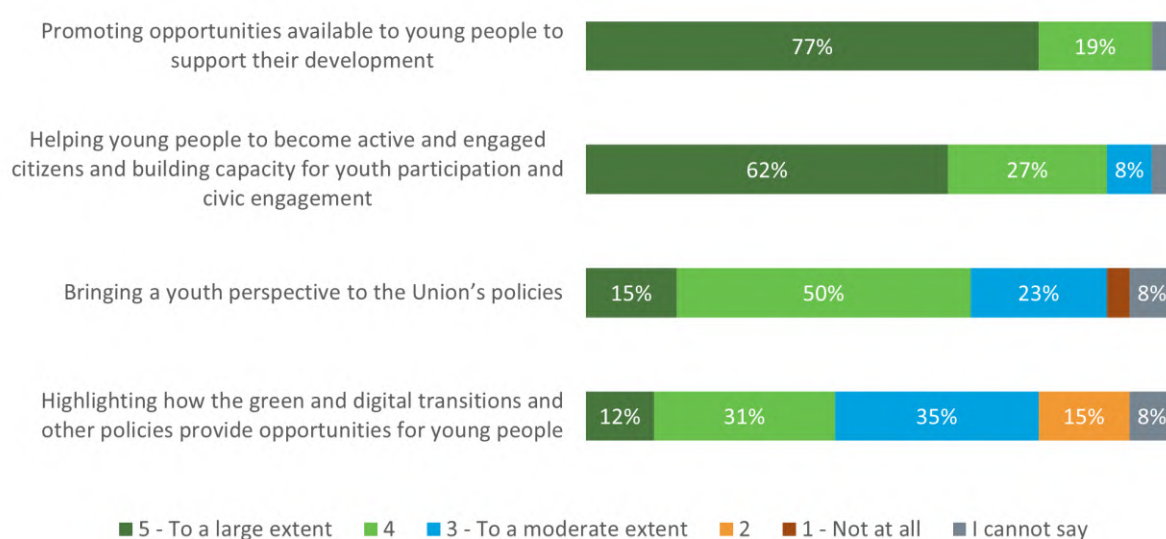


Figure 24. 'On a scale of 1 to 5, to what extent were the EYY's overarching objectives achieved in your country?' (26 responses from NCs).
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs

NCs were then asked to indicate whether the Year contributed to specific objectives. As shown in Figure 25, providing *More information about the opportunities available to youth ...* (85%) was selected the most.

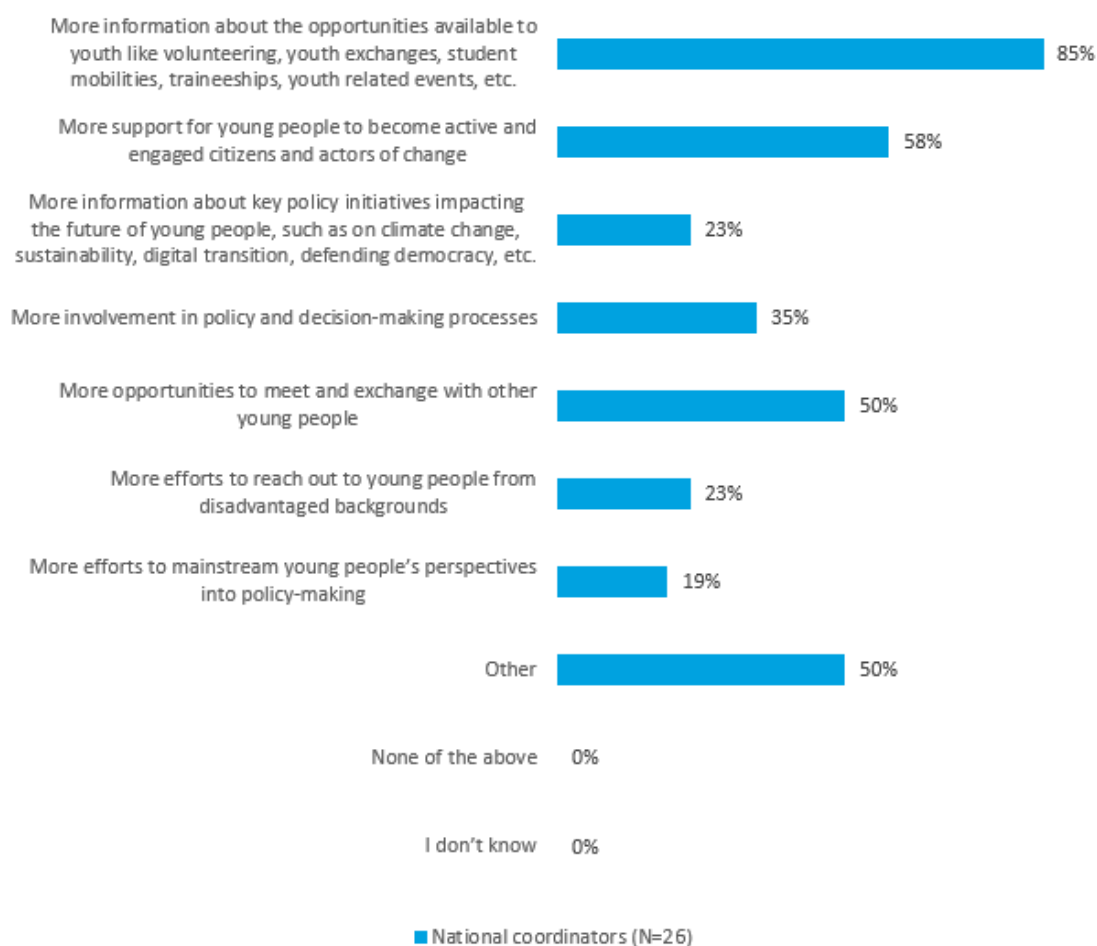


Figure 25. The European Year of Youth contributed to the following developments' (26 responses from NCs)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs

The second most selected option (by 58% of NCs) was *More support for young people to become active and engaged citizens and actors of change*. However, only 35% of NCs agreed that there had been *More involvement in policy and decision-making processes*. Likewise, only 23% of NCs agreed that there had been *More information about key policy initiatives impacting the future of young people, such as climate change, sustainability, digital transition and defending democracy, etc.*

4.3.3.2 Outreach and engagement

In terms of the activities' reach, NCs were asked how many young people in total had been reached through EYY activities implemented at national level (only outreach activities were taken into account). The overall estimated reach that they declared was almost 7.3 million young people, with France, Italy, Lithuania and Finland being reached out to the most. The

table below shows the NC's responses on outreach via social media. It is to be noted that these numbers should not necessarily taken as the real impact in terms of outreach to young people.

Italy	2 500 000	Denmark	10 000
France	1 750 000	Liechtenstein	9 000
Lithuania	1 000 000	Serbia	5 000
Finland	825 201	Luxembourg	3 000
Portugal	500 000	Greece	3 000
Estonia	250 000	Ireland	2 500
Bulgaria	141 000	Belgium	1 000
Romania	69 847	Slovakia	650
Sweden	60 000	Hungary	100
Malta	50 000	Slovenia	18
Belgium	45 000	Belgium	14
Czechia	40 000	Germany	No answer was given
Croatia	10 000	Overall	7 275 330

Table 8. 'How many young people were reached through EYY activities, initiatives and campaigns (including social media campaigns) in your country?' (26 responses from NCs).

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs

Respondents were then asked how they engaged on social media with content posted by the Commission's 'European Youth' social media account and could choose all options that applied. As shown in Figure 26, most NCs shared or engaged with the content. Overall, slightly more than one in four (27%) did not engage, and Facebook was the preferred channel (58%), followed by Instagram (50%) and Twitter (15%).

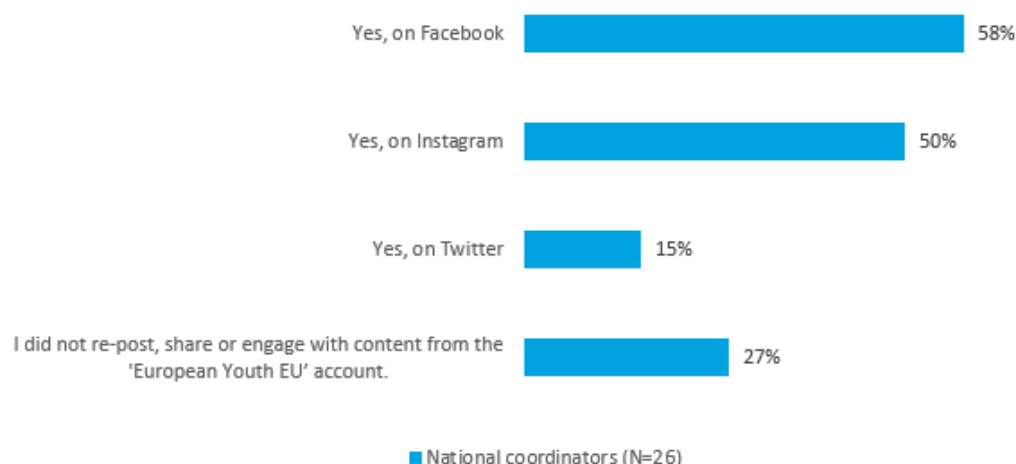


Figure 26. Did you re-post, share or engage with content posted by the European Commission's youth social media account "European Youth EU" on the following social media? (Choose all that apply.)' (26 responses from NCs)).

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs

4.3.3.3 Making young people's voices heard

As shown in Figure 27, NCs were then asked if they felt that the EYY had enabled young people to express their opinions and make their voices heard. Using the 1 to 5 star rating system, 100% of NCs agreed that it had, voting either with 5 stars (31%), 4 stars (31%) or 3 stars (38%).

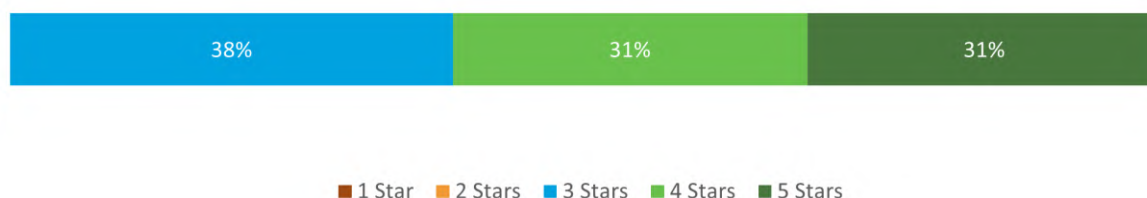


Figure 27. Do you feel that during the European Year of Youth you had opportunities to make your voice heard/express your opinion? Please rate: 1 not at all – 5 to a large extent.' (26 responses from NCs).

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs

4.3.3.4 Contributing to the European Year of Youth

Respondents were asked about the activities they had organised for the EYY. As shown in Figure 28, NCs frequently referred to the organisation of conferences or events for young people (65%) and information and awareness-raising campaigns for young people (54%), as their main contributions to the EYY objectives. Dialogues and debates with young people (38%), promotion of opportunities for young people (38%) and festivals, meet-ups or other activities and spaces where young people could meet and interact (31%) were also highlighted. By contrast, certain activities, such as workshops, training and capacity-building sessions (27%), specific activities targeting young people belonging to vulnerable groups (23%) and particularly studies, surveys and research on youth issues (8%) were not organised as much, and therefore could not have contributed much to achieving the objectives.

national and local levels, and being more prepared to take up such opportunities through capacity building, networking and engagement activities. NCs considered the theme of skills, education and training to be important in terms of environmentally friendly and digitally transformed societies. Furthermore, NCs mentioned that they had supported young people's active participation in decision-making by enabling them to develop connections, not only with stakeholders but with decision-makers, through networking events, thus enabling them to have their voice heard at different levels. They also emphasised the inclusion of vulnerable target groups, such as young NEETs, young people with fewer opportunities and young people from marginalised ethnic minorities.

The box below contains a selection of quotes highlighting the key achievements described in submissions from NCs.

‘Young people are more familiar with the opportunities they have at local, national and European levels’ (Serbia).

‘Environmentally friendly and digitally transformed societies’ (Romania).

‘The “Your Europe – Your Year!” campaign was aimed at encouraging youth-led dialogues between young people and decision-makers at all levels’ (Germany).

‘Targeting young people, in particular NEETs’ (Italy).

‘We gave young people the opportunity to express themselves and convey the voice of their peers from different Slovenian regions to decision-makers’ (Slovenia).

‘Created lasting initiatives and reached more young people than ever before; new networks and connections between NA and youth organisations’ (Lithuania).

Figure 30. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs

NCs also noted that the Year was an opportunity to discuss and highlight a wide range of topics relevant to young people, and to boost ongoing policies for them. This became even more necessary due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which required the younger population to make huge sacrifices (e.g. as regards job opportunities, education and mental health). NCs believe that the EU needs the vision, engagement and participation of all young people to build a better future, which is greener, more inclusive and digital.

NCs mentioned different kinds of online and offline events and activities in their open-ended answers. The highlighted initiatives included significant media campaigns on websites and social networks, and the production of a comic book illustrating the various opportunities that the Erasmus+ programme offers young people.

The box below contains a selection of quotes from submissions by NCs with regard to their outreach and communication activities.

‘The creation of a significant media-campaign on websites and social networks (Jeunes.gouv, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube) watched by 1.7 million people, with the realization and spread of short videos “I inform myself, I express myself, I engage myself” (*Je m’informe, je m’exprime, je m’engage*)’ (France).

‘There were some regional initiatives with the support of national funding. We can mention the edition of a comic book to illustrate the various possibilities of ERASMUS+ programmes for young people with a regional meeting to launch it’ (France).

*Figure 31. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs*

A few central themes also emerged in terms of the types of activities and how they were carried out. First, the EYY was organised as a participative and inclusive process for all involved (e.g. young people, youth organisations, NGOs, ministries, National Agencies and decision-makers). The aim was to ensure intensive cooperation between EU institutions and all actors involved at national, regional and local levels. For this to happen, national coordination and synergies with EU programmes (Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps, etc.) in the youth field were indispensable. Second, informal and non-formal education (including tools such as Youthpass) and young people’s ability to share their own stories and experiences were considered to be very important. The promotion and encouragement of creativity, physical activity and sports, as well as art, were also considered to be fundamental. Third, NCs believed it was vital to base activities on co-creation, with young people taking full part in their design and implementation.

Last but not least, NCs highlighted the EYY Micro Grants scheme, which enabled young people to fund their own events and projects, as shown by the selection of quotes in the box below ⁷⁴.

‘Increased youth participation through activities planned as part of the EYY (106 activities were organised with the support of EYY microgrants)’ (Ireland).

‘Increased interaction and development of relationships between EU NAs and newcomer organisations - 81% of microgrant beneficiary organisations were newcomers in Erasmus+ or European Solidarity Corps’ (Ireland).

