



Research Paper

Fighting youth unemployment, marginalisation and radicalisation through social inclusion in Europe

Eurodiaconia is a European network of churches and Christian NGOs providing social and healthcare services and advocating social justice.

Mission

Eurodiaconia is a network of churches and Christian organisations that provide social and health care services and advocate for social justice. Together we work for just and transformative social change across Europe, leaving no-one behind.

Vision

Driven by our Christian faith, our vision is of a Europe where each person is valued for their inherent God-given worth and dignity and where our societies guarantee social justice for all people, including the most vulnerable and marginalised.

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Executive Summary

Eurodiaconia is a network of organisations in Europe founded in the Christian faith and is working in the tradition of Diaconia, which is committed to a Europe of solidarity, equality and justice. Eurodiaconia wants to identify and promote innovative youth work among its members. Therefore, Eurodiaconia conducted the Empower You(th)! Project¹ to collect and assess innovative youth work models and methods and analyse them in terms of their international transferability. A compilation of the results appears in an online toolkit², which contains not only best practices but also an assessment of the current challenges young people in Europe face today. As a follow-up to that project, Eurodiaconia has been looking to expand its collection of good practices and to further assess its role in terms of youth unemployment, marginalisation and radicalisation prevention through social inclusion.

This study provides information about diaconal youth work in Europe and its relevance in terms of fighting in tackling these challenges. The following chapters explore how Eurodiaconia member organisations contribute to youth empowerment in Europe and how it can successfully support European policymaking.

¹ Eurodiaconia Empower You(th)! Project (2018): <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplu-project-details/#project/2016-3-BE05-KA205-002031>

² Eurodiaconia Empower You(th)! Project toolkit (2018): <https://www.eurodiaconia.org/resources/empower-youth/>

Hence, between July and October 2019, Eurodiaconia carried out a comprehensive study in the following areas:

- The current EU policies and state of play on youth unemployment, marginalisation and radicalisation prevention through social exclusion.
- A collection of best practices from the Eurodiaconia membership by building on existing findings and testing it against the current EU policies concerned.
- A set of policy recommendations that stem from the existing policies and that are based on best practices of Eurodiaconia members.

9 member organisations from 8 different countries participated in the study. They took part in an online survey and phone interviews about 9 projects that were presented and analysed. All member organisations that are represented in this report are involved in empowerment and capacity building activities, and 77% of them focus on education, training and volunteering. It is clear how diaconal work is trying to support young people in developing their competences. Therefore, Eurodiaconia and its members strongly call upon the European Commission, the member states and the local representatives to share their vision by establishing a clear policy to support the implementation of better and more accessible programs for youth work which focus on the transferability of competences. Eurodiaconia members urge all the actors involved in policymaking to keep in mind the short- and long-term impact that clear and practical measures could have on the future of Europe.

Thus, it is necessary to enable multipliers – the organisations working in the youth field – to help young people in transferring the competences they need to allow them to contribute actively to the process of social inclusion to fight unemployment and marginalisation.

Introduction

Diaconal youth work is a unique approach to youth work in Europe and contributes significantly to increased education, employability and social cohesion and provides young people with a narrative of hope beyond denominational borders.

This study builds on the findings of the Empower You(th)! Project and its online toolkit and aims to apply and further develop these findings by analysing additional youth projects that have been implemented by the Eurodiaconia members in Europe, which accurately contribute to fighting youth unemployment and marginalisation as well as to promote social inclusion and prevent radicalisation.

This research aims to provide information about diaconal youth work in Europe. It was conducted between July and October 2019 and involved 9 Eurodiaconia member organisations of 8 different countries from a total of 9 projects that were presented and analysed.

Furthermore, to strengthen the capacity of the Eurodiaconia member organisations on such policies, an overview of the current European youth policies has been included. The policy recommendations based on the findings of this study aims to provide the European Commission and other relevant decision makers with informed and evidence-based suggestions for future action and strategies among the youth.

Research objectives, audience and findings

This study intends to provide the Eurodiaconia members and the European Commission with good practice examples in the area of diaconal youth work and its relevance in fighting youth unemployment, marginalisation and radicalisation through social inclusion. It also aims to develop policy recommendations for the European Commission in addition to discussing policies that are already in place so as to show potential avenues to use EU funds and support the development of the members' work in this area. The study consists of the following four sections:

- **Section 1** - Showcases an overview and assessment of the current EU policies and state of play on youth unemployment, marginalisation and radicalisation prevention through social exclusion.
- **Section 2** - Focuses on the online survey results that provide information on the Eurodiaconia members' work with the youth and their perception regarding the current EU policies.
- **Section 3** - Includes a collection of the best practices of the 9 Eurodiaconia member organisations that took part in the study, and it builds them on the existing findings of the Empower You(th)! Project.
- **Section 4** - Presents a set of policy recommendations that stem from the existing policies and evidence and are based on the opinions and good practices of the Eurodiaconia members.

Youth policies development in the European Union and the Europe Region

1

Overview

When did the European Union (EU) policies start to target young people and for what purpose? How can they support young people to be included in society and to fulfil their aspirations and increase their potential? Also, what is the role of youth work in achieving these goals? This overview, which is sketched from the history of the EU youth policy and the main concepts, principles and challenges tackled by the new EU Youth Strategy, is meant to answer these questions.

This chapter intends to offer an overview of the current situation of young people in the EU and the latest European policies concerning the youth, specifically in the areas of **unemployment, marginalisation and radicalisation prevention**.

The first segment presents, in brief, the historical journey of the EU policies concerning the youth. This analysis considers the increasing interest towards the target group, the recognised relevance of youth work at the European level and the need to create a cooperation framework, which resulted in the creation of the recent EU Youth Strategy.

The second part briefly recounts the role of the Council of Europe (CoE) as a pioneer in the field of youth policy and elaborates on the partnership framework built with the EU.

The third section gives an overview of the results achieved through cooperation with the EU and the areas for improvement. A separate article explores the EU initiatives and persistent challenges faced by young people in the areas of **unemployment, marginalisation and radicalisation**.

The final segment presents the new EU policy framework that deals with the youth and is defined by the EU Youth Strategy of the period 2019–2027 and its practical implementation.

European Union policies concerning the youth: A historical perspective

According to Eurostat, in 2016, the EU estimated a total of 80 million children (from 0 to 14 years of age) and over 88 million young people. The number of young people in the EU represented 17% of the total population of the EU, and their potential in terms of skills, creativity and diversity is an essential source for the future development of the EU.³

We can recall the attention given to young people by the EU (which was known as the *European Economic Community (EEC)* at that time) in 1969 from the **conclusions drawn at the Hague meeting**,⁴ where the member states mentioned the need for youth policy actions. The discussion on the need for youth policy was one of the first steps in this regard, which slowly progressed during the 70s when the activities involving youth started to be financially supported. These dreams and ideas began to become a reality from 1988 onwards with the development of youth programmes.

A deeper attention was paid to the needs of the youth through the **Maastricht Treaty**, which dates back to 1992.⁵ Its chapter, **Education, vocational**

³ Eurostat-Statistic Explained. “Being young in Europe today: demographic trends” https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Being_young_in_Europe_today_-_demographic_trends

⁴ Meeting of the heads of state or government- The Hague (1969) http://aei.pitt.edu/1451/1/hague_1969.pdf

⁵ Treaty on European Union (1992) https://europa.eu/european-union/sites/europa.eu/files/docs/body/treaty_on_european_union_en.pdf

training and youth, recognises the role of the community in encouraging ‘the development of youth exchanges and exchanges of socio-educational instructors’(Article 126).

Although youth policies have mainly been developed at the national level by the member states, the European Commission has worked to establish a framework for cooperation among them to address the need to solve problems outside the domestic environment but at the European level. In this regard, we can flag the White Paper ‘A New Impetus for European Youth’⁶ (2001) as a pivotal step for this cooperation in terms of youth policies with priority on promoting active citizenship among young people and the involvement in the decisions that affect them.

