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**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE  
COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE  
COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**on the Interim evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027**

{SWD(2024) 90 final}

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The **EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027** (the EUYS) is the framework for EU cooperation in the youth field based on a Council Resolution of 18 December 2018 <sup>1</sup>. The EUYS fosters young people's participation in democratic life, in line with Article 165 TFEU, supports their social and civic engagement and aims to ensure that all young people have the necessary means to participate in society.

### EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 overall objectives

- enable young people to be architects of their own lives, support their personal development and growth to autonomy, build their resilience and equip them with life skills to cope with a changing world;
- encourage and equip young people with the necessary resources to become active citizens, agents of solidarity and positive change inspired by EU values and a European identity;
- improve policy decisions with regard to their impact on young people across all sectors (notably employment, education, health and social inclusion);
- contribute to the eradication of youth poverty and all forms of discrimination and promote the social inclusion of young people.

The EUYS **engages, connects and empowers young people, and advances youth participation and youth mainstreaming across policy areas**. It encourages the development of youth policies, in synergy with other policies that target young people (e.g. education and training, employment, health, culture and the environment) to help achieve the **11 European Youth Goals** <sup>2</sup>.

The European Commission has carried out an **interim evaluation** of the EUYS as foreseen in the Council Resolution, supported by an external study (carried out in February-December 2023) and consultations. It assessed the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and added value of the EUYS at mid-term. An inter-service group of Commission departments oversaw the evaluation.

The evaluation has confirmed the continued relevance of the EUYS as a strategic framework for cooperation on youth. It has also identified some areas for improvement, including to further accelerate youth mainstreaming across policy fields towards the longer-term overall objectives, together with continuing to strengthen inclusive youth participation, to enhance communication and to reduce Member States' reporting. This report presents the **main evaluation findings and proposes ways forward**. The accompanying staff working document provides details on the findings, consultations and method.

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<sup>1</sup> [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](#)

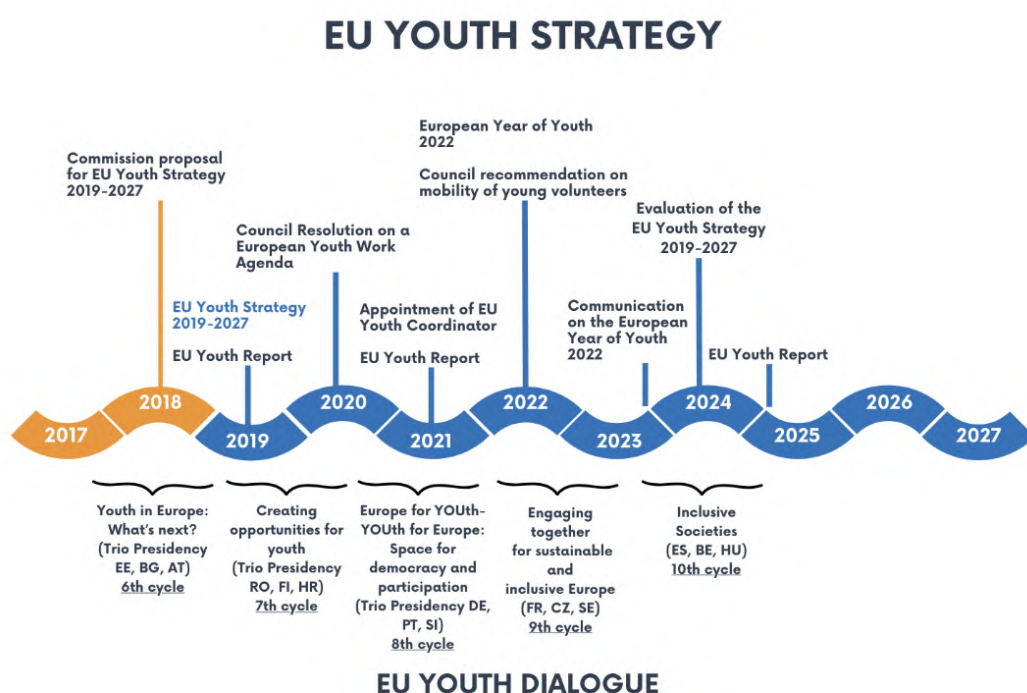
<sup>2</sup> [European Youth Goals | European Youth Portal \(europa.eu\)](#)

The evaluation **complements the Communication on the European Year of Youth 2022**<sup>3</sup>. Both aim to **support any follow-up by the Council**, including a potential mid-term review and the EUYS Work Plan for 2025-2027, and to initiate discussions on the next EUYS after 2027.