‘181 activities received financial support funds under the TCA/NET objectives. An internal selection committee decided on the financial support based on guidelines shown on the webpage (*[Europäisches Jahr der Jugend 2022 | nationale Agentur für Erasmus+ und ESK (erasmusplus.at)]*). Micro-grant beneficiaries met at the EYY National Event on 10 November 2022 for an exchange and a peer learning exercise’ (Austria).

*Figure 32. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs*

⁷⁴ The quote from the Austrian NC was received in an email to the Commission. It was not part of the survey.

4.3.3.6 Activities that took place because 2022 was designated the European Year of Youth

As Figure 33 shows, NCs were asked to agree or disagree with the statement that most of the activities took place because 2022 was designated as the EYY. Overall, 77% of NCs agreed with the statement, 8% neither agreed nor disagreed and only 15% disagreed.

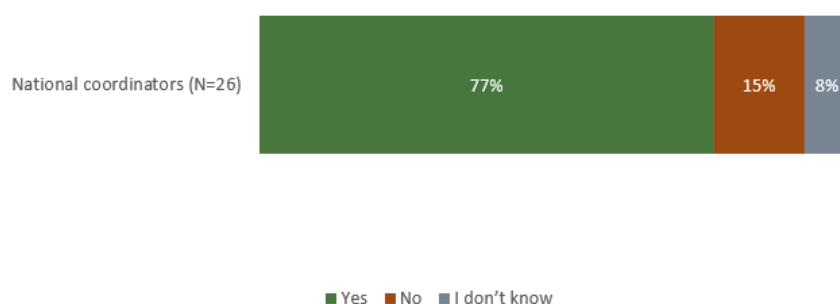


Figure 33. 'Do you agree with this statement: "The majority of these activities took place because 2022 was designated the European Year of Youth"?' (26 responses from NCs).

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs

4.3.3.7 Tools, resources or expertise from the European Commission

As can be seen in Figure 34, NCs were asked whether they used tools, resources or expertise provided by the Commission when implementing any activities. NCs were very likely to have done this. The 85% who replied in the affirmative were then asked to provide more information in an open-ended answer. These NCs mentioned that they had used a wide range of resources, including the Youth Portal and Youth Voices Platform, as well as the stakeholder toolkit, visual materials, logos and presentations that the Commission had provided.

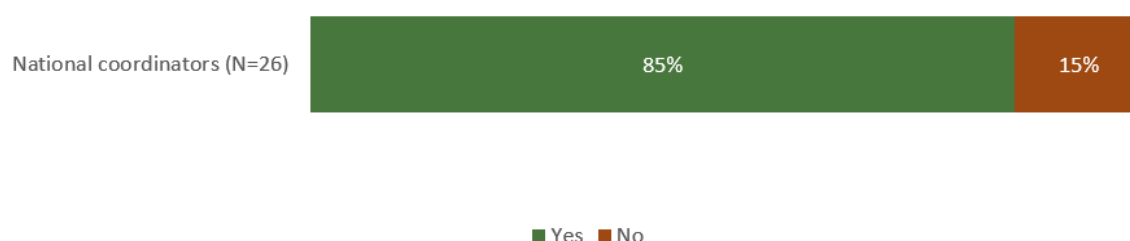


Figure 34. 'Do you agree with this statement: "The majority of these activities took place because 2022 was designated the European Year of Youth"?' (26 responses from NCs).

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs

Using a ranking system on a scale of 1 to 5, with an additional 'don't know' option, NCs were asked to what extent they had found certain resources useful. Considering rankings of 4 and 5 only, 92% of NCs rated the EYY webpage positively and 88% rated the EYY communications package (logo, visuals and stakeholders' toolkit) positively. 73% of NCs rated the EYY NC/SH

Group meetings positively. Despite the innovative nature of the Pool of European young journalists, only 35% of NCs agreed that it had been useful.

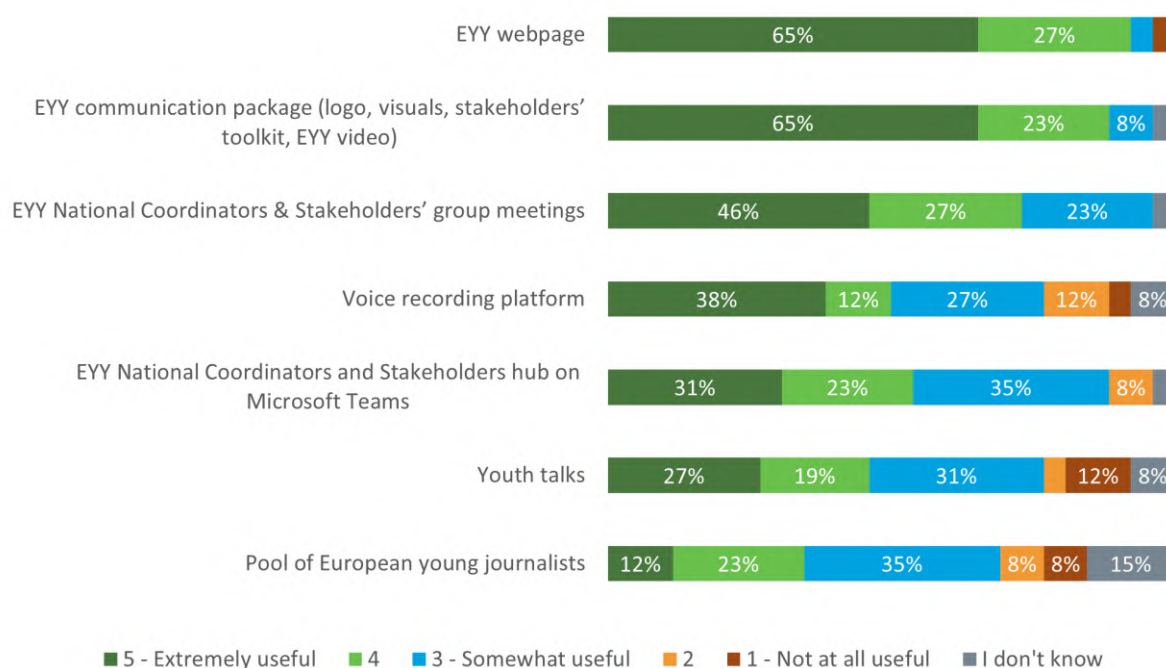


Figure 35. 'On a scale of 1 to 5, how useful did you find the following': (26 responses from NCs)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs

4.3.3.8 Bringing a youth perspective across all relevant EU policy fields (EYY Objective 4)

NCs were then asked which organisation they had collaborated with in order to mainstream youth perspectives in relevant policy areas. As Figure 36 shows, NCs collaborated with many different types of organisations. Almost all respondents (92%) selected national youth councils or similar national youth organisations. 81% had collaborated with ministries or public administration bodies other than those responsible for youth policy, thus demonstrating their intention to make a positive contribution to achieving the objective. By contrast, regional youth councils or similar regional youth organisations were selected by the least number of respondents (28%).

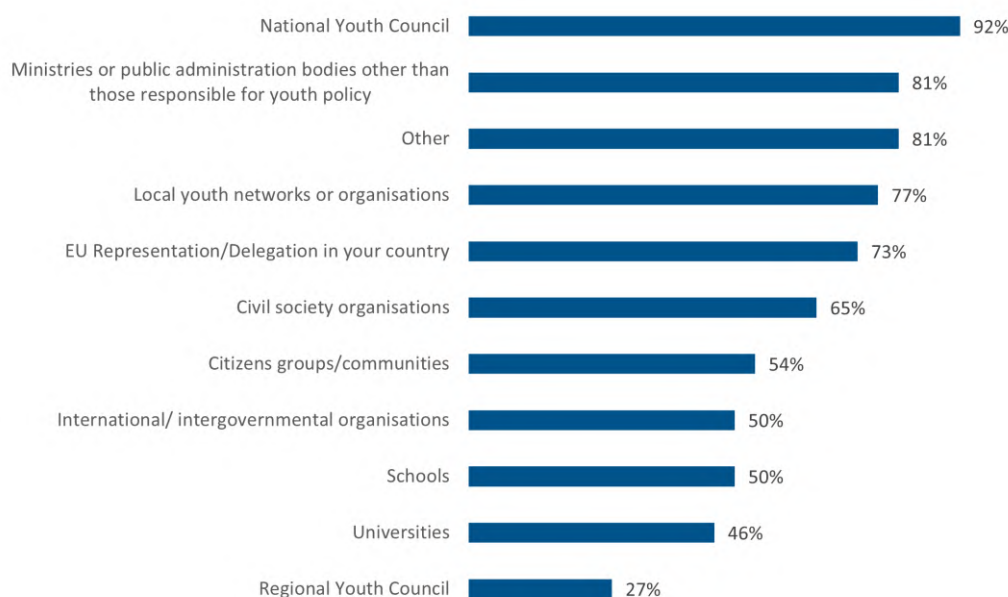


Figure 36. During the European Year of Youth, did you collaborate with: (select all that apply)? (26 responses from NCs)

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs

NCs were asked whether they had set up any steering groups or networks during the Year. A majority of 69% of NCs said that they had and 31% said that they had not. Those who answered in the affirmative were then asked which types of stakeholders had been part of the steering group or network. National youth council/forum (69%) and ministry/agency responsible for youth policy (65%) were the most selected types (each by about two thirds of respondents). With regard to mainstreaming youth policy, 61% of the steering groups included ministries or agencies responsible for policy areas other than youth.

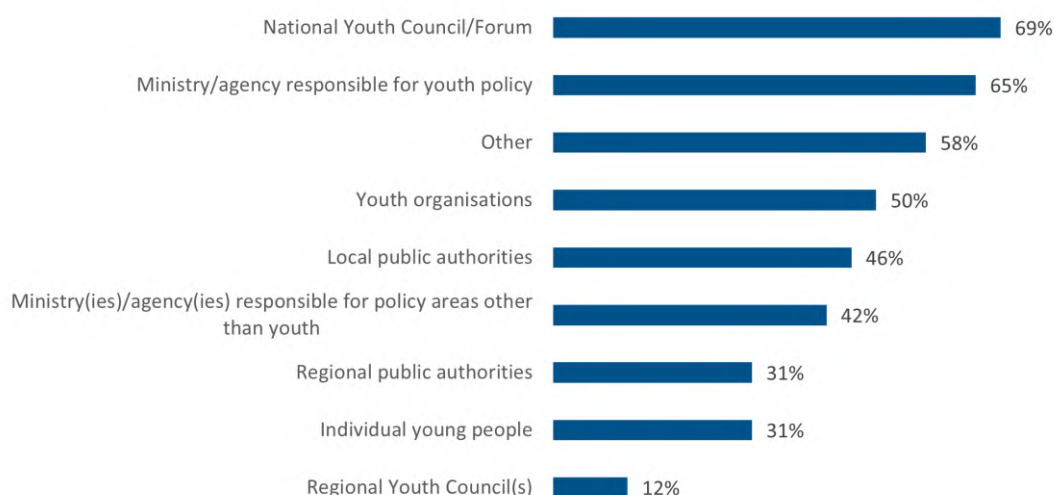


Figure 37. Which of the following stakeholders were part of your steering group/network? (select all that apply) (26 responses from NCs)

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs

4.3.4. National coordinators' views on the European Year of Youth and recommendations for beyond 2022

NCs were asked about their overall feedback on the EYY. Their views were predominantly positive and respondents indicated their support for EYY activities to be continued beyond 2022. The word cloud below visualises the words that were mentioned the most in their open-ended answers.



Figure 38. Word cloud based on open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs

NCs generally saw the EYY as having been successful in supporting young people to become active engaged citizens and actors of change. They stated that the Year had succeeded in providing information on key policy initiatives with an impact on young people's future, including those relating to climate change, sustainability, digital transition, democracy and mental health. It could therefore be stated that the Year had allowed young people to build better networks and improved their capacity to do so. NCs highlighted Policy Dialogues with Commissioners as a unique opportunity for young people to get closer to policy initiatives and decision-makers, making the EU story more tangible at local level.

The meetings and events organised by the Commission were considered as having been very helpful for engaging NCs. The final conference in Brussels also demonstrated good parallels and connections between the EYY and the European Year of Skills. Furthermore, NCs reported that they had received feedback from young people, who had greatly appreciated being involved in the final conference.

The Micro Grants schemes were often highlighted because they made it possible to reach new organisations and to raise awareness on a large scale of the opportunities available to young people and organisations. NCs noted that this wide reach would not have been possible without the grants.

However, some NCs stated that the Year had not achieved its full potential because of its late announcement and the late availability of budget. Communication of the initiative at short notice meant that not every young person and relevant stakeholder could be involved. Some respondents nevertheless stated that activities had already been planned, regardless of the EYY.

Another common concern was that young people will be forgotten once the Year is over, and that the commitment to them will need to be continued. Further efforts will be required to ensure the EYY's legacy and to mainstream youth issues at all levels.

The word cloud below visualises the most frequently recurring words in the open-ended answers on action at **EU level**.

Figure 39. Word cloud based on open-ended question.

NCs underlined the need to continue to support the EYY NCs/SH Group; provide more opportunities for young people's voices to be heard at all levels; disseminate good practices; integrate recommendations into policies; and create more targeted activities, based on young people's needs as voiced throughout the EYY.

Finally, NCs highlighted the importance of involving young people directly in the preparation of various initiatives, proposals, etc. as an example of good practice. The Swedish Presidency of the Council hosted the EU Youth Conference between 20 and 22 March 2023; this is cited as a positive example because young people's proposals were included in the preparation of the Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the governments of the Member States on the outcomes of the ninth cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue.

4.4.1 Sample composition

The survey's target group was stakeholders in the youth field. A total of 446 responses were received: 355 from within the EU and 91 from outside (shown in Figure 41).

Responses were received from stakeholders representing all Member States. Croatia led with the highest number of responses (55), but Cyprus, Lithuania and the Netherlands contributed only two responses each.