Despite these steps, the obstacles concerning education (6 million early school leavers in 2006) and unemployment (at a rate of 17.4%) still affected youth participation in society at that time. Hence, the time was right for a comprehensive social and professional integration of young people.⁷ As a result of the new discussion undertaken by the European framework for cooperation in terms of youth policies, the European Youth Pact (2005) highlighted the need to focus on three broad areas:

- 1. Employment, integration and social advancement;
- 2. Education, training and mobility;
- 3. Reconciliation of working life and family life.

⁶ European Commission White Paper: a new impetus for European youth (2001) <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a3fb3071-785e-4e15-a2cd-51cb40a6c06b>

⁷ The history of Youth Work in Europe. Relevance for youth policy today (2009) https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47261623/History_of_youth_work.pdf/b97318a2-2d74-4ea5-b94c-40c726d7d47d

Primarily, the actions that were agreed to be taken were increasing the employment of youth, supporting social inclusion and reducing the number of young people who left school before completing their term.

The **Youth in Action Programme** was launched in 2007 (included later in the Erasmus+ Programme) to promote ‘active citizenship, solidarity and tolerance and involving young people in shaping the future of the European Union’ through mobility, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue.

Further, the EU’s competence to support, coordinate or supplement the actions of the member states that concerned the youth was confirmed by **Title XII on ‘Education, Vocational Training, Youth and Sport’, which was presented in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)**⁸ and was set into motion on 1st December 2009. The TFEU has also recognised the role of the union in ‘encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe’ and affirming that the member states shall ‘encourage the exchange of young workers’ (Art. 47). This aspect had already been addressed in the Maastricht Treaty, but the TFEU motivated the member states to implement the strategies in this regard.

However, the need to create a more structured framework for cooperation grew. The EU was eager to increase the opportunities for youth in education and employment to facilitate access and full participation of young people in society and to foster mutual solidarity with them. This situation led to the formation of the EU Youth Strategy, which was introduced by the Commission in 2009.⁹ It gave significant relevance to youth work, its social and economic contribution and the discourse around its professionalisation.

⁸ Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (2012) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012E%2FTXT>

⁹ The history of Youth Work in Europe. Relevance for youth policy today (2009) https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47261623/History_of_youth_work.pdf/b97318a2-2d74-4ea5-94c-40c726d7d47d

Furthermore, the increasing interest towards youth work as a practice that is used to engage young people was prepared into a document by the Council, which affirmed ‘the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people’. The member states were requested to cooperate on the matter and increase their effectiveness.¹⁰ Consequently, in 2009, the EU adopted a **Renewed Framework for Cooperation in the Youth Field 2010–2018**, which unfolded two main objectives:

- Providing more equal opportunities for young people in education and the labour market;
- Encouraging young people to actively participate in society.

The interventions proposed within this EU Youth Strategy (2010–2018) were concerned with eight main areas:¹¹

- Employment and entrepreneurship;
- Social inclusion;
- Participation;
- Education and training;
- Health and well being;

¹⁰We appreciate that Greece also received further recommendations through the post-programme commitments (June 2018) which accounts for its low number of CSRs this year.

¹¹ To see further the initiatives taken, please consult: https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy/strategy-2010-2018_en

- Voluntary activities;
- Youth and the world;
- Creativity and culture.

To implement this strategy, the EU created a comprehensive mobility programme for youth in **formal and non-formal** environments named **Erasmus+**.¹² This programme had initially been set-up for the EU countries but had gradually been extended to the neighbouring countries of the European Union.

More recently, in December 2016, the EU launched a new mobility programme named '**European Solidarity Corps**',¹³ to provide opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in their own country or abroad with the broader aim of benefitting the communities and people around Europe.

The role of the Council of Europe

One of the purposes of this research is to analyse the EU policies concerning the youth in three specific areas of interest; thus, it is essential to mention the role of the CoE as a pioneer in the youth policy development. Since the 70s, the CoE has focused on the youth sector and has promoted

¹² Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council establishing 'Erasmus+': the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport (2013) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0050:0073:EN:PDF>

¹³ ESC was consolidated in 2018 with the regulation (EU) 2018/1475 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down the legal framework of the European Solidarity Corps (2018) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018R1475&from=EN>

an approach based on the equal involvement of the member states and the youth ‘to build more just, more democratic and safer societies all over Europe’ by working together.¹⁴ The CoE has become a fundamental player in youth policy and youth work development and recognition in Europe thanks to the implementation of the co-management approach.¹⁵ The co-management approach is unique and gathers youth organisations and governments in the Joint Council on Youth, where everyone has ‘an equal say in decision making on a range of programme priorities and activities’.¹⁶ The CoE youth policy follows ‘the future of the Council of Europe youth policy – AGENDA 2020’¹⁷, which recognises human rights and democracy, the promotion of cultural diversity and social inclusion as the three priorities of the CoE’s youth policy.

Due to its extensive experience, the CoE has become one of the main contributors of the EU with regard to the youth. From 1998, a cooperation programme between the European Commission and the CoE led to the **EU–CoE partnership concerning the youth**, which involved both the EU and the CoE members, as well as the countries that signed the European Cultural Convention and the neighbouring South Mediterranean countries. The creation of the framework was meant to combine the efforts of the EU and the CoE with regard to the youth in order to collaborate on topics of shared interest.

Among the main youth policy themes that are relevant in Europe are **supporting youth employment; preventing and contrasting hate**

¹⁴ The Council of Europe and youth policy. Support, assistance and resources for youth policy development in member states (2016). <https://rm.coe.int/16806da341>

¹⁵ For further details on co-management approach: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/co-management>

¹⁶ For details on the history of youth work and Council of Europe role, please consult: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/the-history-of-youth-work-volume-6>

¹⁷ “The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020. Background documents” (2008) <https://rm.coe.int/1680702428>

speech, extremism and radicalisation, which leads to violence, and supporting inclusion. Also, the EU–CoE partnership carries out its work with two main objectives:

- Promoting better knowledge on current and future challenges for young people and monitoring their participation;
- Supporting youth work by advocating the role and contribution of youth work in youth participation and social inclusion.¹⁸

It is essential to mention that the work developed within the EU–CoE partnership is pivotal. Thus, the achievements earned and challenges encountered to reach the current EU approach in youth policy will be addressed in the following section.

¹⁸ For further details on the current activities <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/activities>

Youth in Europe today: Assessing the achievements and challenges

The working document ‘*Situation of young people in the European Union*’¹⁹, prepared by the European Commission in 2018, indicates an overall improvement of the situation of youth in the EU compared to the period preceding 2010.²⁰

In general, the cooperation in the youth field promoted through the EU Youth Strategy 2010–2018 and parallel initiatives have attained some critical objectives. The first achievement is the legislative and policy improvements at the Member States level.²¹ Some of the Member States have improved their policies in the field of youth development, while others have introduced specific youth policies. The intervention of youth organisations played a vital role in the improvement of the youth sector among the Member States.

The establishment of the structured dialogue²², the use of EU funds, the exchange of good practices, and knowledge-building have played a pivotal role in increasing the capacity of youth organisations in shaping youth policies. It is noteworthy that the results of the survey confirm what has been mentioned here. For Eurodiaconia member organisations to be

¹⁹ Situation of young people in the European Union- Commission staff working document <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b6985c0c-743f-11e8-9483-01aa75ed71a1>

²⁰ It refers to the period before the establishment of the EU youth strategy 2010

²¹ To know more about plans in each Member States, please consult <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/youthwiki>

²² Structured dialogue is a consultative process that initiates communication between young people and the decision-makers to involve youth in the process of shaping European policies. The dialogue is based on consultation cycles that last 18 months each. During this period, within each Member State, national consultation is organized involving young people and youth organisations.

able to foster and contribute to youth work development, access to EU funding programmes such as Erasmus + is vital (table-13).

The chance to exchange, promote and develop further is key for their existence and the young people themselves.

However, owing to the cooperation established at EU level, the implementation of numerous initiatives as well as the production of relevant tools (i.e. publications, toolboxes) to support the work of various stakeholders in the youth field have happened.