## 2. IMPLEMENTATION

The EUYS, as a **strategic framework for policy cooperation** between the EU's Member States and the Commission, relies on the **open method of coordination** and the commitment of all stakeholders to act towards common objectives and create effects at different levels.

The EUYS operates in **3-year work cycles**, at the end of which the Commission reports on progress in the **triennial EU Youth Report**. The priorities are set by the Council together with the Commission in **EUYS Work Plans**, spanning two Council presidency trios. The overarching thematic priority for 2019-2021 was 'Creating opportunities for youth'. For 2022-2024, it is 'Engaging together for a sustainable and inclusive Europe'<sup>4</sup>.



Disclaimer: The infographic showcases only the main milestones.

Figure 1. Timeline of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027

<sup>3</sup> [Commission Communication on the European Year of Youth 2022](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the revision of the EU Youth Strategy Work Plan 2022-2024 2023/C 185/05](#)

The implementation of the EUYS is supported by **instruments**, which are funded by the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes (e.g. the EU Youth Dialogue, the European Youth Portal and the European Youth Work Agenda<sup>5</sup>).

The **European Year of Youth 2022** boosted work on the objectives and instruments of the **EU Youth Strategy** through its mobilisation and outreach<sup>6</sup>. New opportunities for young people to engage included the policy dialogues with European Commissioners and the citizens' panels launched during the Conference on the Future of Europe.

### 3. MAIN EVALUATION FINDINGS

Based on the Commission's **Better Regulation Guidelines**<sup>7</sup>, the evaluation draws on the evidence provided by an external study<sup>8</sup>. The period covered was 2019-2022 and part of 2023. The evaluation shows an **overall positive assessment** across all evaluation criteria and supports the EUYS's continuing implementation.

### 3.1. Effectiveness, efficiency and coherence – to what extent is the EU Youth Strategy successful?

### *Effectiveness*

The evaluation found that the EUYS is an **effective strategic cooperation framework** that draws attention to youth in EU-level policymaking and alignment with EU programmes, positively influences youth policies in EU Member States, enhances the work of youth organisations and directly benefits young people through the EUYS instruments. It has contributed to encouraging youth participation and solidarity and supporting youth empowerment and active citizenship. The main **findings related to key instruments** are highlighted below:

- **The EU Youth Dialogue** (EUYD) <sup>9</sup> is the largest EU-level participatory instrument for involving young people in policymaking. Other participatory actions (such as policy dialogues with European Commissioners, the EU Children’s Participation Platform and the Youth Sounding Board in EU external action) have also emphasised the role of dialogue between EU policymakers and youth.

The EUYD has facilitated greater outreach and engagement with youth. However, the evaluation found limited evidence on the EUYD's direct and systematic influence on EU and national policymaking and follow-up. Stakeholders are not always aware of the final recommendations and follow-up. The role of national youth councils in the EUYD could also be clarified.

<sup>5</sup> [EU Youth Strategy | European Youth Portal \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> Page 3 of the [Commission Communication on the European Year of Youth 2022 \(europa.eu\)](#).

<sup>7</sup>[https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/planning-and-proposing-law/better-regulation-why-and-how/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/planning-and-proposing-law/better-regulation-why-and-how/better-regulation-guidelines-and-toolbox_en).