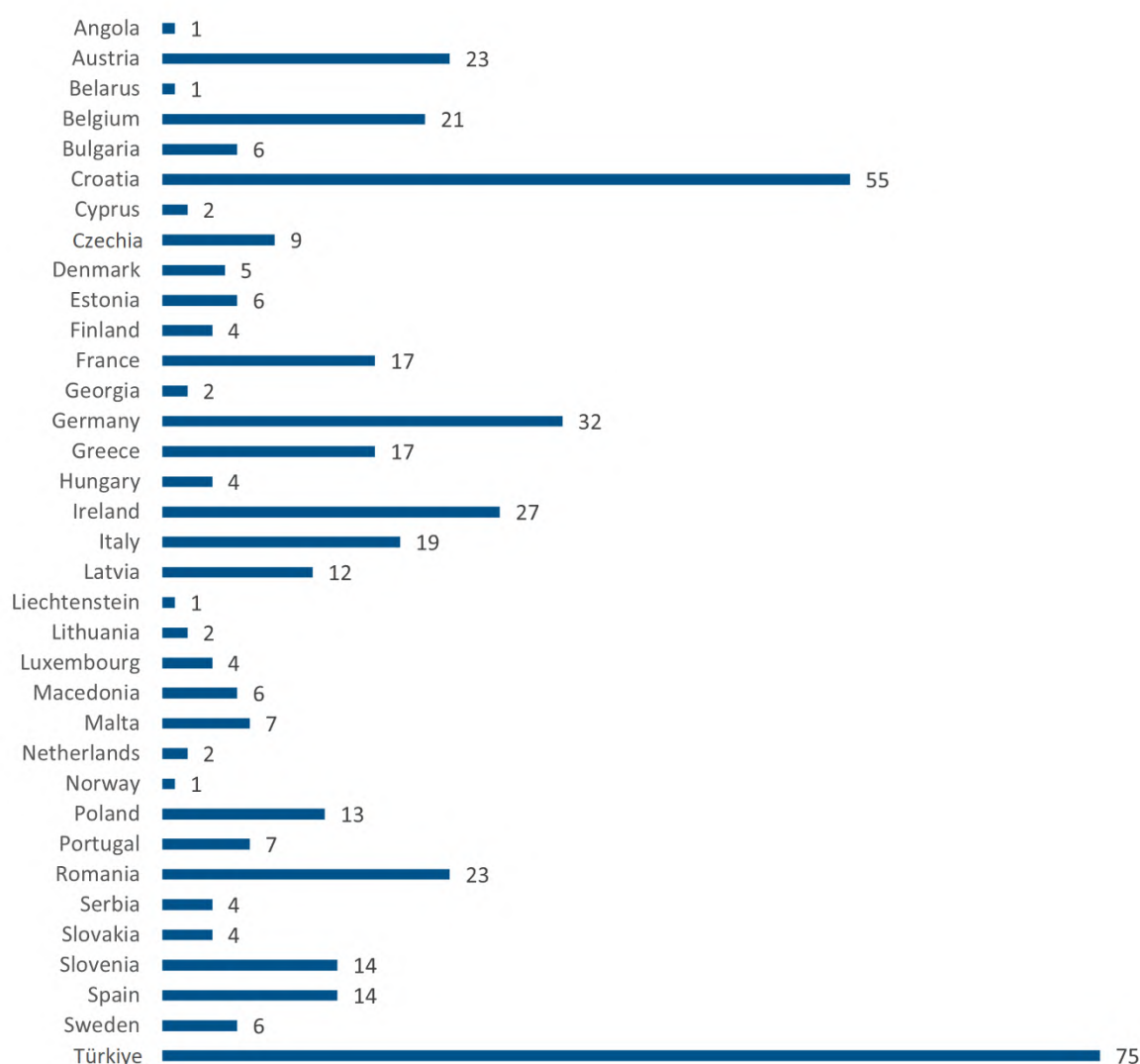


Figure 41. Please select your country.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

Most responses received from outside the EU were from stakeholders in Türkiye (75), but there were also responses from stakeholders in Angola, Belarus, Georgia, Liechtenstein, Macedonia, Norway and Serbia.

Respondents were asked to select the organisation they represented. As shown in Figure 42, around 1 in 5 selected *Youth organisation* (21%, 95 responses), *Universities or school* (21%,

94 responses), *Public administration* (20%, 87 responses) or *Civil society organisation* (18%, 81 responses).

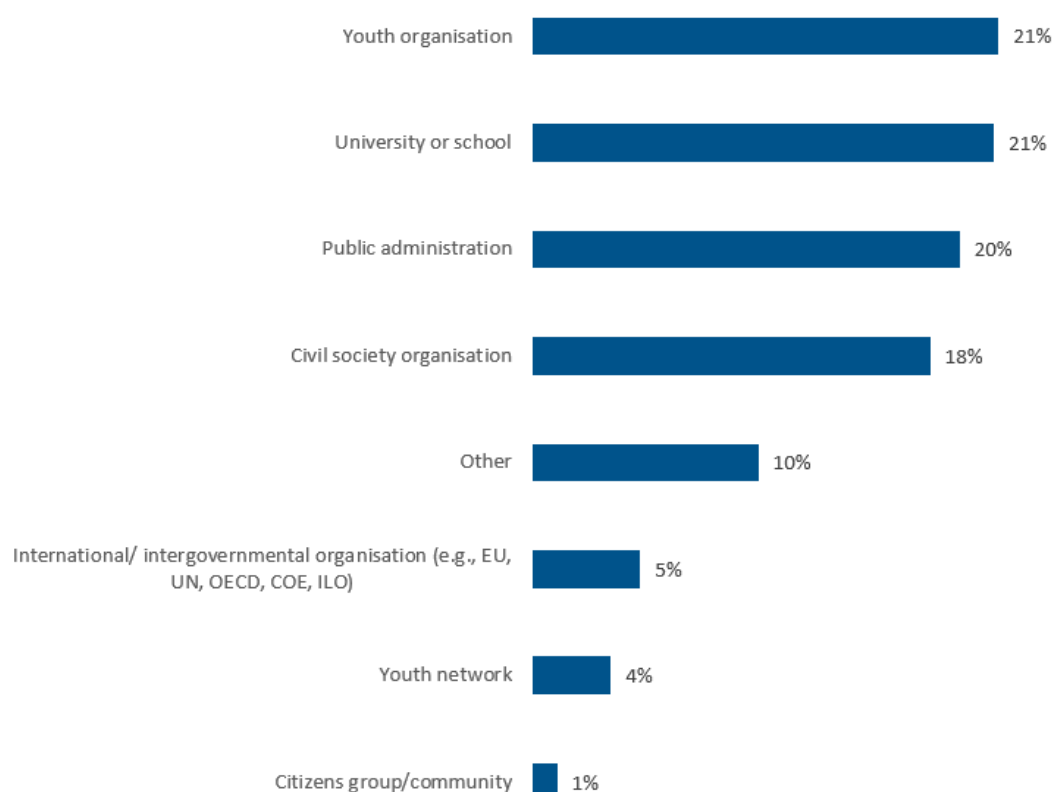


Figure 42. Please, select the organisation you represent: 446 responses from stakeholders)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

Figure 43 shows, there was a balance between organisations that are youth-led (52%) and those that are not (48%). Overall, only 27% of international or intergovernmental organisations and 24% of other organisations were youth-led, while youth organisations (74%), youth networks (69%) and citizens groups/communities (60%) were more youth-led.

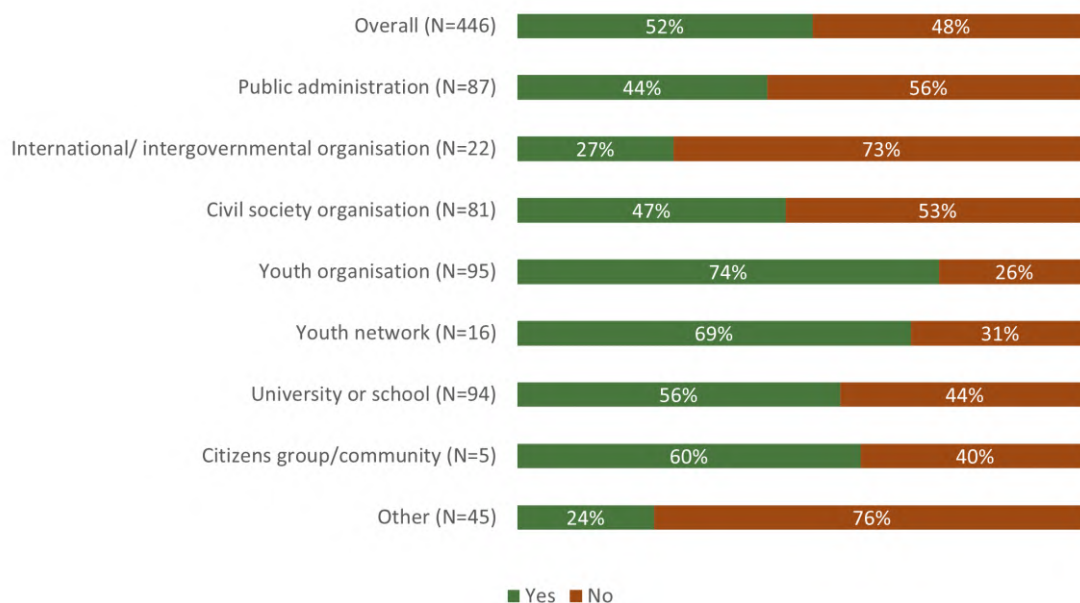


Figure 43. 'Would you say your organisation is youth-led?' (446 responses from stakeholders)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

As shown in Figure 44, 28% of organisation representatives knew that their organisation was a member of the EYY NCs/SH Group. A quarter of respondents (24%) did not know whether their organisation was a member of the EYY NCs/SH Group. This was particularly the case for universities and schools (30%).

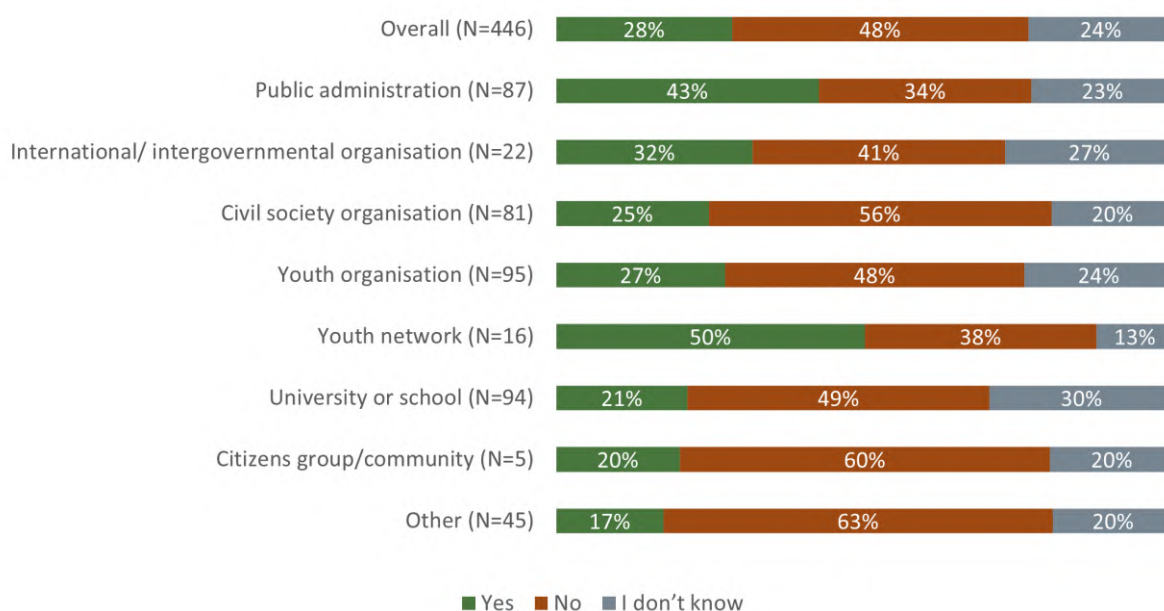


Figure 44. 'Is the organisation you represent a member of the European Year of Youth national coordinators and Stakeholders Group?' (446 responses from stakeholders)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

As Figure 45 shows, the Year was the first time that one in three organisations had contributed to an EU initiative.

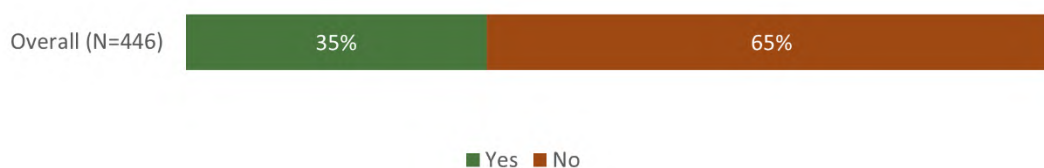


Figure 45. 'Was the European Year of Youth the first time your organisation contributed to a European Union initiative?' (446 responses from stakeholders)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

4.4.2. Executive summary

This section presents the results of the survey sent to stakeholders. The survey sought to measure the impact of EYY.

Key findings

- The survey revealed that the two objectives that were most fully achieved and saw the highest engagement among stakeholders were:
 - *promoting opportunities* for young people to support their development (79%); and
 - *helping young people to become active and engaged citizens, and building capacity for youth participation and civic engagement* (78%).
- By contrast, *bringing a youth perspective to the EU's policies* (46%) and *highlighting how the green and digital transitions and other policies provide opportunities for young people* (41%) were among those in which stakeholders had invested fewer resources.
- According to stakeholders, the Year allowed them to accomplish organisation-related goals. Among their key achievements, stakeholders identified: raising awareness about prejudice, climate change, digitalisation, fake news, physical and mental health and well-being, disability, sexual orientation and social disadvantage; and increasing young people's awareness of opportunities in the EU by providing information on subjects such as the European institutions, volunteering and Erasmus+. Furthermore, 64% of stakeholders agreed that the Year had contributed to more information being shared about opportunities available to young people, such as volunteering or youth exchanges; 54% thought the Year had provided more opportunities to meet and exchange with other young people; and 56% noted that there was more support for young people to become active and engaged citizens.
- An important theme that emerged in the results is that of building networks, mainly by strengthening connections with youth organisations, networking, building new partnerships with official institutions and NGOs, and facilitating collaboration among young people.

- Another key topic was increasing youth engagement. Successful efforts to get more young people involved in EYY events and activities led to young people becoming more engaged in their local communities (e.g. as volunteers) and reaching out to individuals who had no prior involvement in youth projects.
- Some organisations described the activities they had organised as *workshops, training courses and capacity-building sessions* (55%); *conferences or events for young people* (49%); and/or *promotion of opportunities for young people* (40%). Only 28% of stakeholders organised dialogues and debates with young people, leaving room for stakeholders to promote dialogue between policymakers and young people to strengthen young people's meaningful participation in decision-making on issues that affect them. Stakeholders stated that the overall reach of their activities was around 473 million young people. 53% of stakeholders believed that the activities organised were directly related to the Year.

Recommendations

- More opportunities to make young people's voices heard at all levels (77% of stakeholders).
- More networking and capacity-building opportunities for young people beyond 2022 (69% of stakeholders).
- More efforts to include the youth perspective in all policy areas (44% of stakeholders).

4.4.3. Survey results according to the European Year of Youth's objectives

4.4.3.1 European Year of Youth objectives

Stakeholders were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that the EYY's overarching objectives had been achieved through the organised activities.