Results of this cooperation show different progress. For instance, in the fields of education and training, the data indicate that there is an increased proportion of young Europeans who have attained a secondary-level qualification (in 2016, 83,2% between 20 and 24 years old), and there is a growing number of young people attending university and holding a degree. Specifically, for the employment sector, a positive correlation between a higher level of education and the possibility of finding a job was noticed. There was also a general decrease in unemployment (in 2018, there were 1.3 million fewer jobless young people as compared to 2013). The possibility of choosing different educational opportunities (considering non-formal and informal settings and youth work) has increased the youth's social and personal development, reducing risks of social marginalisation, poverty and exclusion. Encouraging data show a growing participation in voluntary activities (25% more as compared to 2011) and engagement in politics (over half of the youth between 15 and 24 years old in 2018), favoured also using ICT and online participation.

Despite this progress, a complex European society, which is evolving quicker than imagined, needs diverse support. Thus, the European Commission has highlighted some space for improvement in the **cooperation framework in the field of youth** in the EU countries.

The first point of reflection was that, with the **EU Youth Strategy**, a flexible approach for cooperation has been set and includes a high number of possible actions. This flexibility has given each Member State the possibility to address several topics among the ones identified.

However, the result was that none managed to reach all of them, and differences emerged among member states.

An in-depth analysis then showed reasons for the Member States not being successful. In line with the opinion of Eurodiaconia members (table-10), among the reason for the lack of success registered so far is the lack of monitoring tools for the actions implemented and the lack of evaluation mechanisms of youth policies implemented within a single state. The second reason refers to the difficulties in engaging young people with fewer opportunities.²³ The European Parliament has expressed a further concern, according to which, good practices remained linked to the peculiarities of the countries where they were implemented: a set of benchmarks has not been identified under the youth policy of the EU.²⁴

Eurodiaconia members have also underlined other areas that need to be improved regarding EU youth policies. The most relevant among them are as follows: higher accessibility to existing EU funding programmes and initiatives, coherence between the international and the national level, and time for a bottom-up approach.

Despite the creation of EU programmes, indeed, the majority of the organisations are not entirely using them yet (table-5). They still feel that such programmes are not accessible or easy to use for youth empowerment and that they need more capacity building programmes (table-11).

Further, as confirmed by the answers of Eurodiaconia members to our survey (table-7), it is noteworthy that youth work is still not equally recognised in all European countries. However, in some countries, youth work is established and, to a great extent, professionalised as part of

²³ Results of the open method of coordination in the youth field 2010-2018 (2018) https://ec.europa.eu/youth/sites/youth/files/youth_swd_168_1_en_autre_document_travail_service_part1_v6.pdf

²⁴ Report on the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy (2018) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2018-0162_EN.html?redirect#_part1_def4

both the educational and social welfare system. In other countries, youth work develops relatively independent of these systems and is a practice conducted by volunteers. In most countries, youth work is a mix of all these interventions. In any case, youth work today must find its place and position itself within families and schools (as a central part of the so-called *third socialisation environment*) as well as for adult concerns and young people's needs and desires.

Unemployment, marginalisation and radicalisation prevention: The EU initiatives in the youth field

Unemployment, marginalisation and radicalisation prevention are the three main topics of the EU cooperation framework and the EU–CoE partnership. In this respect, numerous initiatives have been implemented in these areas with significant progress but also the persistence of challenges.

Regarding employment, at the EU level, a strong emphasis has been placed on 'job creation' with priority on 'inclusive growth' in the European 2020 Strategy²⁵ to increase the employment rate of people between 20 and 64 years of age to 75%. Also, youth employment and entrepreneurship was one of the eight priorities of the EU Youth Strategy 2010–2018, which dealt with the following aspects:

- Addressing the concerns of young people in employment strategies;

²⁵ European 2020 Strategy <https://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/COMPLET%20EN%20BARROSO%20%20%20007%20-%20Europe%202020%20-%20EN%20version.pdf>

- Investing in the skills employers look for;
- Developing career guidance and counselling services;
- Promoting opportunities to work and train abroad;
- Supporting quality internship and traineeship;
- Improving childcare and shared family responsibility;
- Encouraging entrepreneurship.

The European Commission renewed its effort to support young people in 2016²⁶ by proposing a provision of three frameworks:

- Better opportunities to access employment;
- Better opportunities through education and training;
- Better opportunities for solidarity, learning mobility and participation.

Hence, numerous initiatives, as follows, have been implemented at the EU level to reduce unemployment, specifically youth unemployment:

- The Youth Guarantee (2013), which was developed within each member state to support young people (unemployed or who have dropped

²⁶ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the regions investing in Europe's Youth (2016) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016DC0940&from=EN>

out from the formal education setting) to receive quality job offers, further education/learning opportunities or access to apprenticeship or traineeship.²⁷

- The creation of the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships, which sets a criteria for standard and promotes good quality and effective apprenticeships.
- The European Solidarity Corps, which creates opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in solidarity-related projects that benefit the communities and people around Europe.
- The creation of the EURES portal – a network shaped to facilitate free movement among the workers in the countries of the EU.²⁸

It is important to emphasise on the role of civil society youth organisation in advocating for the results mentioned above as well as in promoting the principles of the Agenda 2020²⁹ across their programmes with young people from different communities across Europe. For example, the European Youth Forum had a significant role to play in the proposal and implementation of the Youth Guarantee.³⁰ Another example is the ‘European quality charter on internships and apprenticeships’, which was produced by the European Youth Forum in 2010 with the support of its members

²⁷ Council recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:120:0001:0006:EN:PDF>

²⁸ Accessing Eures. The European job mobility portal. <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/homepage>

²⁹ Smart, inclusive and sustainable growth principles.

³⁰ European Youth Forum on Youth Guarantee - <https://www.youthforum.org/youth-guarantee>

and partners in the matter. The document is the result of the consultation process that the European Youth Forum carried out to advocate for better quality standards for internships and apprenticeships. Education, rights and remuneration were the main aspects taken into consideration in this initiative.³¹

Although the initiatives undertaken have been directed to lower the disengagement of young people, youth unemployment persists as one of the main challenges in the EU. A Eurostat publication that was issued in June 2019 confirms that 3.176 million young persons (under 25 years old) are unemployed in the EU-28, out of which 2.251 million people live in the euro area.³² Compared to the previous year, the data shows a reduction in the unemployment rate from 15.2% (registered in June 2018) to 14.1% (documented in June 2019).

Nevertheless, there is a profound gap among the countries of the EU in terms of unemployment rate with the lowest rate being recorded in Germany (5.5%), which was followed by the Netherlands (6.5%) and Czech Republic (6.6%). On the other hand, the highest rates were recorded in Greece (39.6% in the first quarter of 2019), Spain (32.4%) and Italy (28.1%).³³

Another alarming piece of data from Eurostat is concerned with the number of young people at the risk of marginalisation. Poverty and social exclusion still affect large sections of the youth population. According to the Eurostat data in 2017, the at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion rate for young people aged 16-29 years was 27.7% in the EU-28, which accounts for roughly 21.8 million young people.³⁴

³¹ European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships <https://www.youthforum.org/european-quality-charter-internships-and-apprenticeships>

³² Eurostat- Unemployment statistics (2019) <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/pdfscache/1163.pdf>

³³ Eurostat-Statistic Explained. "Unemploymentstatistics" https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics#Youth_unemployment

Fighting social exclusion has been one of the priorities of the EU Youth Strategy 2010–2018, which has divided its action plan into the following categories:

- Creating more and equal opportunities for all young people to gain education and participate in the labour market;
- Supporting active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity of all young people;
- Realising the full potential of youth work and youth centres as a means of inclusion;
- Encouraging a cross-sector approach to address exclusion;
- Supporting the development of intercultural awareness to combat prejudice;
- Providing information and education to young people about their rights;
- Promoting access to quality services;

The social inclusion of all young people has been recognised as one of the core topics of the Work Plan (2016–2018) set under the EU Youth Strategy

³⁴ Eutostat-StatisticExplained. “Young people–social inclusion” https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Young_people_-_social_inclusion#Young_people_at_risk_of_poverty_or_social_exclusion

2010 - 2018. According to the plan, the initiatives for inclusion should especially address the young people who are at risk of marginalisation, who are 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET) and who have a migrant background.