<sup>8</sup> Support study for the Interim evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027

<sup>9</sup> EU Youth Dialogue | European Youth Portal (europa.eu)

There is scope to:

- ✓ enhance mechanisms for **feeding EUYD recommendations** to policymakers and sharing information about **follow-up at EU and national level**;
- ✓ boost **the EUYD process and outreach**, to involve hard-to-reach groups (e.g. young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, and those not in employment, education or training and rural youth) and maintain the progress made for minorities and young people with disabilities;
- ✓ **support the preparation** of young people for the EUYD and systematically involve **national youth councils**;
- ✓ map **synergies between participation initiatives** in democratic processes at all levels, and support civil society organisations in navigating and promoting the opportunities.

- **The EU Youth Coordinator's** role is to enhance cross-sectoral cooperation and knowledge on youth in the Commission and to work with stakeholders for communication to young people. The role was established in June 2021 and the EU Youth Coordinator has become a **front runner in supporting youth mainstreaming**. The Youth Network of youth correspondents in the Commission, which was announced in the Communication on the European Year of Youth, will support the EU Youth Coordinator in these efforts.

There is scope to:

- ✓ build on the EU Youth Coordinator achievements for more **stakeholder engagement, interinstitutional involvement and cooperation on youth**. The evaluation found that the EU Youth Coordinator's **mandate is extensive** and requires attention and support for cooperation and communication with external stakeholders.
- **The Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes** remain the main and best-known EUYS instruments.

The evaluation found that there is **good alignment between the EUYS objectives and the programmes**, for example in the Erasmus+ youth participation activities, DiscoverEU and in support for youth work. The formal education and training strands of Erasmus+ also contribute to youth engagement and empowering young people. The European Solidarity Corps aligns with the EUYS through volunteering. The programmes' **horizontal priorities** (inclusion and diversity, the environment and climate change, digital transformation, participation and civic engagement, **training and cooperation activities and SALTOs**<sup>10</sup>) facilitate links.

**Other EU programmes and schemes that benefit young people** include Horizon Europe; EU cohesion policy funds (including the ESF+, the ERDF, the Just Transition Fund and the Cohesion Fund); the Recovery and Resilience Facility; Digital Europe; the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme; EU4Health; Creative Europe and the Technical Support Instrument.

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<sup>10</sup> SALTO (Support for Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities) resource centres provide expertise and services to the national agencies of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps

There is scope to:

- ✓ **safeguard links** between the EUYS and Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps; promote opportunities for young people; and further explore synergies with other EU and national programmes/funds.

- **The European Youth Portal** is one of the **top 10 most visited websites on europa.eu** and a well-known channel among young people and stakeholders for opportunities and initiatives. Youth information and support is also provided by national agencies, the Eurodesk network and civil society organisations.

The **European Year of Youth** has revitalised the European Youth Portal with its activity map and new tools for young people to make their voices heard. Thanks to these innovations, the Portal now provides young people with a platform for engaging.

There is scope to:

- ✓ keep **developing the European Youth Portal** with user-friendly content for target groups in line with policy developments.

- **The European Youth Work Agenda (EYWA)**<sup>11</sup> complements the EUYS, strengthening the policy base for **quality youth work**. The **EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership**<sup>12</sup> supports the EYWA with knowledge and evidence, notably through a Steering Group<sup>13</sup>. **EU youth programmes** also support youth work and the **Youthpass**<sup>14</sup> and contribute to the recognition of youth work.

There is scope for:

- ✓ **mutual learning activities** on the EYWA in the **joint effort** between the Commission, EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership, Member States and stakeholders, because Member States are at different stages of youth work development.
- **Learning mobility** is key to youth engagement, connectivity and empowerment and to the implementation of the European Education Area. The **Council Recommendation of 2022 on the mobility of young volunteers**<sup>15</sup> was a deliverable of the European Year of Youth and will facilitate youth volunteering in the European Solidarity Corps and national schemes. It was followed in November 2023 by a Commission **proposal for a Council Recommendation ‘Europe on the Move’ – learning mobility opportunities for everyone**<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> [Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the Framework for establishing a European Youth Work Agenda 2020/C 415/01](#)

<sup>12</sup> [About the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership - Youth Partnership \(coe.int\)](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Steering Group on the European Youth Work Agenda - Youth Partnership \(coe.int\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Welcome to Youthpass – Youthpass](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Council Recommendation of 5 April 2022 on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union \(Text with EEA relevance\) 2022/C 157/01](#)

<sup>16</sup> Proposal for a [Council Recommendation](#) ‘Europe on the Move’ – learning mobility opportunities for everyone as part of the [Talent Mobility](#) package.