As shown in Figure 46, overall, stakeholders stated that *Promoting opportunities available to young people to support their development* (79%) and *Helping young people to become active and engaged citizens, and building capacity for youth participation and civic engagement* (78%) were the two options that had been best achieved. Fewer stakeholders stated that *Bringing a youth perspective on the EU's policies* (46%) and *Highlighting how the green and digital transitions and other policies provide opportunities for young people* (41%) had been achieved.

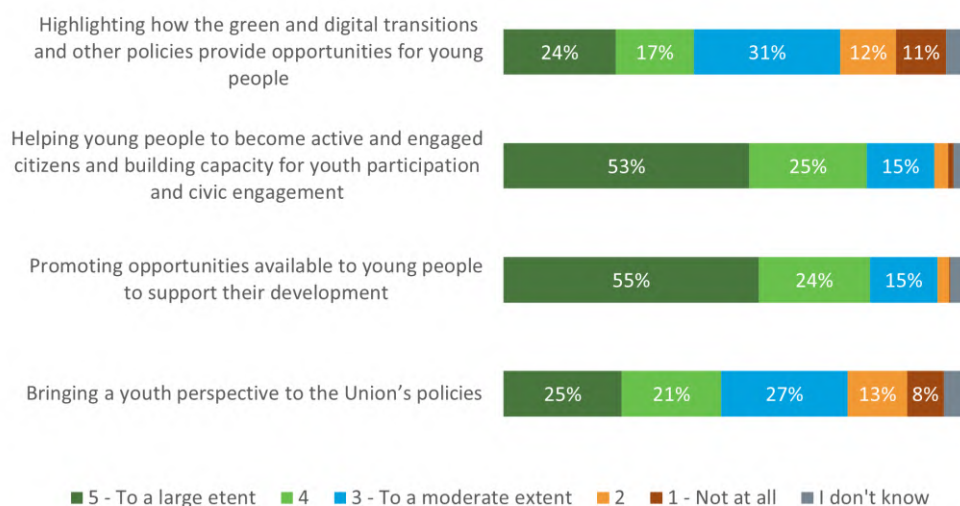


Figure 46. 'On a scale of 1 to 5, to what extent were the EYY's overarching objectives achieved in your activities?' (446 responses from stakeholders)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

Stakeholders were asked to indicate whether the Year had contributed to specific objectives. As shown in **Error! Reference source not found. 47**, almost all organisations indicated that the EYY had played a key role in the achievement of certain objectives. For instance, 64% of stakeholders selected *More information about the opportunities available to youth* and 56% of stakeholders selected *More support for young people to become active and engaged citizens and actors of change*.

However, 26% of stakeholders identified the need for *More efforts to reach out to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds*; 17% stressed the importance of *More involvement of young people in policy and decision-making processes*, and 14% emphasised the need for *More efforts to mainstream young people's perspectives into policymaking*.

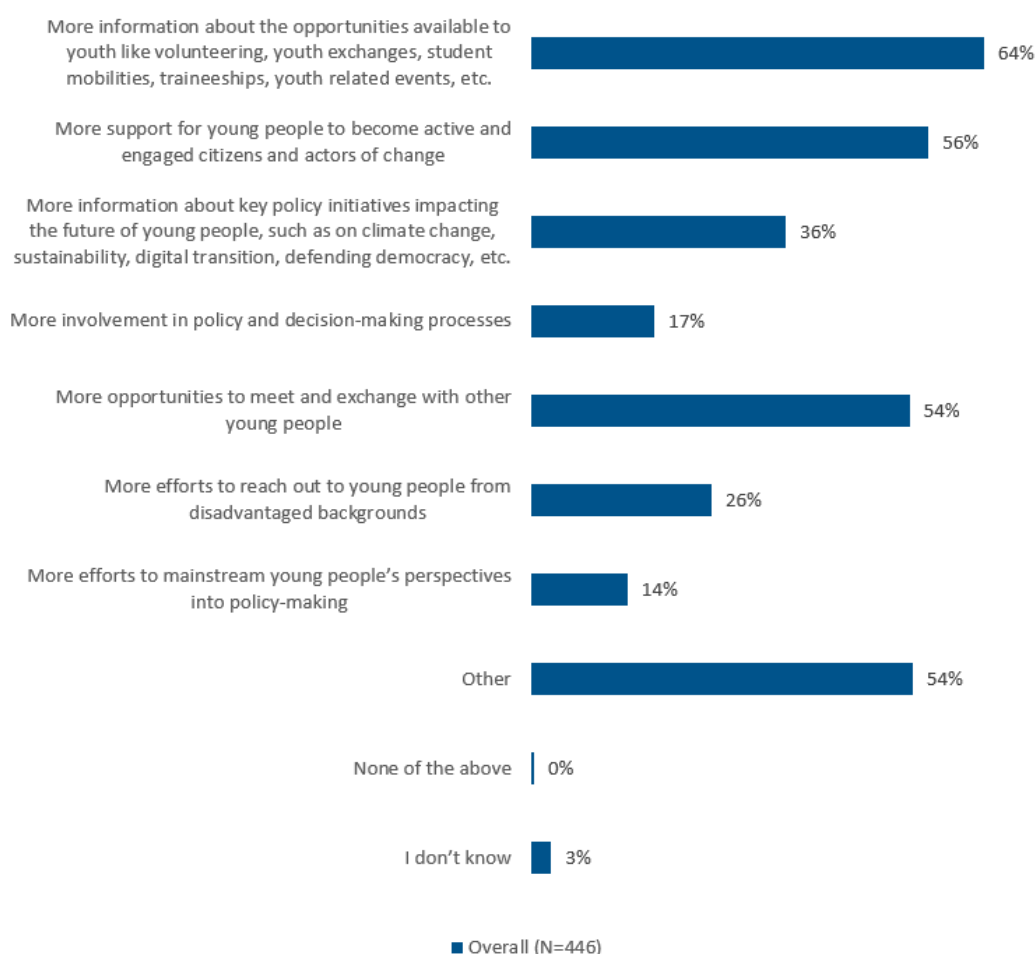


Figure 47. 'The European Year of Youth contributed to the following developments:' (446 responses from stakeholders)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

4.4.3.2 Outreach and engagement

Stakeholders were asked how many young people in total were reached through the EYY activities implemented by their organisation. Figure 48 shows that the overall estimated reach of EYY activities declared by stakeholders was around 473 million (472 828 231) people. This figure is relatively high and may include organisations' outreach efforts through social media, among other indicators. One stakeholder response indicates a reach of approximately 454 million young people, but this figure appears highly improbable and is probably a false entry.

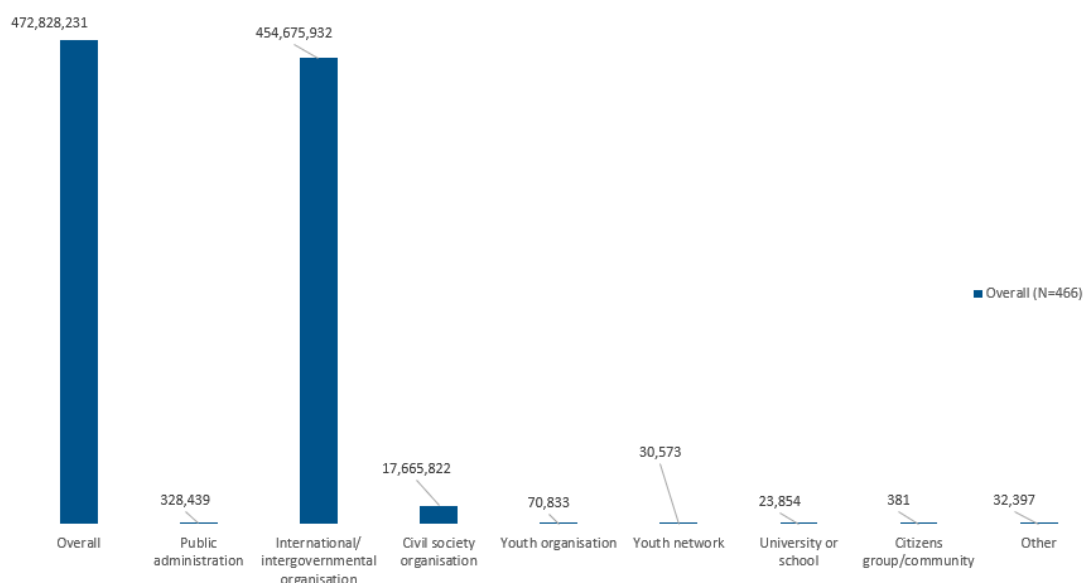


Figure 48. 'How many young people in total have been reached through the EYY activities implemented by your organisation?' (446 responses from stakeholders)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

Stakeholders were asked whether and how they had engaged with content posted by the Commission, and could select all survey options that applied. As shown in Figures 49 and 50, most stakeholders shared or engaged with the content, but just over 1 in 4 (28%) did not engage with the EYY content through the Commission's social media channels.

Overall, Facebook was the preferred channel for stakeholders (55%), while Twitter was the least preferred, with only 17% engaging through that social media platform.

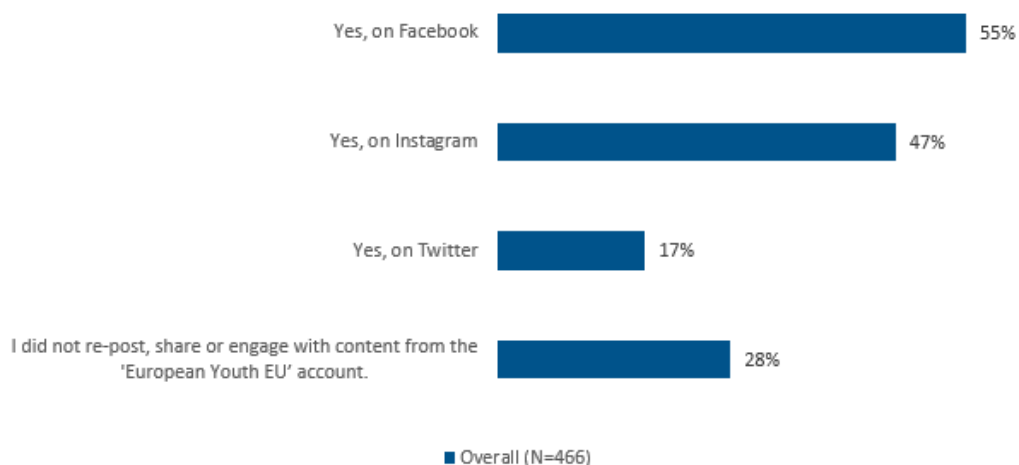


Figure 49. 'Did you re-post, share or engage with content posted on the European Commission's youth social media account "European Youth EU" on the following social media?' (446 responses from stakeholders)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

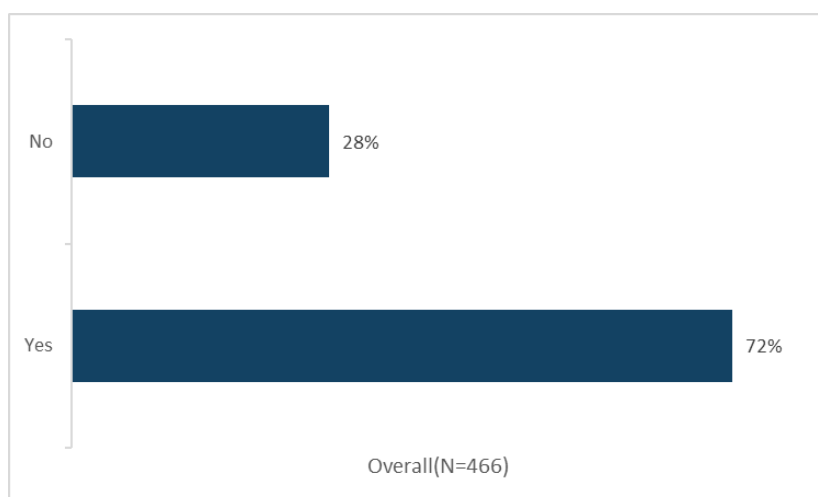


Figure 50. 'I did not re-post, share or engage with content from the "European Youth EU" account' (446 responses from stakeholders)

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

4.4.3.3 Making young people's voices heard

Stakeholders were asked whether they felt that the EYY had enabled young people to express their opinions and make their voices heard, using the 1 to 5 star rating system. Overall, 89% of respondents agreed, giving ratings of 3, 4 and 5 stars.

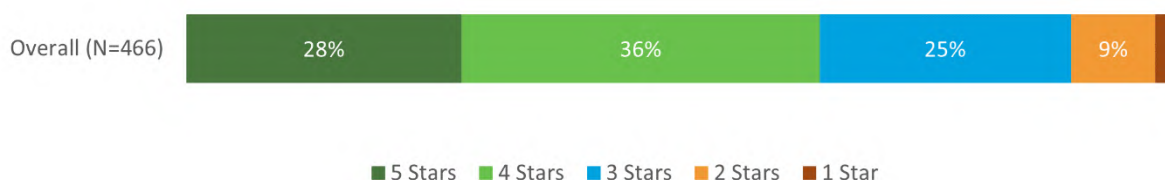


Figure 51. Do you feel that during the European Year of Youth young people had opportunities to make their voice heard/to express their opinion? Please rate: 1: not at all - 5 to a large extent. (446 responses from stakeholders) Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

4.4.3.4 EYY measures and activities

Respondents were asked what activities they had organised that contributed to the EYY. As shown in Figure 52, stakeholders indicated that three types of activities were organised most: *Workshops, trainings and capacity-building sessions* (55%); *Conferences or events for young people* (49%); and *Promotion of opportunities for young people* (40%). These were followed by *Information and awareness-raising campaigns for young people* (33%); *Festivals, meetups or other activities and spaces where young people can meet and interact* (30%); and *Dialogues and debates with young people* (28%). The activities that were organised least were *Specific activities targeting young people belonging to vulnerable groups* (15%) and *Studies, surveys and research on youth issues* (10%).