Under this framework, an expert group of policymakers, researchers and practitioners was set up³⁵ to examine the evidence and good practices related to the role of youth work in promoting active citizenship and preventing marginalisation and violent radicalisation. The main result of this process is the toolbox 'the contribution of youth work to prevent marginalisation and violent radicalisation', which offers practical suggestions to young workers.³⁶

Other initiatives that the Erasmus+ Programme have supported favour inclusion³⁷ through the chapter specifically dedicated to the youth. In particular, the section supports the Youth Organisation's activities to promote active citizenship and to spread European values through formal and non-formal education.

Marginalisation and exclusion are also areas that have been researched by the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy – an online database built by the EU–CoE partnership, which was created to collect and provide information about the condition of young people in Europe.³⁸

A profound link exists between **marginalisation and radicalisation**.

³⁵ Council Conclusions on the role of youth work in supporting young people's development of essential life skills that facilitate their successful transition to adulthood, active citizenship and working life (2017) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52017XG0615%2801%29>

³⁶ The contribution of youth work to preventing marginalization and violent radicalization (2017) <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/0ad09926-a8b1-11e7-837e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

³⁷ Erasmus + programme portal https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en

³⁸ Eurostat- Unemployment statistics (2019) <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/pdfscache/1163.pdf>

Unemployment, poverty, racism and discrimination are some of the factors that lead the youth to experience unjust treatment and feel frustrated.³⁹ This provokes social exclusion and marginalisation and can push young people to be attracted to environments that propagate false promises that their ideas will be heard, which may lead to extremism and radicalism. These phenomena are not new; nevertheless, in recent years, their implication for young people has been highlighted and confronted more than before. At the EU level, the work done with young people has been focusing on identifying and addressing the root causes of extremism. Furthermore, the need to ‘strengthen young people's resilience, prevent marginalisation, promote equality, emphasise alternatives and reinforce the community in which they live’ have been identified.⁴⁰ Among the specific initiatives undertaken by the European Commission is the creation of the Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN)⁴¹ – a network of networks with a collaborative approach, which involves various stakeholders across Europe that are engaged in the prevention of radicalisation that leads to violent extremism. The network suggests some strategies and areas of intervention, among which education and training addresses both the practitioners that deal with people at risk of radicalisation and young people. Additionally, the Council of Europe, through its co-management system, promoted the No Hate Speech Movement in 2010 to prevent violent extremism and all other forms of hatred that lead to hate speech and hate crime. The Youth Sector expanded the pan-European campaign, following which the CoE adopted it as a whole. Policy development, recommendations and plan of action have been designed thanks to this initiative shaped by

³⁹ Eutostat-Statistic Explained. “Unemploymentstatistics” https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics#Youth_unemployment

⁴⁰ CE extremism and radicalization leading to violence. <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/extremism-and-radicalisation-leading-to-violence>

⁴¹ Radicalisation Awareness Network. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network_en

the Youth Sector. National committees are present in each of the CoE member states and cross-continent cooperation on the matter has already started.⁴²

The partnership between the CoE and the European Commission in terms of youth policies has led to the research and illustration of initiatives through which the violent radicalisation of young people can be addressed and prevented to examine how to strengthen the role of different actors in this process (2017). The partnership resulted in the publication ‘Youth work against radicalisation’,⁴³ which focuses on the role of youth work in preventing this phenomenon in the early stages and in offering positive spaces for socialisation, learning and development among young people. According to the study, youth work can empower young people to have a higher degree of autonomy, self-determination and control over their lives. They are enabled to represent their interests responsibly and support other young people to deal with the challenges they face. Also, youth work strengthens the resilience of the youth to violence and helps them recognise the harm that violence can cause to them and their communities.

Despite the presence of all these policies and programmes in the youth field that address unemployment, marginalisation and radicalisation, the results of the survey show that the organisations that work at the grassroots-level believe there is a lack of knowledge and awareness in terms of radicalisation prevention

(44%), a lack of effective policies in the area of youth unemployment (78%) and a lack of evaluation on the real implementation of the policies concerned with fighting marginalization (67%) (Table 10).

⁴² The Council of Europe is promoting the NHSM to the Commonwealth, the USA, and some of the Euromed countries.

⁴³ Youth work against violent radicalisation. Theory, concepts and primary prevention in practice (2018) <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47261953/YW-against-radicalisation-web.pdf/90a7569d-182d-0b0c-ce5d-9a0fe111ec91>

The future EU youth policies: The EU youth strategy 2019–2027 and its instruments

On analysing the recent context of the strategy that ended in 2018 and the results of the EU policy in the field of youth,⁴⁴ the member states sought to find a more sustainable solution to fight youth unemployment, strengthen social inclusion and prevent violent radicalisation.

These three issues have been considered in the EU Youth Strategy,⁴⁵ which is the current framework for youth policy cooperation at the EU level. The strategy covers the period 2019–2027 and is based on the findings of the reports from the previous period (2010–2018) as well as the opinions expressed by young people in Europe through a structured dialogue process delivered between 2017 and 2018.⁴⁶

The EU Youth Strategy (2019–2027) focuses on three aspects – *engage*, *connect* and *empower*.

- The EU Youth Strategy fosters the participation of youth in democratic life (*engage*);

⁴⁴ 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-18) (2015) [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52015XG1215\(01\)&from=GA](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52015XG1215(01)&from=GA)

⁴⁵ 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 (2018) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2018:456:FULL&from=EN>

⁴⁶ In particular, from the 6th cycle of the Structured Dialogue under the title ‘Youth in Europe: What’s next?’ decision-makers, young people and researchers recognized and collected topics relevant for young people in 11 areas.

- It promotes voluntary engagement, mobility in learning, solidarity and intercultural learning (*connect*);
- It supports youth empowerment through the quality of youth work, along with its innovation and recognition (*empower*).

The strategy intends to reach out to all young people and make EU programmes more inclusive for those with fewer opportunities. The strategy also considers the results of the EU Youth Dialogue, which led to the identification of 11 European Youth Goals. These objectives were achieved through specific youth programmes, such as Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps. The strategy is based on adequate, focused and joint implementation across sectors by mobilising several EU programmes and funds and encouraging cross-sectoral co-operation at all levels. The EU Youth Strategy includes interactive learning activities among member states, sharing of information at the national level, the EU Youth Dialogue and other forms of participation of young people in policymaking, the EU Youth Strategy Platform and evidence-based tools. The EU Youth Coordinator is the European Commission's contact and visible reference point for young people. For additional information on the instruments of the strategy, please consult 'Annex I – EU Youth Strategy Instruments'.

Through triennial work plans, the strategy aims to address the challenges that young people face in the EU countries to provide a natural and coherent response to them by complementing the efforts and initiatives by the member states in this regard.

According to the strategy, the EU policies that deal with the youth should focus on the following objectives:

- Enabling young people to be architects of their own lives, support their personal development and growth to autonomy, build their resilience and be equipped with life skills to cope with a changing world;
- Encouraging and providing young people with the necessary resources

to become active citizens and agents of solidarity and positive change by being inspired by EU values and European identity;

- Improving policy decisions about their impact on young people across all sectors, notably employment, education, health and social inclusion;
- Contributing to the eradication of poverty among youth and all forms of discrimination and promote social inclusion of young people.

Quality employment for all and inclusive society are two of the 11 youth goals that were identified by young people and decision makers through the structured dialogue and which became a part of the EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027.