There is scope for:

- ✓ **mutual learning activities** to support Member States and stakeholders in the implementation of the mobility recommendations.
- **Youth mainstreaming and youth participation** are encouraged by the EUYS **across policy areas** at all levels to ensure that impacts on youth are considered when designing policies.

The evaluation found **an increased emphasis on youth in EU strategies and policies**. The Commission Communication on the comprehensive approach to mental health is a prominent example<sup>17</sup>. The **European Year of Youth and the EU Youth Coordinator** have contributed to this increased cooperation on youth.

At **national level**, the impact of the EUYS has been more to influence policy agendas and practices, rather than to trigger the development of new national strategies. The EUYS continues to be a **catalyst** for national youth policy alignment and development, by empowering youth stakeholders and enhancing their legitimacy (including in the eyes of policymakers from other sectors).

The evaluation did not cover the use of **youth mainstreaming instruments** (e.g. youth checks and youth tests). However, national policymakers in Belgium (the Flemish Community), Germany, France and Austria have mentioned their positive experience with such tools. A forthcoming analytical report by the Commission to be published in 2024 will present an overview of youth mainstreaming approaches in the Member States. This will make it easier to exchange good practices and organise peer learning activities among interested Member States.

In January 2024, the **Commission Communication on the European Year of Youth 2022**<sup>18</sup> announced actions to give young people a greater say in the decisions that affect them and deepen the youth dimension across a range of EU policies. When designing EU policies, the Commission will use the full potential of youth mainstreaming as part of the Commission's Better Regulation framework and toolbox, resulting in a youth check. This will be complemented by the youth-specific instruments under the EUYS.

There is scope to:

- ✓ ensure **effective follow-up** of the actions to strengthen the youth dimension in EU policymaking, and related synergies, and to support Member States wishing to adopt similar approaches in national policymaking.
- **The Youth Action Plan in EU external action**<sup>19</sup>, which was adopted in October 2022 as a deliverable of the European Year of Youth, has **strengthened the international dimension** of the EUYS. It helps deliver on EU international commitments and promote

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<sup>17</sup> [Commission Communication of 7 June 2023 on a comprehensive approach to mental health \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>18</sup> [Commission Communication of 10 January 2024 on the European Year of Youth 2022 \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Youth Action Plan \(Joint communication by the Commission and the High Representative\)](#)

EU values by enhancing youth participation and empowerment in EU external action policies.

The international impact of the EUYS is also demonstrated in knowledge-building and cooperation, the EU-Council of Europe Youth partnership, and positive perceptions among international organisations such as UNICEF. The participation of non-EU countries in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps supports the international reach of the Strategy.

There is scope to:

- ✓ further promote the implementation of the Youth Action Plan in EU external action.
- **Communicating on the EUYS** has succeeded in providing information about the funding opportunities. Stakeholders have a positive opinion of the EUYS, linked to high awareness and a positive view of the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes. Communication has been less successful about other activities.

The evaluation found a lack of communication products **targeting policymakers and civil society organisations**. The **EU Youth Report** contains a lot of information on EUYS progress, but the frequency and format may hamper its use by stakeholders.

Young people<sup>20</sup> have suggested that even more could be done to use suitable styles and channels for **communication to young people**.