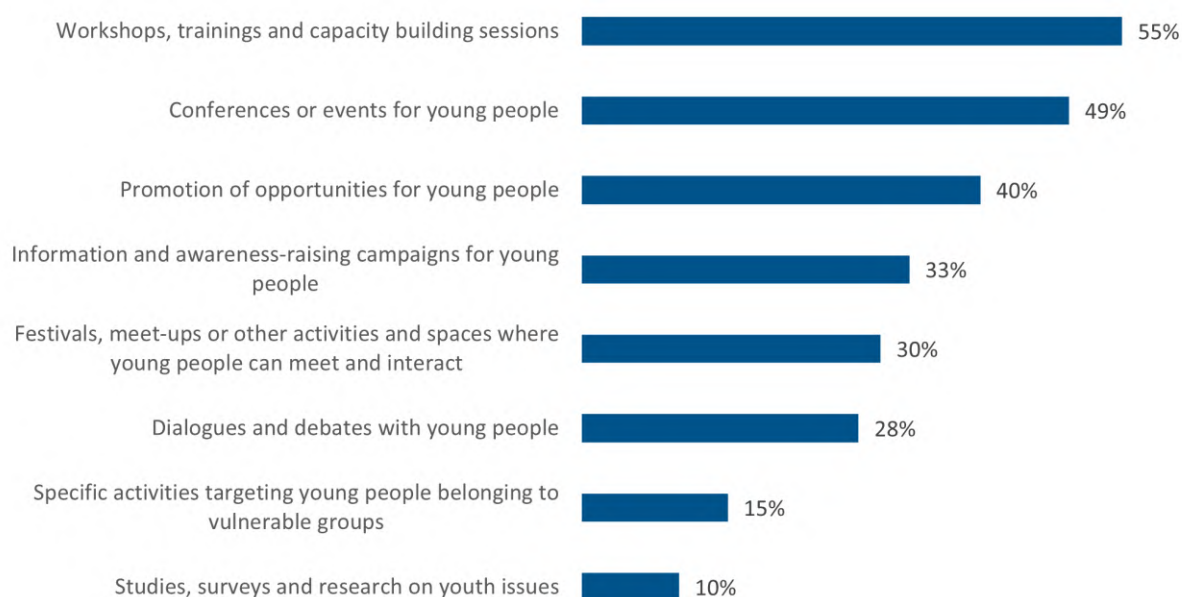


Figure 52. In 2022, my organisation launched/implemented/organised the following activities which contributed to the objectives of the European Year of Youth (including online activities). (446 responses from stakeholders)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

4.4.3.5 Main achievements linked to the European Year of Youth according to stakeholders

Stakeholders were invited to describe their top achievements by responding to an open-ended query. Numerous keywords emerged as recurring themes and are depicted in the word cloud below. The size of each word corresponds to how frequently it occurred.



Figure 53. Word cloud based on open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

Many respondents highlighted the creation of events such as workshops, meetings, festivals, conferences, seminars and exhibitions as a key achievement of their organisation in relation to the EYY.

Another main achievement that was highlighted was that the organised activities helped to increase awareness on a wide range of topics, including prejudice, climate change, digitalisation, fake news, physical and mental health and well-being, disability, sexual orientation and social disadvantage. They also helped to increase young people's awareness of opportunities in the EU by providing information on areas such as the EYY, the EU institutions in general, volunteering and Erasmus+.

The box below contains a selection of quotes from stakeholders highlighting their achievements with regard to increasing awareness.

'Workshops were held on the topic of prejudice towards students with special educational needs.' (Croatia)

'Organising an exhibition with portraits and stories of LGBTQIA+ students.' (Romania)

'We were promoting opportunities of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps to youth in our local community.' (Slovenia)

'To increase awareness of local youths about the European opportunities in my region.' (Türkiye)

Figure 54. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

Another achievement that emerged relates to increasing youth engagement. Some organisations highlighted successful efforts to get more young people involved in events and activities related to the Year. A few responses described young people becoming more engaged in their local communities (as volunteers in some cases) and reaching out to individuals who had no prior involvement in youth projects.

The box below contains a selection of quotes from stakeholders highlighting their accomplishments with regard to youth engagement.

'Boost youth engagement and participation on activities, actions and events related to the EYY.' (Greece)

'We organised a series of national and international events to promote the participation of young people in society and encourage their active citizenship. This initiative included conferences, seminars and workshops, where young people could exchange ideas, discuss issues and engage in meaningful dialogue.' (Portugal)

'Our organisation involved over 360 young people in its activities during EYY.' (Czechia)

Figure 55. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

The theme of capacity building and training was also deemed important by stakeholders. A few stated that individuals had developed skills as a result of the activities that they had organised. Others said that they had successfully increased the capacity of their own organisation.

The box below contains a selection of quotes from stakeholders highlighting their achievements with regard to capacity building and training.

‘Dreamcatchers: training course for youngsters who want to write a solidarity project, a participation project or a youth exchange.’ (Belgium)

‘Building the capacity of our youth members through training.’ (Ireland)

‘Workshops, trainings and capacity building sessions.’ (Croatia)

‘It helped us to develop our capacity.’ (Türkiye)

*Figure 56. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders*

Finally, some organisations described facilitating dialogue between policymakers and young people, providing an opportunity for issues affecting youth to be discussed at a high level of government.

The box below contains a selection of quotes from stakeholders highlighting their accomplishments with regard to facilitating dialogue between policymakers and young people.

‘Discussions, dialogues and debates of young people on improving living conditions in the local environment.’ (Croatia)

‘More dialogue between politicians and youth and awareness for youth participation.’ (Austria)

‘We managed to host a public dialogue with the local/municipal authorities, where young people expressed their views directly to the mayor, addressed major concerns of the community and proposed ways of implementing these into real life. We believe such an initiative is crucial because it facilitates the social responsibility of the youth and their political involvement into public affairs.’ (Greece)

*Figure 57. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders*

Respondents were also asked about the sustainability of any new youth activities or initiatives that began as part of the Year and might continue beyond 2022. Their responses emphasised the same themes as the question on key achievements, and described the reasons for continuing activities.

The box below contains a selection of notable quotes by stakeholders highlighting their achievements with regard to new youth activities or initiatives launched within the framework of the EYY.

‘Digital Skills Training: In response to the pandemic, we have launched a series of digital skills training programmes for young people. We will continue to develop and expand these initiatives, providing young people with the necessary skills to thrive in the digital world while promoting safe and responsible use of technology.’ (Portugal)

‘Youth engaging activities in cooperation with the interinstitutional network on youth outreach and engagement.’ (Belgium)

‘Bridging/narrowing the gap between politics and youth engagement, getting more young people involved in politics.’ (Germany)

‘Workshops, trainings and capacity building sessions.’ (Türkiye)

Figure 58. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

4.4.3.6 Activities that took place because 2022 was designated the European Year of Youth

Respondents were then asked to agree or disagree with the statement that most of the activities took place because 2022 had been designated as the EYY. Most stakeholders agreed (51%), while 41% disagreed, and 6% said that they did not know. However, most responses (71%) were from stakeholders outside the EU. Almost half of EU-based stakeholders (48%) agreed with the statement.

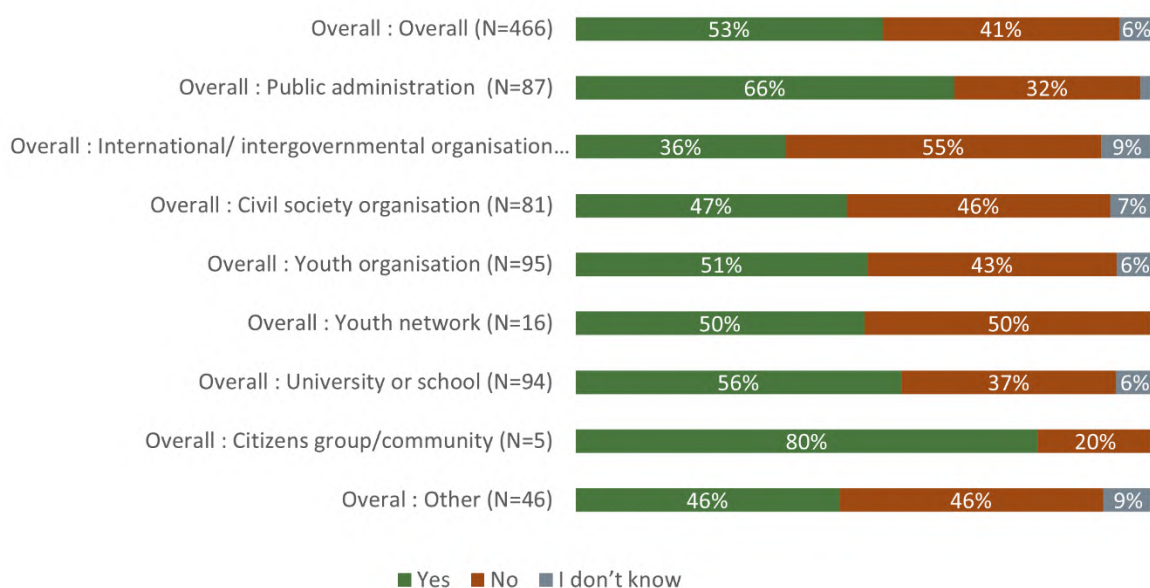


Figure 59. ‘Do you agree with this statement: The majority of these activities took place because 2022 was designated as the European Year of Youth.’ (446 responses from stakeholders)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

4.4.3.7 Tools, resources and expertise from the Commission

49% of the stakeholders asked had used tools, resources or expertise provided by the Commission when implementing activities. Responses were evenly divided between ‘yes’ and ‘no’. Stakeholders belonging to international/intergovernmental organisations (68%) and youth networks (75%) implemented activities using tools provided by the Commission.

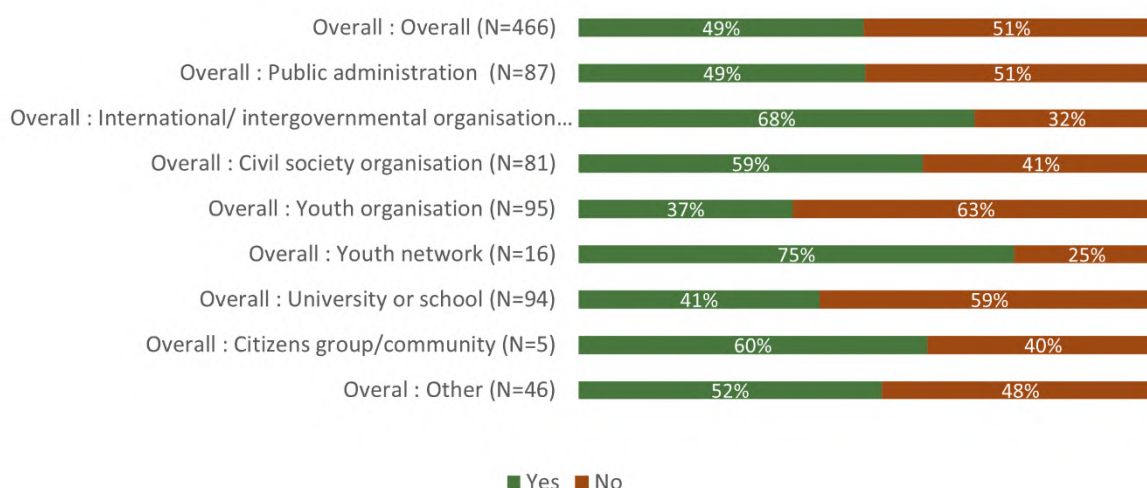


Figure 60. 'Did you implement any activities using tools, resources or expertise from the European Commission (e.g. European Youth Portal, stakeholders' toolkit, presentations, speakers, visual materials, etc.)?' (466 responses from stakeholders)

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

If respondents gave an affirmative response to this question, they were then asked to provide more information in an open-ended format. This particular query has been subject to a qualitative analysis.

Use of the Youth Portal accounted for the largest share of responses, followed by the use of visual materials, toolkits, logos and presentations. Across all items, stakeholders mentioned that resources were used for promotional purposes, to provide information, and during training sessions. Materials were used online and offline, including for posters and leaflets, social media posts and events.

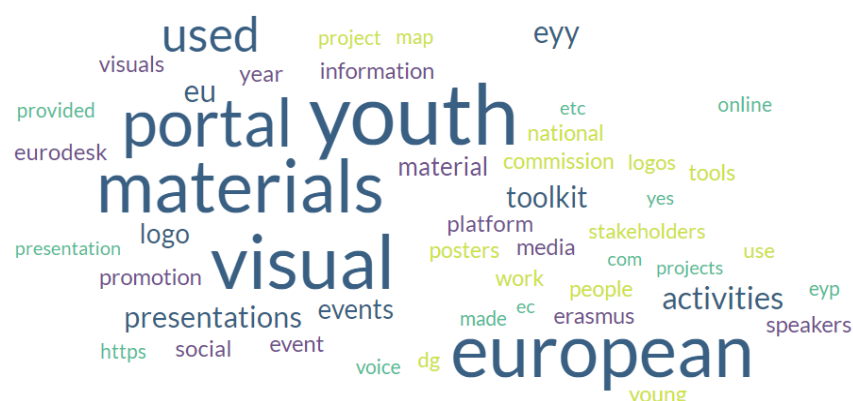


Figure 61. Word cloud based on open-ended question.

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

4.4.3.8 Bringing a youth perspective across all relevant EU policy fields (EYY objective 4)

Another theme that emerges from the open-ended question on the three main achievements was the topic of collaboration and building networks. Some stakeholders described how they had strengthened their connections with youth organisations, while others mentioned networking or building new partnerships with official institutions and NGOs. A few organisations said that they had facilitated collaboration between young people. The importance of this collaboration can be seen in the willingness of stakeholders to continue collaborating with other organisations and working to embed the youth perspective into EU policymaking.

The box below contains a selection of quotes by stakeholders highlighting their achievements with regard to collaboration and building networks.

‘Improving the network among public and private operators.’ (Italy)

‘More young people showing interest and joining youth organisations, realising their initiatives through them.’ (Latvia)

‘Collaborating more closely with the officials.’ (Cyprus)

‘Within the scope of the EU youth year, we have gained more networks for more local and EU-supported projects on youth.’ (Türkiye)

‘We will continue with workshops, exchanging knowledge between the students, and collaboration of students from our region of Croatia. We will also involve our students in Erasmus mobilities and give them the opportunity to take part in learning and meeting their peers from other European countries.’ (Croatia)

‘Developing collaboration with other stakeholders in Italy has allowed us to further spread EU opportunities and policies to youth. We are definitely continuing.’ (Italy)

Figure 62. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders

4.4.4. Stakeholders’ views on the European Year of Youth and recommendations for beyond 2022

The survey aimed to obtain feedback from stakeholders on aspects that they considered should be continued beyond 2022. As shown in Figure 79, 72% of stakeholders underlined the need for *More opportunities to make young people’s voices heard at all levels*. Stakeholders also stressed the importance of providing *More networking and capacity-building opportunities for young people* beyond 2022, with this item ranking second overall (59%). Slightly fewer respondents (53%) opted for *More dialogue between young people and high-level decision-makers*. This was followed by *More efforts to include the youth perspective in all policy areas* (44%), and *Mapping activities and events that are relevant for young people across Europe on the Youth Portal* (37%). Of those who chose the ‘Other’ option, only 8 gave an open-ended response. The main themes centred around the need for increased youth engagement through projects, with a particular focus on providing more opportunities to those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and better support for local youth work in the form of improved financing and structure.

The box below contains a selection of quotes highlighting stakeholders' views on the EYY and their recommendations for beyond 2022.