The following targets have been set to achieve the goal of providing **quality employment for all**:

- Create quality jobs that guarantee fair working conditions, working rights and the right to a living wage for all young people;
- Safeguard social protection and healthcare for all young workers;
- Guarantee appropriate treatment and equal opportunities for all young people to end discrimination in the labour market;
- Ensure the provision of equal opportunities for all young people to develop the necessary skills and gain practical experience to smoothen the transition from education to the labour market;
- Guarantee the recognition and validation of competencies acquired through internships, apprenticeships and other forms of work-based learning, as well as volunteering and non-formal education;
- Ensure involvement of young people and youth organisations as equal partners in the development, implementation, monitoring and

- evaluation of employment policies at all levels; Ensure equal access to quality information and adequate support mechanisms to prepare young people for the changing labour market and the future of work.

The following targets have been identified to achieve the goal related to the creation of an inclusive society:

- Provide legal protection and enforce international legal instruments to fight against all kinds of discrimination and hate speech and recognise that young people are subjected to multiple forms of discrimination.
- Strengthen the outreach of information to marginalised young people to ensure that they are aware of the spaces, opportunities and experiences available to them.
- Ensure that all the marginalised young people have equal access to formal and non-formal learning environments and address all the dimensions of inclusion.
- Strengthen the capacities of educators to work with marginalised young people.
- Provide more spaces, opportunities, resources and programmes to foster dialogue and social cohesion and combat discrimination and segregation.
- Strengthen social support by implementing the right to a living wage, fair work condition and universal access to quality health care as well as ensuring specific measures for marginalised young people.
- Ensure that marginalised young people participate in all the decision-making processes and are key players, particularly in procedures concerning their rights, well-being and interests.

As mentioned at the beginning, the implementation of the strategy is based on three main areas of intervention, which are identified through three keywords – *engage*, *connect* and *empower*.

Engage means enhancing young people's and youth organisations' social and political participation at all levels. In particular, the strategy recognises the importance of actively involving the youth in the policy-making decisions that affect their lives. It also stresses the importance for young people to express their

opinion, to be represented and to be involved in decision-making at all levels. Support for participation should also be provided through the creation of opportunities for 'learning to participate', raising interest in participatory actions and helping young people to be ready for it. Engagement should also take into consideration the use of innovative forms of participation, such as digital tools.

Connect implies the creation of links based on solidarity that can support the future development of the EU. In this sense, young people and youth workers are essential resources. Their potential can be enhanced through more opportunities for mobility, exchange, cooperation, and cultural and social activities at the European level. Measures to facilitate equal participation in these activities should be implemented by considering the obstacles that affect young people with fewer opportunities.

According to the strategy, the connection refers to EU-funding opportunities in two main ways:

- Favouring synergies between the EU funding instruments and the national, regional and local funding schemes;
- Engaging young people and youth organisations in all the phases – the design, implementation and evaluation of relevant EU funding programmes.

Empowerment specifies the role of youth work in empowering young people and promoting social inclusion. The Council of the EU recognises the crucial benefits of youth work to young people ‘in their transition to adulthood, providing a safe environment for them to gain self-confidence and learn in a non- formal way’. Its benefits also consist of equipping ‘youth with key personal, professional and entrepreneurial competencies and skills’ and preventing exclusion by building a bridge to education, training or work.⁴⁷

In this regard, quality, innovation and recognition of youth work, should be fostered through a **European Youth Work Agenda**. The qualitative improvement of youth work should be favoured through ‘policy development in the field, training for youth workers, the establishment of legal frameworks and sufficient allocation of resources’,⁴⁸ and its activities should be supported at all levels of society.

The role of youth organisations in facilitating the development of competences and social inclusion through youth work should be recognised. Also, the empowerment of youth should concern the provision of information and guidance for their development.

The strategy illustrated is quite demanding and, at the same time, provides much guidance to the member states. However, it is essential to understand, as history teaches us, that we cannot escape the tensions inherent to each social practice. Youth work must support young people in often tricky transitional periods, and at the same time, youth work has the power to

⁴⁷ 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 (2018) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:C:2018:456:FULL&from=EN>

⁴⁸ Resolution on the European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (2018) <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14944-2018-INIT/en/pdf>

give young people a forum to negotiate power relations, to get to know and understand each other and to encourage interest in others. Youth work is not merely a transit zone to adapt young people to public expectations nor is it an instrument for young people to claim *private rights*.

History also teaches us that these tensions pose a severe risk, which could lead to a two-track policy where the relatively privileged young people enjoy the forum function of youth work and adapt society according to their needs, while the disadvantaged young people are targeted in transit youth work and adapt themselves to the needs of society. This counterproductive two-track policy deals with the tensions by separating them from each other. The effect is that youth work (as the educational system all too often does) reproduces or even reinforces social inequalities amongst young people.

Therefore, diversity in youth work practices and methods is valued in most countries, although new claims on accountability and efficiency could create the risk of formalising the informal, which is a chance that was recognised in the recently adopted EU Youth Work resolution, but also in the Agenda 2020 of the CoE.

The Study: Diaconal youth work in Europe in relation to EU youth policies

2

The survey

According to the European Commission, youth work encompasses a broad range of activities (e.g., social, cultural, educational, sports-related and political), which are carried out with, by and for young people through non-formal and informal learning. Its value is recognised in the ‘council conclusions on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people (2013/C 168/03)’ and is highlighted in a study titled ‘Working with young people: The value of youth work in the European Union’, which was released in 2014. Youth work helps young people to reach their fullest potential. It encourages personal development, autonomy, initiative and participation in society.

Specifically, in this survey, Eurodiaconia investigates if and how member organisations include youth workers in their activities to gain further insight into the work carried out by them. Eurodiaconia also keeps in mind the critical role that the EU has in recognising youth work, which fosters active citizenship and participation of young people in diverse and tolerant societies and prevents marginalisation and radicalisation that could potentially result in violent behaviour.

The research conducted by Eurodiaconia focuses on the diaconal youth work in Europe and the direct impact of the youth policies of the EU on youth unemployment, marginalisation, social exclusion and radicalisation prevention through social inclusion. The survey contains the following three sections:

- 1. General information about the work of the Eurodiaconia member organisations,
- 2. Collection of best practices from the field,
- 3. Youth work policies at the national and EU level.

The survey included a mix of open and multiple-choice questions, and the average time for completion was roughly 20 minutes.

Nine organisations from eight countries took part in the survey – Armenia, Italy, Germany, Greece, Finland, Kosovo, Sweden and Ukraine.

Results of the online survey

Diaconal organisations

The organisations that took part in the survey are as follows:

- The **World Council of Churches Armenia Inter-Church Charitable Round Table Foundation** works in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh to help the Armenian society face and overcome socio-economic hardships and to restore hope by promoting Christian values. They work individually with the youth by providing training, promoting educational projects or activities, conducting projects or campaigns to raise awareness and encouraging empowerment and capacity building. Besides this, they provide help in terms of employment and entrepreneurship as well as in social inclusion matters, such as fighting marginalisation and promoting equality among young people aged 15 to 35 years who represent different backgrounds of society.

- The **Commissione Sinodale per la Diaconia** is a non-profit ecclesiastical body which collects, links and coordinates social activities and manages assistance and reception facilities for the Waldensian Church in Italy. They implement a wide variety of activities for young people from education and volunteering to leisure and empowerment. Their programmes include services for young people aged 15–30 years but mostly paying attention to the youth from rural areas. Their youth work activities cover the main topics addressed and include social inclusion, fighting against marginalisation, prevention of violent radicalisation, participation in civil society, promotion of volunteering activities and encouraging youth mobility.
- The **Diakonie Düsseldorf**, Germany, supports disadvantaged people of all ages from abandoned children to the elderly who require care. It is an organisation within the protestant church which focuses its efforts in over 180 charitable facilities for people all over Dusseldorf. Their work with young people of 15–25 years of age provides empowering and capacity-building services, delivery of recreational activities, such as summer and recreational camps, in addition to providing information and education to young people. The scope of their work addresses young women and girls, young migrants or members of ethnic minorities, young people with fewer socio-economic opportunities and young people with physical or mental disabilities.
- The **Evangelical Church of Greece (ECG)** is a united church of Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist and Independent Brethren denominations. In 2014, it was the first Protestant church to receive legal recognition. The youth work activities focus on young people aged 15 to 35 years who are from diverse backgrounds. They offer a variety of activities and development opportunities from capacity building and education to leisure and volunteering. Their work focuses on topics such as social inclusion and fighting marginalisation, health

and wellbeing, volunteering, youth policy, youth mobility, culture, equality, environment and sport.