There is scope to:

- ✓ **communicate better about** the EU Youth Dialogue, mutual learning activities, youth mainstreaming and the knowledge base;
  - ✓ develop communication **products for policymakers and civil society organisations**;
  - ✓ **test** communication products with young people.
- **The EUYS monitoring and evidence base** has been reinforced by the publication of an updated EU Youth Dashboard<sup>21</sup> during the European Year of Youth<sup>22</sup>. The Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps dashboards and annual reports, and national agencies, provide data on the programmes. The Youth Wiki<sup>23</sup> provides data on national policies, comparative maps and reports. The EU Youth Report mainly uses these data sources. However, it is not easy to have an overview and user-friendly access to data for stakeholders.

There is scope to:

- ✓ improve the way of addressing **limitations in data availability for stakeholders**, to facilitate the use of data for monitoring, communication and policymaking.

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<sup>20</sup> This observation is based on qualitative information obtained in focus groups with young people as part of the evaluation.

<sup>21</sup> [EU dashboard - Youth - Eurostat \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&code=sdg16.6.1)

<sup>22</sup> The 2021 final report for the [Proposal for an updated dashboard of EU Youth indicators](#).

<sup>23</sup> [Youthwiki: Europe's Encyclopedia of National Youth Policies \(europa.eu\)](#)

## *Efficiency*

The EUYS has been **cost-effective** in delivering value for money at EU level. The modest costs of the EUYS appear proportionate. Stakeholders have agreed that its benefits have outweighed its costs. The EUYS has not imposed significant administrative burdens on public authorities or other stakeholders.

There is scope for:

- ✓ further **improvements** to simplify the Future National Activity Planners (a tool for the Commission to gather information on national youth policies) and reduce Member States' reporting.

## *Coherence*

The EUYS operates in **synergy with many EU policies**, through shared priorities, objectives and values<sup>24</sup>. One example is the **synergy between youth participation and child participation**<sup>25</sup>. The EU Children's Participation Platform<sup>26</sup> involves children in EU decision-making and supports their active participation in democratic life, contributing to youth participation and active citizenship in the EUYS. The Citizenship Package<sup>27</sup> supports democratic participation of young citizens. The Defence of Democracy package<sup>28</sup> underlines the importance of participation by young people and children in democratic life, supports young voters, and refers to best practices, including the EU Youth Dialogue<sup>29</sup>. Youth participation is a pillar of the European strategy for a better internet for kids (BIK+)<sup>30</sup>. Another example is the synergy with demography policies prioritising gender equality, non-discrimination and intergenerational fairness.<sup>31</sup>

The EUYS is **consistent with international obligations** by reflecting some of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, but there is scope to communicate on links.

There is scope to:

- ✓ **showcase synergies between the EUYS and related policy fields**, in particular those highlighted in the Communication on the European Year of Youth (health and wellbeing, the environment and climate change, education and training, international cooperation and European values, employment and inclusion).

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<sup>24</sup> For example, with the EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025 and the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025.

<sup>25</sup> [Communication from the Commission on the EU strategy on the rights of the child, COM \(2021\) 142 final.](#)

<sup>26</sup> [EU Children's Participation Platform | European Union \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>27</sup> [Citizenship Package - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>28</sup> [Protecting democracy - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>29</sup> [Commission Recommendation on promoting the engagement and effective participation of citizens and civil society organisations in public policy-making processes](#)

<sup>30</sup> [Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions A Digital Decade for children and youth: the new European strategy for a better internet for kids \(BIK+\)](#)

<sup>31</sup> [Communication: 'Demographic change in Europe: a toolbox for action'](#)

### 3.2 EU added value – how has the EU Youth Strategy made a difference so far and for whom?

The EUYS has provided added value beyond what Member States could achieve on their own by:

- facilitating knowledge-sharing and exchange of experience;
- acting as an example and catalyst for national and international policy development;
- creating collective responsibility to tackle youth challenges at the EU level;
- increasing the understanding of youth as a complex group that requires holistic approaches.

**Discontinuing** the EUYS would have **negative consequences**, such as a decreasing the importance of youth issues for decision-makers, limiting cross-sectoral cooperation at EU level and slowing progress in national youth policy development.

### 3.3 Relevance – is the EU Youth Strategy still relevant?

According to stakeholder consultations, the most pressing **challenges faced by young people** in 2019-2023 include the cost of living, financial stability and poverty; mental health and well-being; youth unemployment; the environment and climate change; and youth participation in decision-making.