'More structural support of local youth work' (Germany)

'More efforts to involve young people with fewer opportunities, the economic disadvantaged ones in particular. The number of poor young people is increasing which results in increased frustration and distancing from both national as well as European institutions.' (Italy)

'More participation from people from vulnerable groups - active reach out and support is needed.' (Belgium)

*Figure 63. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Stakeholders*

4.5 Young people's survey

The survey targeting young people was published on the dedicated [EYY webpage](#) and the [Youth Portal](#) on 7 March 2023 and remained open until 14 April 2023. It was promoted through various channels, including Commissioner Gabriel's social media channel, as well as the Commission's European Youth social media and EYY stakeholder newsletters, in order to ensure a representative sample of respondents.

4.5.1 Sample composition

The term 'young people' defines as individuals in the 15–29 age group and this definition and age range was applied throughout the survey analysis. The survey was published on the European Youth Portal and promoted extensively on the European Commission's social media youth channels to maximize reach. The total number of responses obtained was 1 590, which included respondents of all ages and those outside as well as inside the EU (1 223 responses from young people inside the EU and 367 from young people in other countries). Nevertheless, to accurately analyse the Year's target group, only 1 435 responses from young people under 30 have been considered in this analysis. Respondents in this age group were selected to reflect the target audience for the majority of European Year of Youth policy initiatives, as indicated on the EYY website.

Responses were received from young people in all Member States. Young people from Bulgaria submitted the most responses (217), but very few were submitted by young people in Denmark (5), Malta (5) Luxembourg (6), Estonia (7), Slovenia (8) and Finland (9).

The vast majority of responses received from outside the EU were from Türkiye (298). Responses were also received from Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Ghana, Iceland, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Macedonia, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Russia, Serbia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and the UK.

The young respondents were first asked to provide demographic information.

As shown in Figure 64, of the 1 590 respondents, those aged 15–19 accounted for the largest age group (720 responses, 51%). This was followed by those aged 20–24 (489 responses, 34%). Respondents under the age of 15 represented the smallest age group (14 responses, 1%).

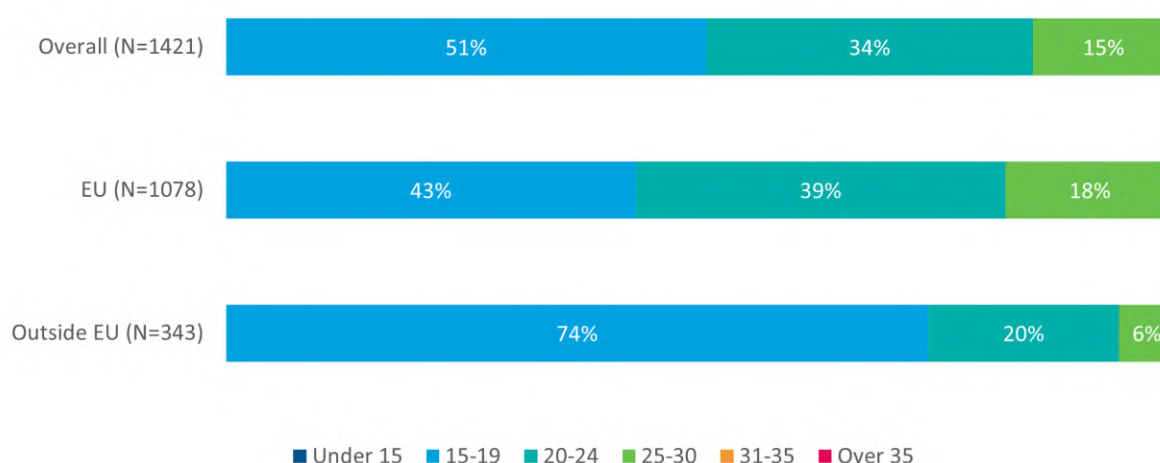


Figure 64. 'How old are you?' (1 590 responses from young people)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Young people

As for responses from within the EU, very few (only 1%) were received from those aged 15 and under. However, there was a fairly even split in responses from young people aged 15–19 (43%), 20–24 (39%), and 25 and over (18%). Most of the responses from outside the EU (74%) were from young people aged 15–19.

Overall, respondents under the age of 30 represented 90% of the sample (1 435 responses). The following analysis focuses on this group, in line with the Eurostat definition.

As shown in Figure 65, 52% of respondents within or outside the EU and under the age of 30 were from a large town or city, 34% were from a small or medium-sized town, and 14% were from a rural area or village.

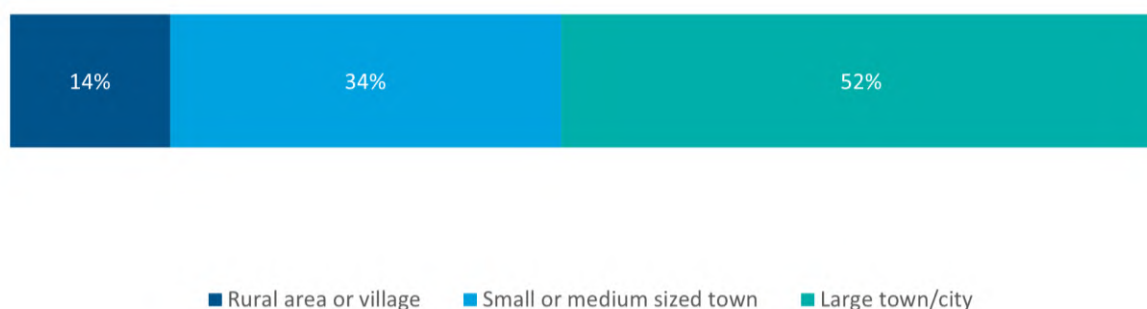


Figure 65. 'Would you say you live in a ...?' (1 435 responses from young people)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Young people

As shown in Figure 66, most respondents (54%) described themselves as female, while 43% said they were male. A few respondents described their gender as 'Other' or preferred not to say.

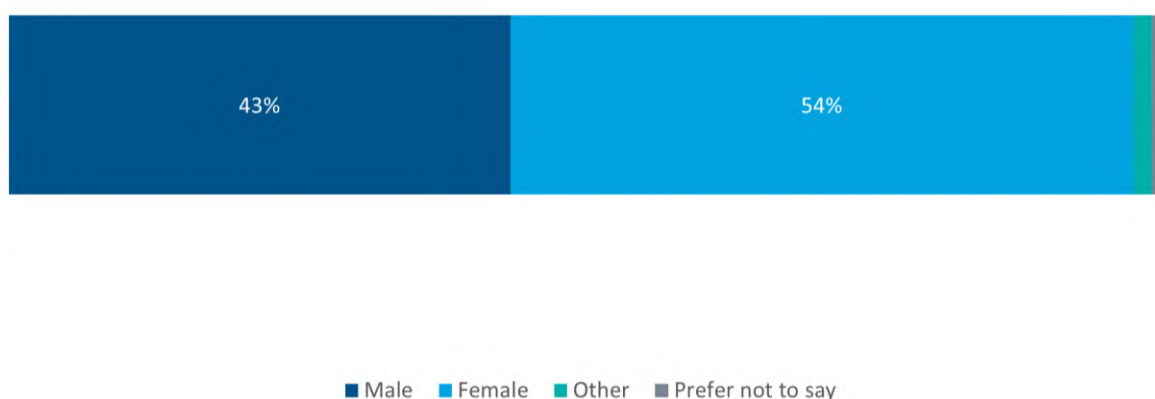


Figure 66. 'What is your gender?' (1 435 responses from young people)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Young people

4.5.2 Executive summary

This section presents the results of the survey sent to young people with the aim of measuring the impact that the EYY had on them.

Key findings

- Almost a third of respondents (30%) indicated that they found out about the Year on social media. This was followed by 14% who found out about the EYY via the Youth Portal, and 12% who found out about it via European networks (such as Eurodesk, the European Youth Card Association, the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency, the Erasmus Student Network and the European Youth Forum). Another 12% found out about the EYY through schools or universities, and only 9% (139) said that they were unaware of it.
- Overall, 64% of respondents participated mostly in activities categorised as *learning and mobility opportunities* (26%); *conferences, workshops or training sessions* (22%); and *meetups and exchanges with young people* (19%).
- 66% of young people stated that they felt they had *opportunities to make their voices heard by engaging in youth participation activities*, such as Erasmus+, European Solidarity Corps or national programmes; communicating on social media; and participating in debates and dialogues (22%).
- In terms of the achievement of the EYY objectives, almost half of the respondents (43%) highlighted their feeling that they were more informed about the *opportunities available to them at all levels* following the EYY. Some also stated that they had more *opportunities to meet and exchange with other young people* or felt more *supported and empowered to become active and engaged citizens*. Almost a quarter of respondents (21%) felt that none of the statements applied to them.
- With regard to young people's opinion of the EU, 70% responded that the EYY positively changed their knowledge or view of the EU's work.

Recommendations

- Young people broadly support the continuation of the Year's aims beyond 2022. For example, young people expressed the need for more opportunities to make their voices heard at all levels, as well as for continued mapping of youth activities in the Youth Portal.
- What is more evident is that all of the age groups stated the importance of young people remaining at the heart of EU policies despite the Year being over, because youth empowerment is an important key action for them.

4.5.3 Survey results in relation to the European Year of Youth's objectives

4.5.3.1 Benefits that the EYY brought to young people in line with the Year's objectives

As shown in **Error! Reference source not found.** almost half of respondents (44%) highlighted their feeling that they were *More informed about the opportunities available to them at all levels* following the EYY. That was followed by 25% of respondents expressing that they had *More opportunities to meet and exchange with other young people* and 24% who felt *More supported and empowered to become an active and engaged citizen*. However, just over a fifth of respondents (21%) felt that none of the statements applied to them.

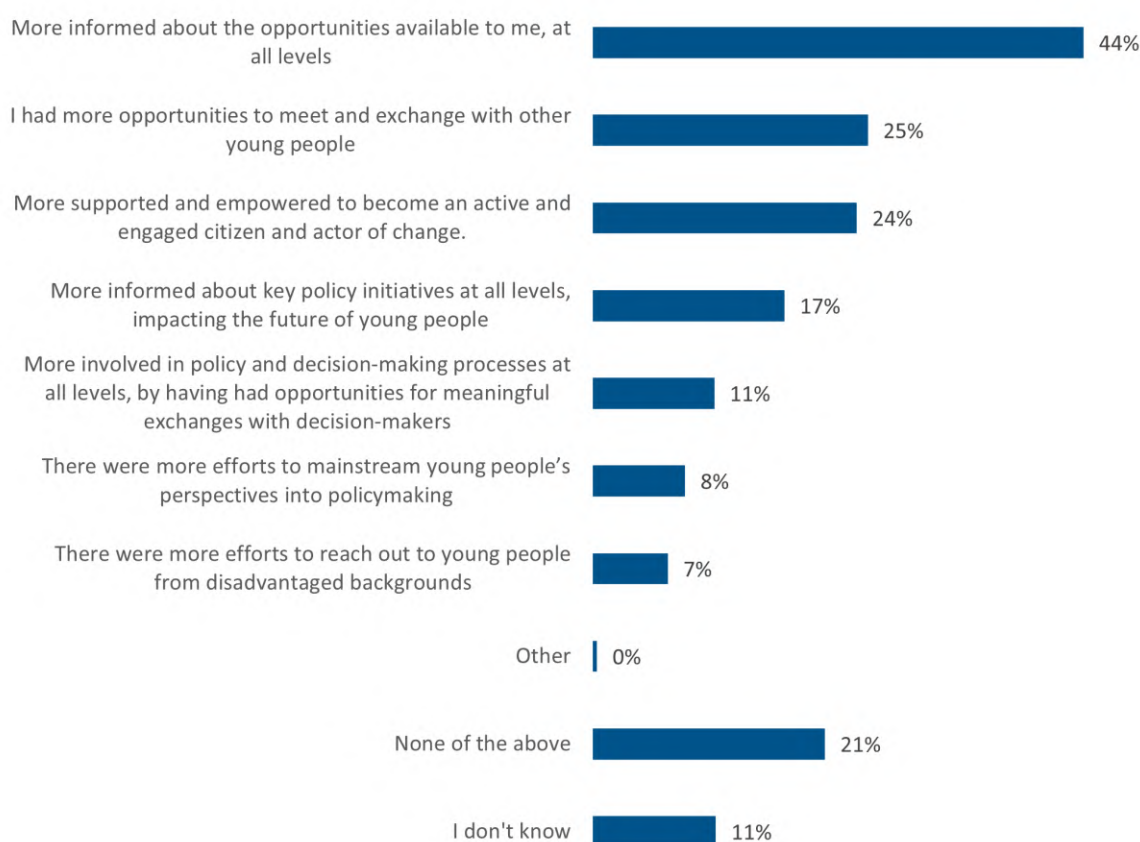


Figure 67. 'Following the European Year of Youth, I feel ...' (1 435 responses from young people)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Young people

4.5.3.2 Discovering the initiative

As shown in Figure 68, around a third of the respondents (31%) stated that they had found out about the Year on *social media*, followed by 14% who found out about the EYY via the *European Youth Portal*. A further 12% of respondents found out about the EYY via *European networks* (such as Eurodesk, the European Youth Card Association, the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency, the European Student Network and the European Youth Forum), while 11% found out about the EYY through *schools or universities*. Only 9% of respondents said that they were *unaware of the European Year of Youth*.

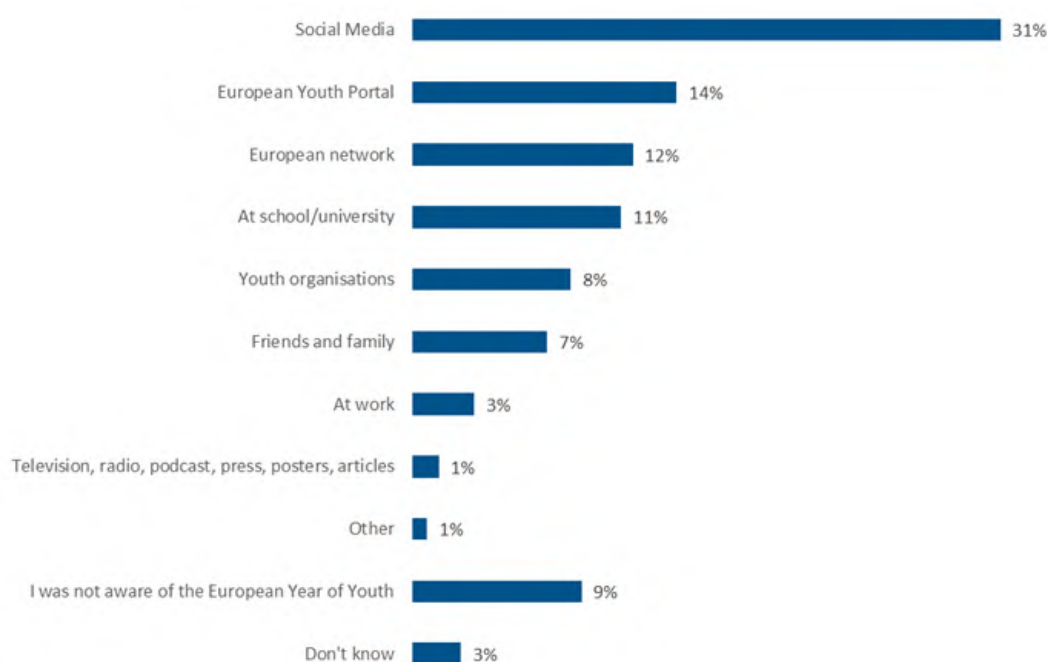


Figure 68. 'How did you find out about the European Year of Youth?' (1 435 responses from young people)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Young people

4.5.3.3 Making your voice heard

Young people were asked to state, using the 1 to 5 star rating system, whether they felt that the EYY had enabled them to express their opinions and make their voice heard. Overall, 66% of respondents stated that the Year had offered them opportunities to make their voice heard. 25% of these responded with 3 stars, 20% with 4 stars and 21% with 5 stars. However, a fifth of respondents (20%) felt that they did not have any opportunity at all to express their opinion.