- **Helsinki Deaconess Foundation**, Finland, is a non-profit organisation that boldly works for human dignity and helps people at the risk of social exclusion. The foundation also runs the Community Action Based Learning for Empowerment (CABLE) to empower people and build resilient communities. The youth work in their context focuses explicitly on NEET young people from 15 to 30 years of age. They offer a wide range of activities and services in education, empowerment and youth participation. Some of the topics they tackle are employment, fight against marginalisation, prevention of violent radicalisation through social inclusion, health and culture.
- After the last war in Kosovo, thanks to the help of organisations such as Diakonia from Germany, **Diakonie Kosovo** established a training centre for the unemployed youth in Mitrovica, Diakonie Training Center (DTC). The work done by Diakonie Kosova involves young people from all kinds of backgrounds who are 15 to 35 years old. They run a variety of activities and projects using different educational methodologies. They offer tutoring services to recreational activities, including sports, summer camps and volunteering activities that lead to empowerment. Their work covers a diverse spectrum, including employment, social inclusion, fight against marginalisation, participation in civil society, prevention of violent radicalisation through social inclusion and equality.
- **Hela Människan** is a non-profit organisation based in Sweden and was founded in the Christian faith in 1920 by representatives from different religious denominations and the Swedish Missionary Union. They are active in tackling alcohol and drug addiction and trafficking. They address homelessness and manage food and clothing banks. With regard to the youth, they offer their services to young people from

15 to 35 years of age and individually work with girls who were victims of trafficking. The main activities they have developed for young people are empowering and capacity building projects, recreational activities, supporting dialogue between young people and policymakers on social inclusion matters, fighting marginalisation and promoting healthy lifestyles.

- **Church of Sweden**, Diocese of Västerås, is part of the Lutheran Church of Sweden. The church has strong links to schools and hospitals, and their parish houses are open to many community groups and activities during the week, for example, drop-in activities for children and parents, study groups, morning groups and youth café. They work with young people from 15 to 30 years of age with specific attention to young migrants or members of ethnic minorities and young people with physical or mental disabilities. They offer services for young people with the intention of preventing violent radicalisation through social inclusion, which covers volunteering events, culture, equality and Christian faith as well as interreligious dialogue.
- Two young Christian volunteers founded the **Living Hope NGO** in 1999 in Ukraine. After working for some years with street kids in Kyiv, they searched for methods and approaches to prevent children from dropping out of school and consequently being disengaged from community life. Today, it works with young people of 15 to 30 years of age and focus on young women/girls, young people with fewer socio-economic opportunities and young people from rural areas. They offer a wide variety of activities from education to recreational on defined critical topics concerning the youth, such as participation, prevention of violent radicalisation through social inclusion, voluntary activities, youth mobility and equality.

Diaconal organisations and their work in the youth field

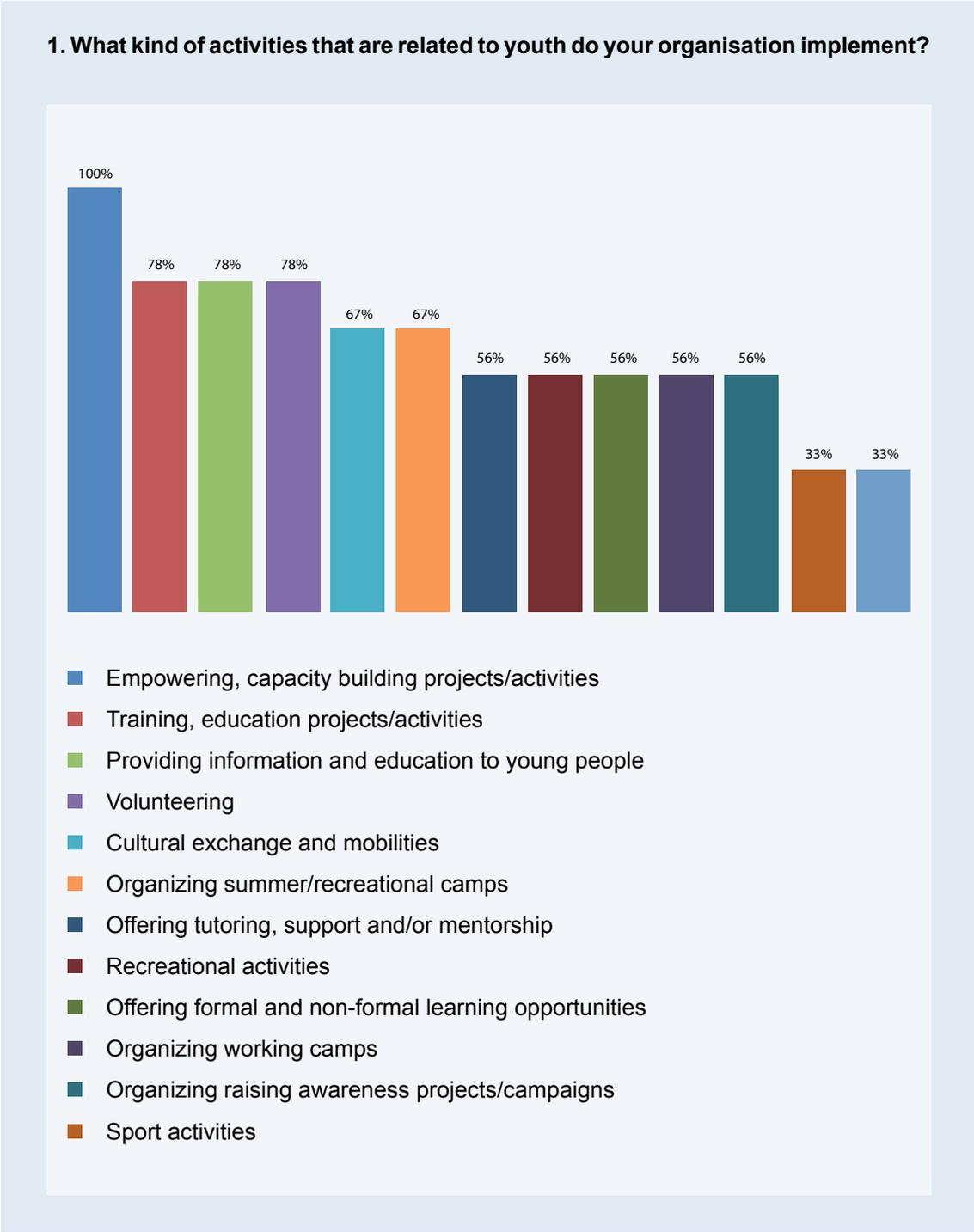
What kind of activities that are related to youth do your organisation implement?

All the respondents of the survey (100%) answered that their organisations implement **empowering and capacity-building projects/activities**, which means that this is a core area of their work with young people. Following a slightly lower trend, 78% of the respondents deliver **training and education**, and the same amount of organisations **provide information and education to young people** or **volunteering** opportunities. At this stage, we can point out that the learning and educational-based activities carried out by the member organisation that lead to **information and empowerment** match the results of similar surveys⁴⁹ conducted at the EU level. The local European communities and the local organisations all over the continent find these topics to be extremely important, as seen in studies⁵⁰ that are carried out transversely by different bodies in different geographical areas with people coming from diverse backgrounds. The data showed that only 33% of the organisations conducted activities to support dialogue between young people and policy makers, which is, nowadays, one of the most common endeavours of the organisations that work with and for young people. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to develop new strategies and policies to foster youth participation in the decision-making processes.