The EUYS has generally remained relevant to youth needs due to its **broad objectives and the European Youth Goals**. The **European Year of Youth** has boosted its relevance through the intensified cooperation on youth between all relevant stakeholders. Based on the consultations, the EUYS could however more visibly address the impact of some of the new/re-surfing challenges (e.g. cost of living).

There is scope to:

- ✓ give greater visibility to **efforts to strengthen youth mainstreaming at EU and national levels** in areas of youth needs.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

### 4.1 Overall conclusions and lessons learned

The evaluation has underlined the **effectiveness and continued importance of the EUYS as a strategic framework** for EU cooperation, knowledge-sharing and peer learning, by channelling resources and concerted action towards common objectives in addressing youth challenges and complementing Member States' action and initiatives. In particular, the EUYS remains vital as a 'catalyst' for policy alignment and development. It is an example/model for national youth strategies and youth policy developments (particularly in Member States that do not have a national youth strategy or where it is being constructed or renewed) to support the convergence of policy approaches. This role also extends beyond

the EU, as demonstrated in the Youth Action Plan in EU external action through which the EUYS can also inspire non-EU countries to adopt similar approaches.

The evaluation has highlighted the **continuing relevance of the EUYS objectives**, with their strong **focus on inclusion and diversity, and on youth participation and civic engagement**. In general, the broadness of the objectives and the European Youth Goals were found to respond to a range of challenges and needs of young people.

Nevertheless, consultation has indicated that there is scope to tackle more visibly the impact on young people of **new/resurging challenges** (particularly the cost of living; housing; the environment and climate; digitalisation; physical and mental health and well-being; and challenges for rural youth). This underlines the importance of the dual approach of the EUYS, i.e. to pursue **youth mainstreaming across policy areas**, relying on strong **youth participation and youth representation**; and to **mobilise and enhance the specific instruments and initiatives** in the youth sector.

The **2022 European Year of Youth** brought the EU closer to young people, raising awareness of the many opportunities available to them. It **boosted youth participation and accelerated youth mainstreaming** and increased the relevance of the EUYS. Sustaining and building on these positive effects, based on the Commission Communication on the European Year of Youth 2022 <sup>32</sup>, will reinforce the implementation and performance of the EUYS in the coming years.

The **main conclusions and lessons learned** from the evaluation are geared towards enhancing the influence of the EUYS by further boosting some of its instruments. These are highlighted below.

## 4.2 Youth participation and Youth mainstreaming

### ➤ EU Youth Dialogue: *becoming more inclusive, attention to follow-up*

The EU Youth Dialogue needs to continue evolving and growing. It is vital to **safeguard the progress on inclusion** achieved over the last three cycles; to keep up the progress in involving young people from minority groups and young people with disabilities; and to increase the participation in the EU Youth Dialogue process of any under-represented groups (including young people not in education, employment or training, and rural youth). **Fine-tuning outreach and communication** can be part of the measures, as can better preparation and support of participants (particularly young people with fewer opportunities).

A key area for attention is to **further develop and support a process to channel recommendations** from the EU Youth Dialogue to relevant stakeholders at all levels (particularly policymakers). There is also a need for **mechanisms** for informing participants and stakeholders about the **follow-up planned** at EU and national level. At EU level, the Commission will align the EU Youth Dialogue's focus more closely with the Commission work programme. **Strengthening the EU Youth Dialogue is a key action in the**

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<sup>32</sup> [Commission Communication on the European Year of Youth 2022 \(europa.eu\)](#)

**Commission Communication on the European Year of Youth** (including reflection on how to link it with the youth check). This reflection is important both for the third cycle of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 and for the successor post-2027 strategy.

It would also be opportune to create more **synergies with other youth participation instruments** (e.g. the EU Children's Participation Platform) at EU and national level for visibility, and to undertake joint efforts to engage young people and youth representatives with the help of civil society organisations and networks.