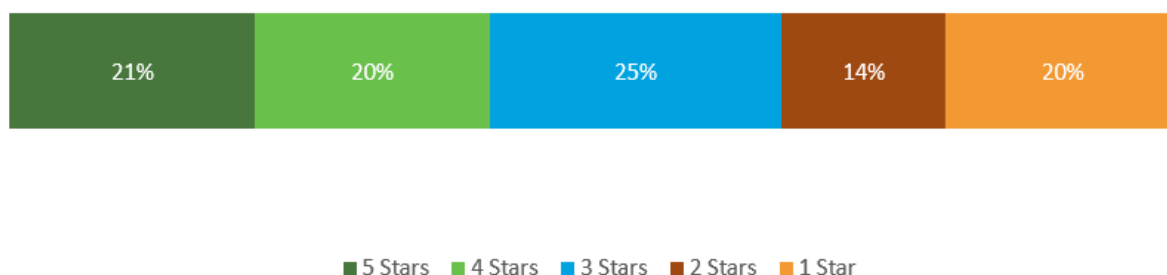


Figure 69. 'Do you feel that during the European Year of Youth you had opportunities to make your voice heard / express your opinion? Please rate: 1 not at all – 5 to a large extent.' (1 435 responses from young people)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Young people

Young people were asked what methods they had used to make their voices heard over the last year, and were able to select up to three options for this question.

Key responses included *Engaging in youth participation activities or solidarity projects* (28%); *Communicating on youth-related topics on social media* (26%); and *Participating in debates and dialogues* (22%). Some respondents highlighted the fact that they had voted in elections (20%).

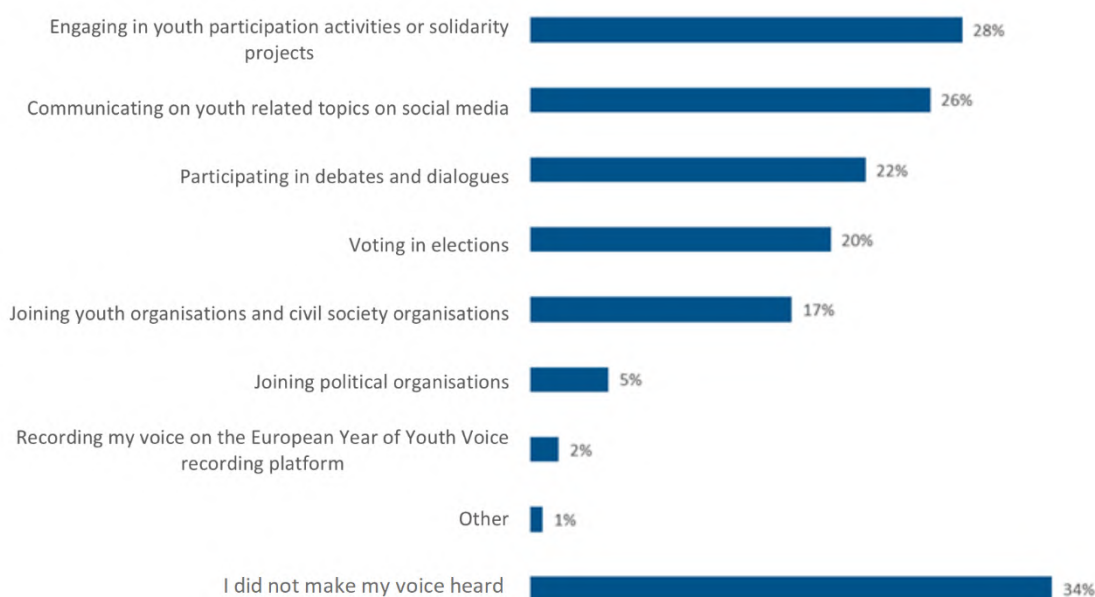


Figure 70. 'How did you make your voice heard?' (1 435 responses from young people)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Young people

4.5.3.4 Young people's participation in activities

Young people found out about the EYY largely online (shown in Figure 68 above), 31% found out about it on social media, and 14% through the Youth Portal. The highest numbers of them participated through *Learning and mobility opportunities* (25%); *Conferences, workshops or training sessions* (20%); and *Meetups and exchanges with young people* (19%). However, few

young people interacted with decision-makers at national or sub-national level (9%), at EU level (8%), or with journalists (6%) (as shown in Figure 71).

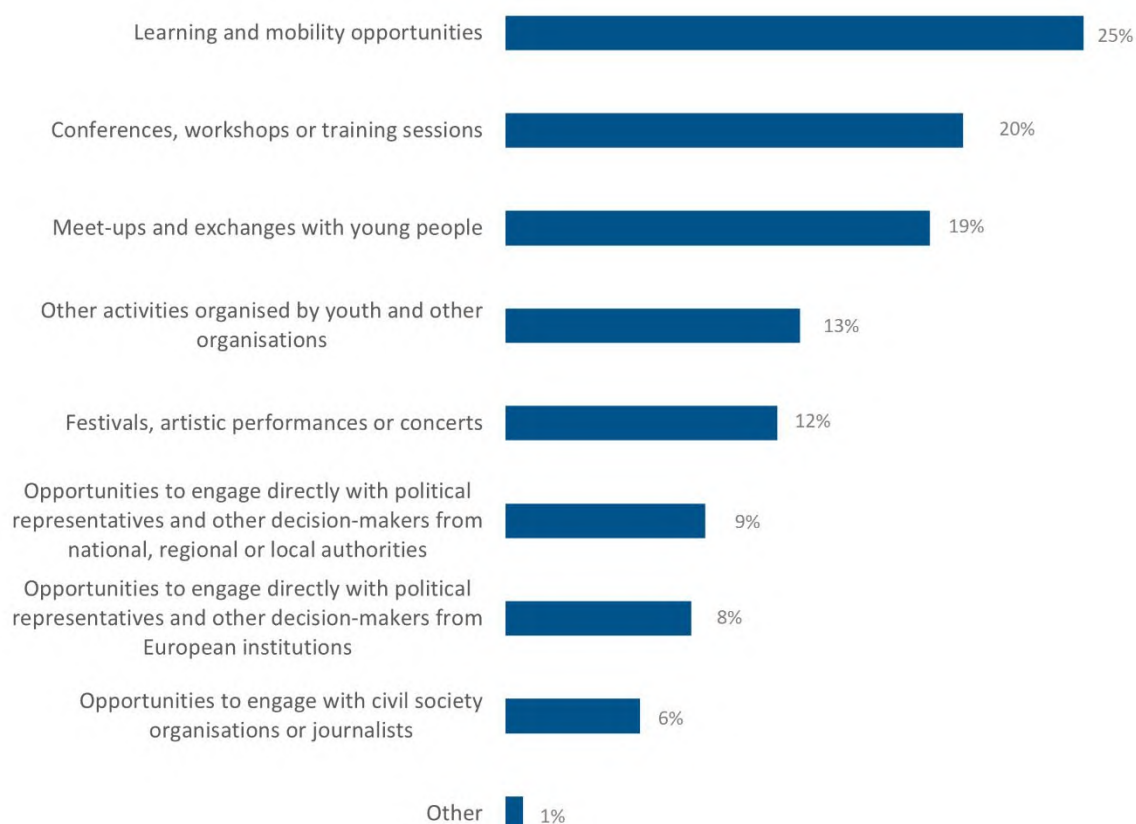


Figure 71. 'In the context of the European Year of Youth, a number of activities were organised. Which activities, if any, did you participate in?' (1 435 responses from young people)

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Young people

4.5.3.5 Young people's opinion of the EU

Young people were asked to rate whether the Year had improved their opinion of the EU, using the 1 to 5 star rating system. Overall, the responses to this question point to a very positive sentiment: 70% of respondents stated (with a rating of 3, 4 or 5 stars) that the Year had positively changed their knowledge or view of the EU's work. A quarter of them (26%) gave 5 stars, indicating that the EYY had positively changed their view of the EU's work to a large extent; 22% gave 4 stars; and 22% gave 3 stars. Just under a third of respondents (30%) gave 1 star (20%) or 2 stars (10%).

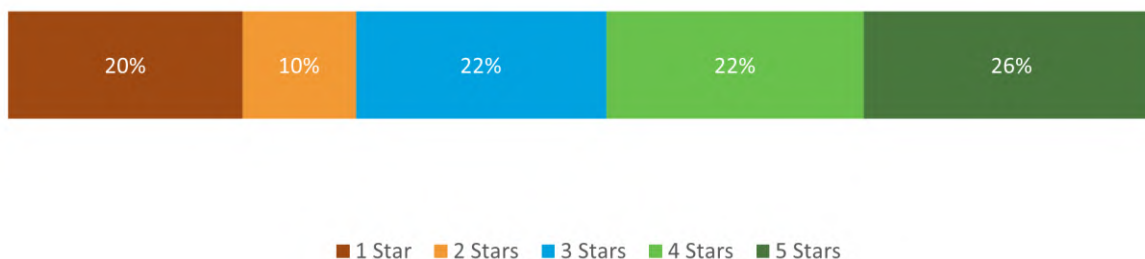


Figure 72. 'Has the European Year of Youth positively changed your knowledge or view of the work of the European Union? Please rate: 1 not at all – 5 to a large extent.' (1 435 responses from young people)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – Young people

4.5.4. Young people's views on the European Year of Youth and recommendations for beyond 2022

Finally, young respondents were asked what aspects of the EYY they felt should be continued beyond 2022. Respondents could select up to three options. Almost all respondents within the EU selected this maximum of three options.

As shown in Figure 79, the survey results indicate that a majority of 61% expressed the need for *More opportunities to make young people's voices heard at all levels*. This was followed by *More involvement of young people in decision-making at all levels* (38%); *More dialogue between young people and high-level decision-makers* (38%); and *Mapping of activities and events relevant to young people across Europe on the European Youth Portal* (38%). However, only 27% asked for *More efforts to include a youth perspective in all policy areas*.

4.6 Comparative analysis of the three surveys

4.6.1. Sample composition

1 435 responses were received from young people⁷⁵, 446 from stakeholders and 26 from NCs. Most (23) of the responses from NCs were submitted by respondents from ministries and National Agencies, and one national youth council within the EU. Three answers were received from NCs outside the EU (one from the National Agency in Liechtenstein, one from the National Agency in Serbia, and one from the National Agency in Türkiye).

Stakeholders from all Member States were represented and submitted relevant answers. Croatia was the most represented, with a total of 55 responses. The most active stakeholders from outside the EU were those in Türkiye, who provided 75 answers.

⁷⁵ Under the age of 30, in line with the Eurostat definition. Available from: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/yth_demo_010/default/table?lang=en.

Young people from all Member States submitted responses Bulgaria submitted the most (190) and Luxembourg the fewest (3). The vast majority of responses received from young people outside the EU were from Türkiye (287).

4.6.2 Survey results according to the European Year of Youth objectives

4.6.2.1 Activities organised and participation

As part of the survey, stakeholders and NCs were asked about the activities they had organised for the Year, while young people were asked about the EYY activities in which they had participated. The questions were the same for NCs and stakeholders but different for young people, so two different charts are used to illustrate the responses.

As shown in Figure 73, 65% of NCs organised *Conferences or events for young people* (compared with 49% of stakeholders); and 54% of NCs organised *Information and awareness-raising campaigns* for young people (compared with 33% of stakeholders). *Dialogues and debates with young people* were organised by 38% of the NCs, compared to 28% of stakeholders. By contrast, only 27% of NCs organised *Workshops, training and capacity-building sessions* (compared to 55% of stakeholders). Both NCs and stakeholders devoted less attention to *Studies, surveys, and research on youth issues*.

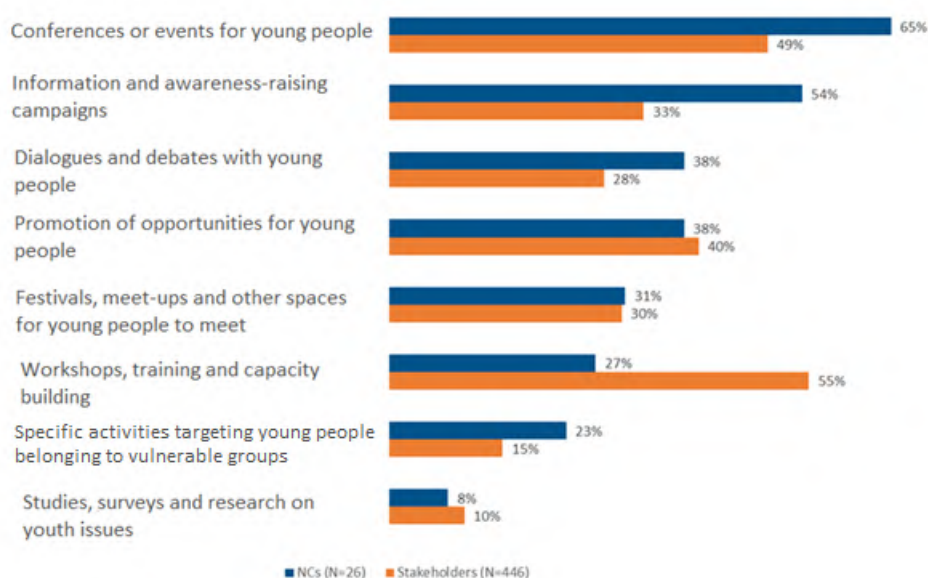


Figure 73. 'In 2022, the following activities were launched/implemented/organised in my country, which contributed to the objectives of the European Year of Youth:' (26 responses from NCs and 446 from stakeholders)

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs, stakeholders and young people

As shown in Figure 71, the most popular activities that respondents participated in were *Learning and mobility opportunities* (25%); *Conferences, workshops or training sessions* (20%); and *Meetups and exchanges with young people* (19%).