⁴⁹ Situation of young people in the European Union- Commission staff working document <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b6985c0c-743f-11e8-9483-01aa75ed71a1>

⁵⁰ Flash Eurobarometer 455 – Report (2017) <https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinionmobile/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/82294;jsessionid=4EA0D3853BD6A5E4988D3FA6C8E75601.cfusion06901?CFD=8558876&CFTOKEN=ac355bd3e4e4d1b5-FB739303-0A15-67FB-0BFF3A965088484D>

Under the category ‘Others’, the organisations specifically added one theme – ‘Young girls victims of trafficking’.

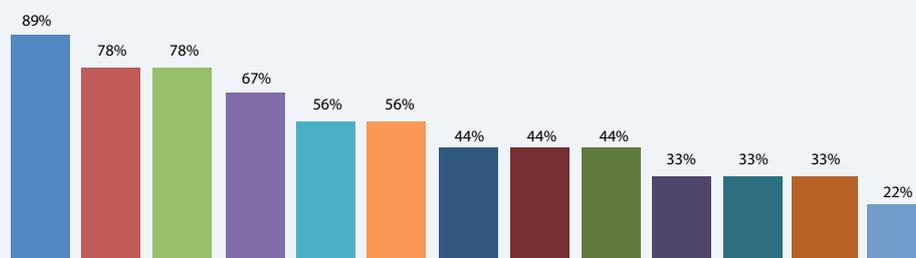


Which of the following topics do your youth programs deal with?

The main topic addressed in the programmes conducted by the respondent organisations is **social inclusion/fighting marginalisation** at 89%, which is followed by **voluntary activities** and **equality** at 78% each. 56% of them work on **youth mobility** while 44% work on **youth policy** and one-third of them (33%) mentioned **international youth camp**.

Besides these, **Christian faith** and **interreligious dialogue** were the two topics that were added explicitly by the organisations under the section 'Other'.

2. Which of the following topics do your youth programs deal with?



- Social inclusion/fighting marginalisation
- Equality
- Voluntary activities
- Preventing violent radicalisation through social inclusion
- Youth Mobility
- Culture
- Health and wellness
- Participation in civil society
- Youth Policy
- Environment
- Employment and entrepreneurship
- Youth International Cooperation
- Sport

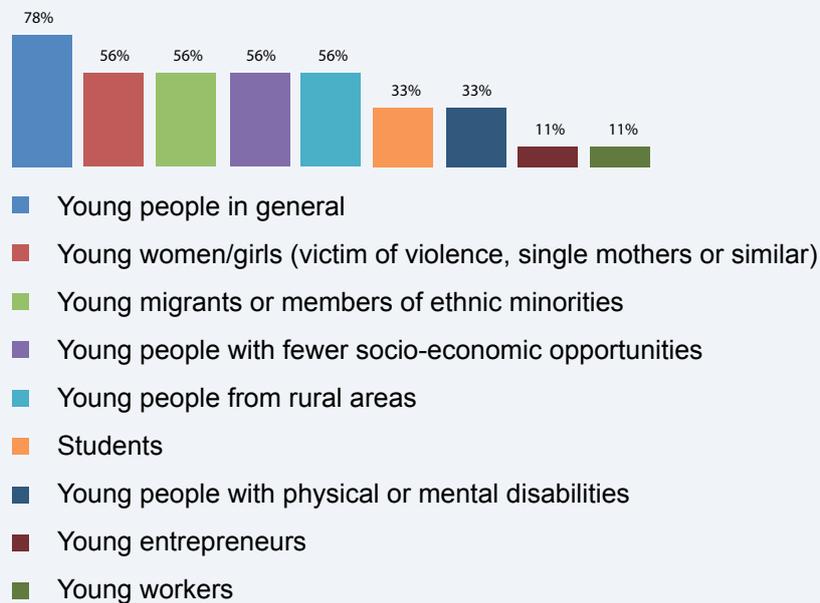
Target group

The main target group for the activities carried out by the respondent organisations is **young people in general** at the rate of 78%. This means that organisations welcome young people from all backgrounds of life; however, some of them work with a specific group and respond to the need that arises from their context.

Young women and girls, young migrants and members of ethnic minorities, young people with fewer socio-economic opportunities and young people from rural areas are focused on at a rate of 56% each. Only a few organisations work with **students, young entrepreneurs and young workers**.

When explored further, the aims of the activities and programmes mentioned focus on helping and supporting young people are at a disadvantage; for example, refugees from Syria and Iraq. The target groups that were explicitly added by the organisations under the section “Other” were ‘boys’ and ‘NEET’.

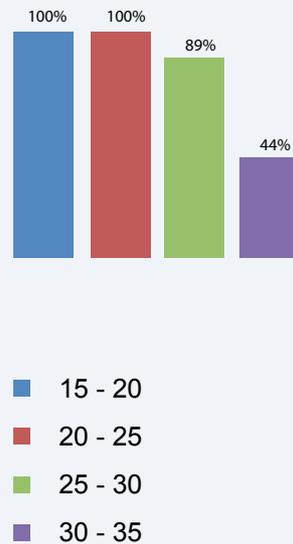
3. Target group



What age groups of young people do you work with?

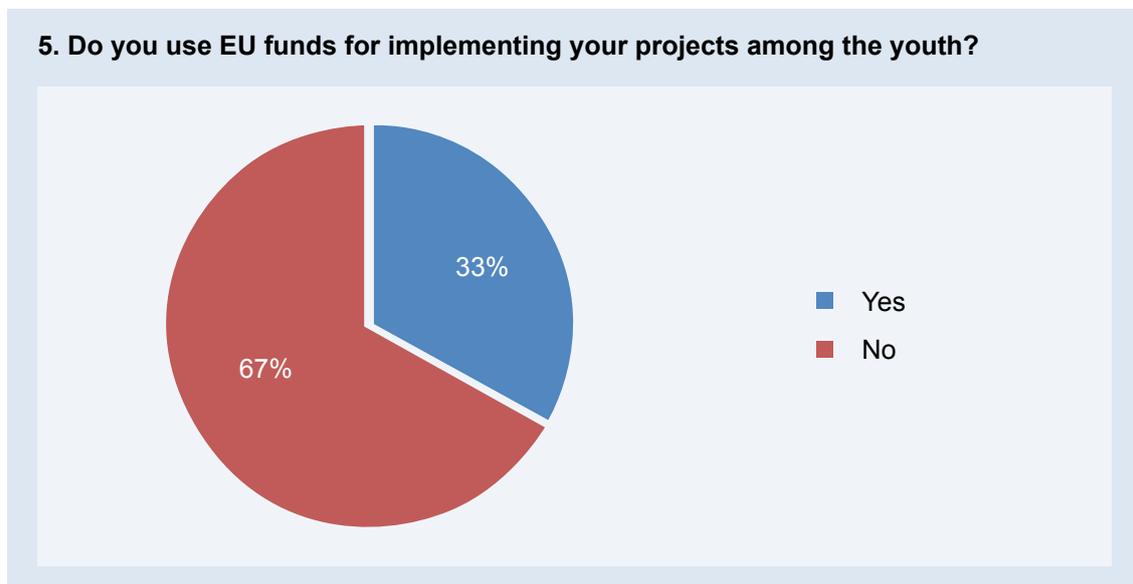
All the respondent organisations work with people from 15 to 25 years of age. A major portion (89%) of them work with people from 25 to 30 years of age, and 44% reach out to young people from 30 to 35 years of age.

4. What age groups of young people do you work with?



Do you use EU funds for implementing your projects among the youth?

Only 33% of the organisations that took part in the survey use the available EU funds to implement projects concerning the youth. The remaining (67%) do not use EU funds. To explain this discrepancy, we need to highlight two variables: First, there are organisations based in countries where the EU funds are not directly available (i.e., Ukraine and Kosovo); second, organisations often are not aware of suitable EU programmes or do not have the competences to apply for those funds. The lack of capability is real most of the time if the organisation's work is community-based at the local level, and they specialise in providing social and educational services. Often, the resources are insufficient to write funding applications because the funds are focused on the imminent need of the local community. Among the comments highlighted in this question, the organisations from EU countries underline how complicated it is for them to apply for those funds and their need for more support in this area. Furthermore, the answer given by the organisations in part 3 of this survey, in which they ask for more capacity-building programs from EU institutions, confirms the challenges they face in this regard.