Priority actions to further develop youth participation and the EU Youth Dialogue are set out in the Commission Communication on the European Year of Youth.

➤ **Youth Mainstreaming: *accelerate, build on and press ahead***

The evaluation has highlighted **examples of EU policy initiatives** that have incorporated the youth perspective. Some also refer explicitly to the EUYS (e.g. the Commission Communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health, which was developed with input from young people<sup>33</sup>). However, although there are many synergies between EU policies, there is limited evidence of concrete actions to exploit complementarities and synergies, and this highlights the scope for further enhanced cooperation at EU level.

Based on the Commission Communication on the European Year of Youth, there is an opportunity to **step up efforts at all levels** to make further progress in youth mainstreaming across all policy fields, including through **concrete mainstreaming instruments**.

When designing EU policies, the Commission will use the full potential of youth mainstreaming as part of the Commission's Better Regulation framework and toolbox, resulting in a **youth check**. Finetuning and piloting the approach is on-going in 2024, with a view to applying the youth check on relevant new initiatives of the Commission's annual work programme as from 2025. Efforts will also include better outreach to civil society organisations, networks and young people in order to encourage them to take part in consultations for new EU initiatives, including in **citizens' panels**. A new **Youth Stakeholders' platform** will be set up, with a first meeting in autumn 2024, to facilitate exchanges with youth organisations, youth researchers, Member State representatives and other EU institutions. Also in 2024, continuing **youth policy dialogues** with European Commissioners, organising **youth mainstreaming roundtables** and regularly mobilising the internal **Commission Youth Network** (particularly through the EU Youth Coordinator) will also be important ways to enhance mainstreaming.

The Commission will also support **national efforts** by organising **mutual learning activities** on youth mainstreaming in cooperation with Member States, to exchange views on how to involve young people and civil society organisations and to take account of the youth perspective in national policymaking processes with an impact on youth. The Commission also encourages Member States to appoint **national or regional youth coordinators**, following the example of the EU Youth Coordinator.

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<sup>33</sup> For example, through the Youth Cancer Survivors conference and the Youth Policy Dialogue on mental health in February 2023.

Member States and the Commission could also **identify specific areas for intensifying synergies and complementarities** (e.g. between youth participation under the EUYS and children's participation under the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and the Better internet for kids strategy (BIK+), and with national policies and initiatives in these areas) in conjunction with the measures for inclusive civic engagement and participation for EU democratic resilience outlined in the Commission's Defence of Democracy package <sup>34</sup>.

Member States and the Commission could also **collaborate on specific policies and initiatives**. Examples include targeting the mental health challenges of young people; considering interconnections with digital life, including artificial intelligence, sport and culture; and pursuing holistic approaches on the basis of the Commission Communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health <sup>35</sup> and Council Conclusions <sup>36</sup>. As a further example, the Commission works closely with the Member States through the subgroup on mental health of the Public Health Expert Group <sup>37</sup>. Similar collaboration can be facilitated in other key areas, based on the challenges identified by young people and youth stakeholders. Public authorities at national and regional level can also request support under the EU Technical Support Instrument to design and implement policies targeted to young people.

There is also a need and scope to increase **engagement with stakeholders**, communicating better on the youth mainstreaming objective and cross-sectoral nature of the EUYS, and spreading and raising awareness about successful youth mainstreaming at all levels.

Priority actions to further strengthen youth mainstreaming are set out in the Commission Communication on the European Year of Youth.

➤ **EU Youth Coordinator: instrumental for youth mainstreaming, attention to role**

The evaluation has shown that the EU Youth Coordinator is a **frontrunner for youth mainstreaming** at EU level, notably through the internal Commission Youth Network; and that it has high potential and is important for the continued efforts to promote the involvement of young people. Stakeholder feedback has indicated that there is scope to **increase the visibility of the role and work** of the EU Youth Coordinator to external stakeholders; and to better communicate and **potentially further clarify the mandate**, which is very broad.