4.6.2.2 Benefits and achievements

Young people were asked about the main benefits derived from their engagement in the Year. As shown in Figure 67, almost half the respondents (44%) reported that they felt *More informed about the opportunities* available to them. 25% felt they had *More opportunities to meet and exchange with other young people*, and 24% who felt *More supported and empowered to become an active and engaged citizen*.

NCs and stakeholders were asked an open-ended question that invited them to articulate their main achievements⁷⁶. The responses from stakeholders and NCs revealed themes and common areas that shed more light on the answers from young respondents.

Increasing awareness of opportunities at EU, national and sub-national level was a common theme identified by NCs and stakeholders, in line with young people's views about how the Year had benefited them (44% of young people said they were *More informed about opportunities available at all levels*; and 17% said that they were *More informed about key policy initiatives*). This shows that there is a widespread desire among young people to be more informed about opportunities and key policy initiatives at various levels of government within the EU and highlights the importance of improving access to information for this demographic.

The box below contains a selection of quotes from survey submissions.

‘We were promoting opportunities of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps to youth in our local community.’ (Slovenia, stakeholders’ survey)

‘To increase awareness of local youths about the European opportunities in my region.’ (Türkiye, stakeholders’ survey)

‘The creation of a significant media-campaign on websites and social networks (Jeunes.gouv, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube) watched by 1.7 million people, with the realisation and spread of short videos “I inform myself, I express myself, I engage myself” (Je m’informe, je m’exprime, je m’engage)’ (France, NCs survey)

‘Young people are more familiar with opportunities they have at local, national and European levels’ (Serbia, NCs survey)

Figure 74.. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs, stakeholders and young people

Building networks was another key theme in responses. NCs and stakeholders highlighted how their countries or achievements had centred on creating connections for young people, in line with the perceived benefits for them (25% of young people responded that they had *More opportunities to meet and exchange with young people*). NCs and stakeholders also highlighted that they had strengthened connections with other organisations and institutions. Building networks and connections, both between young people and with other organisations and institutions, is therefore a crucial factor in promoting opportunities and achievements in this context.

⁷⁶ The questions asked were not the same, however. Stakeholders were asked about the three main achievements of the respondent's organisation (Q8) and NCs were asked about the three main achievements in their country (Q5).

The box below contains a selection of notable quotes obtained from survey submissions.

‘More young people are showing interest and joining youth organisations, realising their initiatives through them.’ (Latvia, stakeholders’ survey)

‘Collaborating more closely with officials.’ (Cyprus, stakeholders’ survey)

‘Created lasting initiatives, reaching more young people than ever before; new networks and connections between NAs and youth organisations.’ (Lithuania, NCs survey)

Figure 75. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs, stakeholders and young people

Supporting and empowering young people as actors of change was another key theme derived from comparing the survey results, which show that 24% of young people support being actors of change themselves. Stakeholders mentioned that young individuals had developed skills through the activities organised in the context of the EYY. Stakeholders also responded that they had succeeded in increasing the capacity of their own organisations. NCs emphasised their achievements in terms of informal and non-formal education for young people (including tools such as Youthpass), and how young people were empowered by being involved in co-creating the design and implementation of activities. NCs also underlined the importance of the Micro Grant schemes in supporting, empowering and expanding networks of young people and youth organisations, including newcomers to programmes such as the European Solidarity Corps.

The box below contains a selection of quotes from survey submissions.

‘Dreamcatchers: training course for youngsters who want to write a solidarity project, a participation project or a youth exchange.’ (Belgium, stakeholders’ survey)

‘It helped us to develop our capacity.’ (Türkiye, stakeholders’ survey)

‘Increased interaction and development of relationships between EU NAs and newcomer organisations – 81% of Micro Grant beneficiary organisations were newcomers in Erasmus+ or European Solidarity Corps.’ (Ireland, NCs survey)

Figure 76. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs, stakeholders and young people

Stakeholders and NCs also highlighted achievements in terms of involvement in policy **decision-making and exchanges with decision-makers**, as well as reaching out to young people from **disadvantaged backgrounds**.

The box below contains a selection of quotes from survey submissions.

‘Workshops were held on the topic of prejudice towards students with special educational needs.’ (Croatia, stakeholders’ survey)

‘Organising an exhibition with portraits and stories of LGBTQIA+ students.’ (Romania, stakeholder survey)

‘Targeting young people, in particular NEETs.’ (Italy, NC survey)

‘The “Your Europe – Your Year!” campaign aimed at encouraging youth-led dialogues between young people and decision-makers at all levels’ (Germany, NCs survey)

Figure 77. Selection of quotes from open-ended question.
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs, stakeholders and young people

4.6.2.3 Making young people’s voices heard

Respondents were asked if they felt that the EYY had allowed young people to express opinions and make their voice heard ⁷⁷, using the 1 to 5 star rating system.

As shown in Figure 78, 89% of stakeholders agreed (28% responded with 5 stars, 36% with 4 stars and 25% with 3 stars). 100% of the surveyed NCs responded positively to the question (31% responded with 5 stars, 31% with 4 stars and 38% with 3 stars). In the survey of young people, 66% agreed that EYY had provided them with the opportunity to voice their opinions and be heard (21% responded with 5 stars, 20% with 4 stars and 25% with 3 stars).

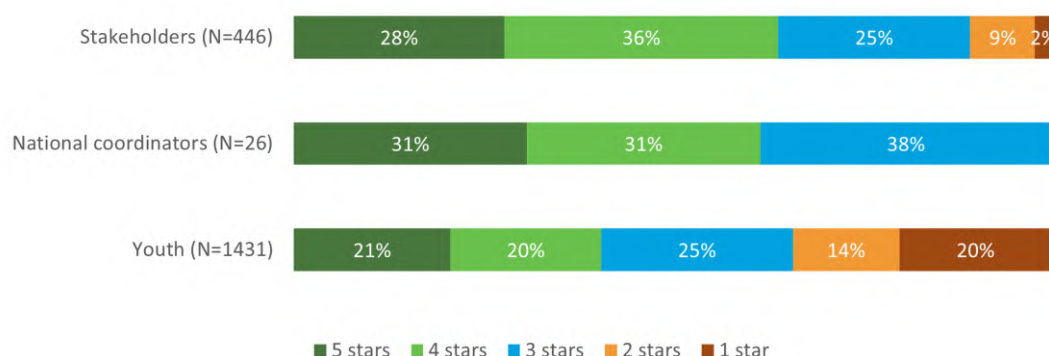


Figure 78. ‘Do you feel that during the European Year of Youth you had opportunities to make your voice heard/express your opinion? Please rate: 1 not at all – 5 to a large extent.’ (26 responses from NCs, 446 responses from stakeholders, 1 435 responses from young people)
Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs, stakeholders and young people

Young people were also asked what methods they had used to make their voices heard. Responses included engaging in youth participation activities or solidarity projects (28%), communicating on youth-related topics on social media (26%), and participating in debates and

⁷⁷ Young people were asked whether they had opportunities to make their voice heard. NCs and stakeholders were asked whether young people had the opportunity to make their voice heard.

dialogues (22%). Some respondents stated that they had voted in elections (20%), and others mentioned activism and petitions.

In conclusion, as can be seen in Figure 115, a majority of stakeholders (64%) and NCs (62%) stated that the EYY had made it easier to express opinions and make oneself heard. In comparison, 41% of young people acknowledged the Year's role in enabling them to make their voice heard and highlighted various methods of engagement, including participation in youth activities, social media discussions and debates.

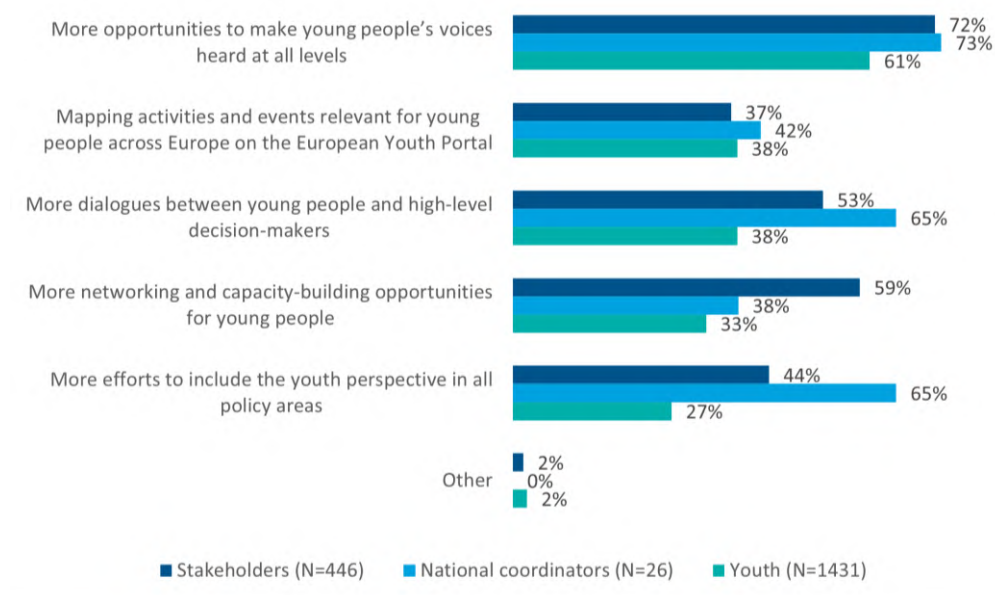
4.6.3 Overall views on the European Year of Youth and recommendations for beyond 2022

Finally, respondents were asked what aspects of the Year they felt should be continued beyond 2022⁷⁸. Figure 79 shows that all respondent groups thought that *More opportunities to make young people's voices heard at all levels* was the main aspect that should continue.

Stakeholders felt that *More dialogues between young people and high-level decision-makers* (53%) and *More networking and capacity-building opportunities for young people* (59%) were also particularly important. A majority of respondents selected them.

Almost two thirds of responding NCs selected *More dialogue between young people and high-level decision-makers* (65%) and *More efforts to include the youth perspective in all policy areas* (65%).

A majority of young people selected *More opportunities to make young people's voices heard at all levels* (61%). *More activities and events relevant for young people across Europe on the European Youth Portal* (38%) and *More dialogue between young people and high-level decision-makers* (38%) ranked joint second in importance.



⁷⁸ Respondents could select up to three options. The options were not exactly the same across the three surveys, so the chart only includes those that were given in all of them.

Figure 79. 'What do you want to see beyond 2022?' (26 responses from NCs, 446 from stakeholders and 1 435 from young people)

Source: EYY Assessment Survey – NCs, stakeholders and young people

In summary, most respondents across all groups strongly emphasised the need to continue providing more opportunities for young people to have their voices heard at all levels. Additional importance was placed on increased dialogues with high-level decision-makers and enhanced networking and capacity-building opportunities, reflecting a collective commitment to youth engagement and empowerment.

The survey results revealed several major findings. For instance, there was strong engagement from stakeholders, NCs and young people in the Year's activities, and this was centred around youth empowerment, networking and policy engagement. Notably, stakeholders and NCs broadly agreed that the European Youth Portal had been effective in amplifying voices (64% of stakeholders and 62% of NCs agreed that it had). In addition, respondent groups collectively emphasised the importance of continuing efforts to empower young voices, promote dialogues with decision-makers and expand relevant activities on the Youth Portal. This underscores their shared commitment to youth empowerment and engagement across all levels.

5. Conclusion and next steps

This staff working document provides details on the implementation, key results and achievements of, and feedback on, the European Year of Youth 2022. It accompanies the Communication on the European Year of Youth, which proposes future follow-up actions in the field of youth to create an enduring legacy for the Year.

It is critical to sustain and build further on the level of commitment to youth that was demonstrated by the EU institutions and Member States in 2022.

In order to empower and involve the EU's young people, the Year's legacy will be aligned with the interim evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy. This alignment will build on and boost the impact of this dedicated year in the framework for the EU's youth policy cooperation. The objectives of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 to promote youth participation in policymaking and embed the mainstreaming of youth policy are central to this endeavour. The EYY's legacy achieves these objectives and enhances the overall consistency of youth empowerment efforts.

Central to this approach is the spirit of the Year itself, as a co-creative endeavour that resonates with young people's perspectives in creating and enabling an ecosystem for youth engagement and participation, and increasing ownership and accountability at all levels. It is a narrative of unity, moving forward collectively, building trust and shaping aspirations for the future. The Year consolidated a common understanding that actions targeting young people are more efficient and effective when created and implemented in collaboration with them, and with youth stakeholders. Results are amplified when EU institutions and national, regional and local authorities are open and dedicated to cooperation and continuous dialogue.

This spirit of shared vision and ownership will be especially important in efforts to engage young people in participating in the 2024 elections for the European Parliament. It is essential that young Europeans feel engaged by this EU-wide exercise in democracy. The next European Parliament will have a key say in the adoption of the EU's multiannual financial framework for the years after 2027, as well as the priorities linked to it, such as the future of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes. The European Parliament will continue to play a deciding role in the adoption of legislation in fields such as the environment, climate change, consumer protection and non-discrimination. It is therefore crucial that young citizens seize the opportunity to express their choice for the EU and ensure their preferred representation in the EU's democratic community.

Youth participation does not start and end with voting, however. It grows from an initial small step, such as volunteering for a community theatre project; taking part in a national beach clean-up campaign; running for a student council; launching a petition; taking part in an EU Youth Dialogue consultation; joining an international, non-governmental youth organisation; attending the European Youth Event or the European Youth Week; or taking part in an action organised by the EU youth programmes. The opportunities given to young people will shape them as people, including the choices and paths they take, and will ultimately shape the EU's future, so young people will remain at the heart of EU policies. Youth empowerment is as important for young people themselves as it is for our democratic societies.

6. Annexes

6.1 List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Stands for
Commission	European Commission
CoR	Committee of the Regions
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
Council	Council of the European Union
Decision	Decision (EU) 2021/2316 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 December 2021 on a European Year of Youth (2022)
DG	Directorate-General
DG EAC	European Commission's Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture
The Union	European Union
EESC	European Social and Economic Committee
EYY or the Year	European Year of Youth 2022
EYY Activities map	Activities map on the EYY webpage
EYY NCs/SH Group	European Year of Youth national coordinators, National Contact Points and Stakeholders Group
Flash Eurobarometer 520 survey	2022 Flash Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
NA	National Agency
NCs	National coordinators
SWD	Staff Working Document
NC	National coordinator
NEET	Young people neither in employment nor education or training
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
SG	Secretariat-General
VET	Vocational education and training
Youth Portal	European Youth Portal