Building on the positive experiences during the European Year of Youth, the EU Youth Coordinator will be able to rely on a **Youth Stakeholders' platform** for consultations, discussions, exchanges and co-creation, by a community of practice that involves stakeholders at all levels and will boost the EUYS's participatory governance.

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<sup>34</sup> [Documents on Defence of Democracy - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>35</sup> [Commission Communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>36</sup> [Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on a comprehensive approach to the mental health of young people in the European Union](#)

<sup>37</sup> [https://health.ec.europa.eu/non-communicable-diseases/expert-group-public-health\\_en](https://health.ec.europa.eu/non-communicable-diseases/expert-group-public-health_en)

### 4.3 Enabling instruments

➤ **EU programmes: *explore further synergies***

Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps are key instruments for supporting the EUYS at EU level. It is therefore important to **safeguard links** between these programmes and the EUYS objectives and activities. There is also scope to further **explore synergies** between these programmes and other programmes/funds/instruments at EU level (e.g. Horizon Europe, cohesion policy funds and the Technical Support Instrument) as well as national programmes/funds. The Commission's Youth Network as well as mutual learning activities can facilitate this.

➤ **Youth information and communication: *development of a communication plan***

There is scope to communicate the EUYS and its interlinked components and outcomes more clearly, to target communication more towards policymakers and civil society organisations/practitioners, and to finetune products on the European Youth Portal for young people. This could be addressed by **developing a communication plan** for the EUYS.

➤ **Evidence-based tools: *continuous improvement, attention to communication***

Continuous efforts are needed to provide and **communicate relevant data** on the implementation and performance of the EUYS and on the evolving situation of young people to all stakeholders in a timely and user-friendly way. The evaluation has identified a need to better capitalise on achievements that have already been made. There is potential to **streamline resources for policymakers and civil society organisations/practitioners** (currently spread over several portals and websites). This could involve reviewing the frequency and the form of the **EU Youth Report** to see if they can be changed to better cater for the needs of different audiences.

To facilitate monitoring and evaluation, the evaluation suggests **developing a few key indicators** to help track progress and provide a bridge between the higher-level objectives and the more direct sphere of influence of the EUYS (on the evolution of youth policies, practices of youth organisations and youth participation) and to continue work on the availability of data based on the proposals of the ad hoc expert group on youth indicators.

Member States and the Commission could, with the involvement of youth stakeholders, **cooperate on further developing key indicators, methodologies and data** for the monitoring of the EUYS.



## 4.4 Scope for simplification

### ➤ **Future National Activities Planners: *consider alternatives***

The evaluation has indicated that there is **scope to simplify and reduce Member States' reporting burden** as regards the Future National Activities Planners<sup>38</sup>. The consultations highlighted that policymakers have found them burdensome to complete and of limited use. This indicates a need to consider alternative ways of gathering information on national youth policy priorities, in cooperation with Member States (for example through the Youth Wiki and simplified surveys).

## 4.5 Way ahead

The European Year of Youth 2022 placed young people at the top of the political agenda. It created strong mobilisation and momentum for more opportunities, space and tools for the participation of young people, and of those working with and for them. The **Commission Communication on the European Year of Youth** includes priority actions to sustain and build on the success of the Year. This, together with the **conclusions of this EU Youth Strategy evaluation**, offers opportunities to further accelerate the implementation and enhance the influence of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027.

**At mid-term**, these efforts could be pursued and framed within the existing objectives of the Strategy and the European Youth Goals (under the core areas of engage, connect and empower) and in youth mainstreaming at all levels, by using existing mechanisms and processes, such as the Work Plan for 2025-2027.

To further feed the **preparations for EU youth policy cooperation after 2027**, including in the context of the new multiannual financial framework, the Commission proposes to **launch a listening and co-creation process in 2025-2026** with all stakeholders. The Commission will mobilise the Youth Stakeholder's platform to gather views and ideas, cooperate and co-create inputs. This could take the form of meetings and events or an online campaign, and could be part of the EU Youth Dialogue consultations.

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<sup>38</sup> [Future National Activities Planners | European Youth Portal \(europa.eu\)](#)