Knowledge on youth policy at the EU level and the national level

Non-formal education:

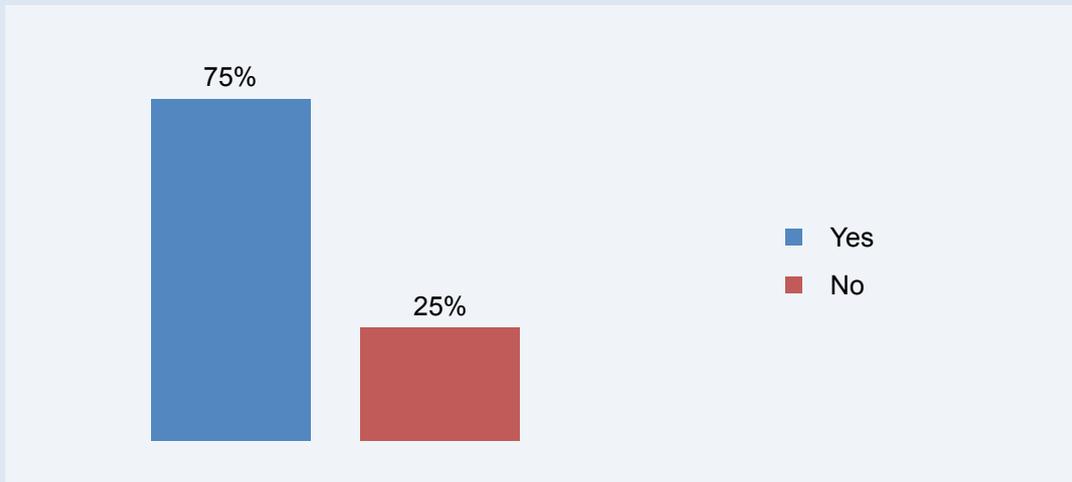
In your country, is non-formal education used in informal education contexts?

In your country, is non-formal education recognised by any law or official system?

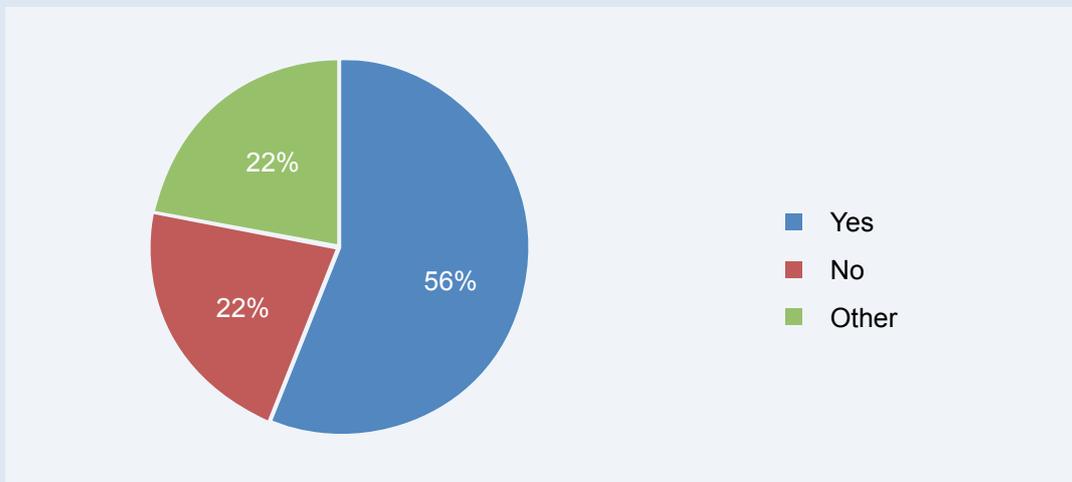
Non-formal education is a methodology used in formal education contexts (Table-6), as confirmed by 75% of the organisations, while 56% of them declared that non-formal education is recognised by law or other institutions (Table-7). However, when they were asked to indicate the means of recognition, the certification for the competences acquired during informal and non-formal learning processes, or if the competences gained in non-formal methods are taken into consideration for the labour market, the answers were not so precise. The organisations are not aware of the laws⁵¹ and regulations in place, but they could mention the certificates gained through the Erasmus+ programme. The lack of knowledge of national recognition schemes confirms the fact that, even if they know what non-formal education is and they use the approach in their work, there is still a significant confusion when it comes to the recognition of non-formal learning outcomes.

⁵¹ Only two organisations indicated laws for recognition of non formal education: Kosovo <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2015/06/ligji-per-arsimin-dhe-aftesimin-per-te-rritur-ne-republiken-e-kosoves-2013-eng.pdf> and Armenia <http://www.anqa.am/en/about-us/legal-field/laws/law-of-the-republic-of-armenia-on-education/>

6. Is non-formal education used in formal education contexts?



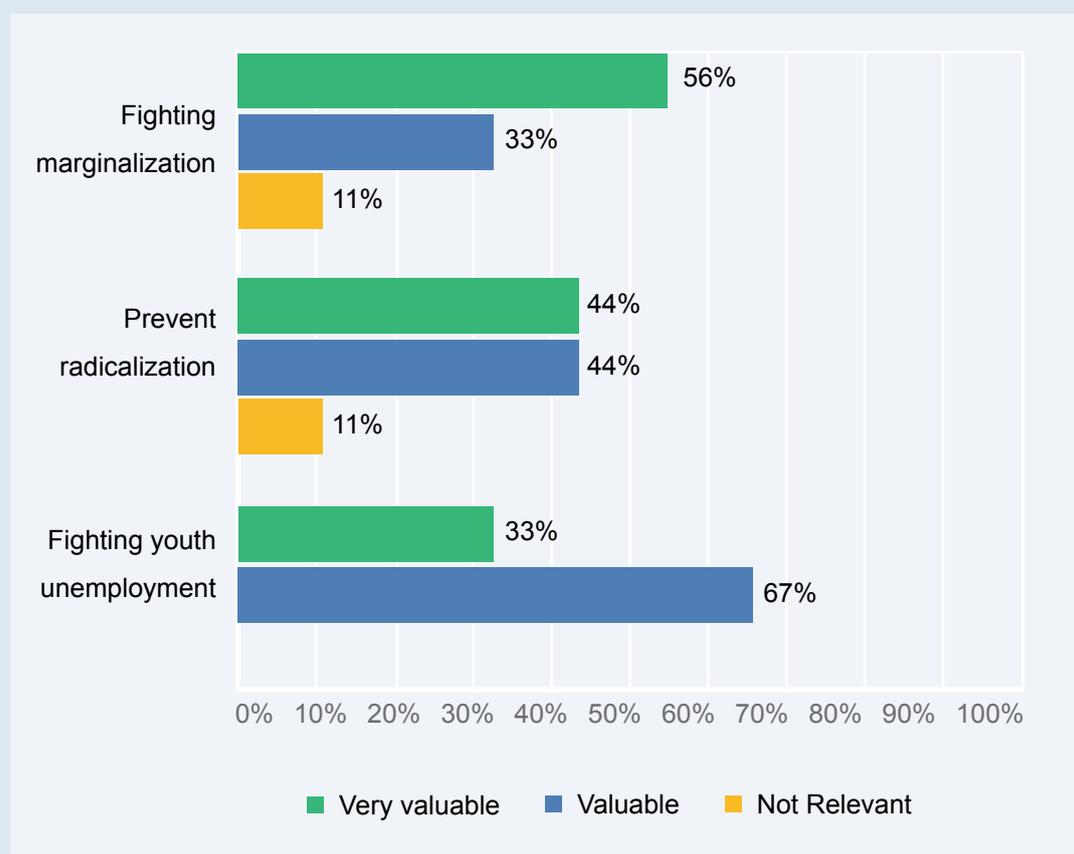
7. Is non-formal education recognised by any law or official system?



In your experience, how valuable are non-formal methodologies to fight marginalisation, to prevent radicalisation and to fight youth unemployment?

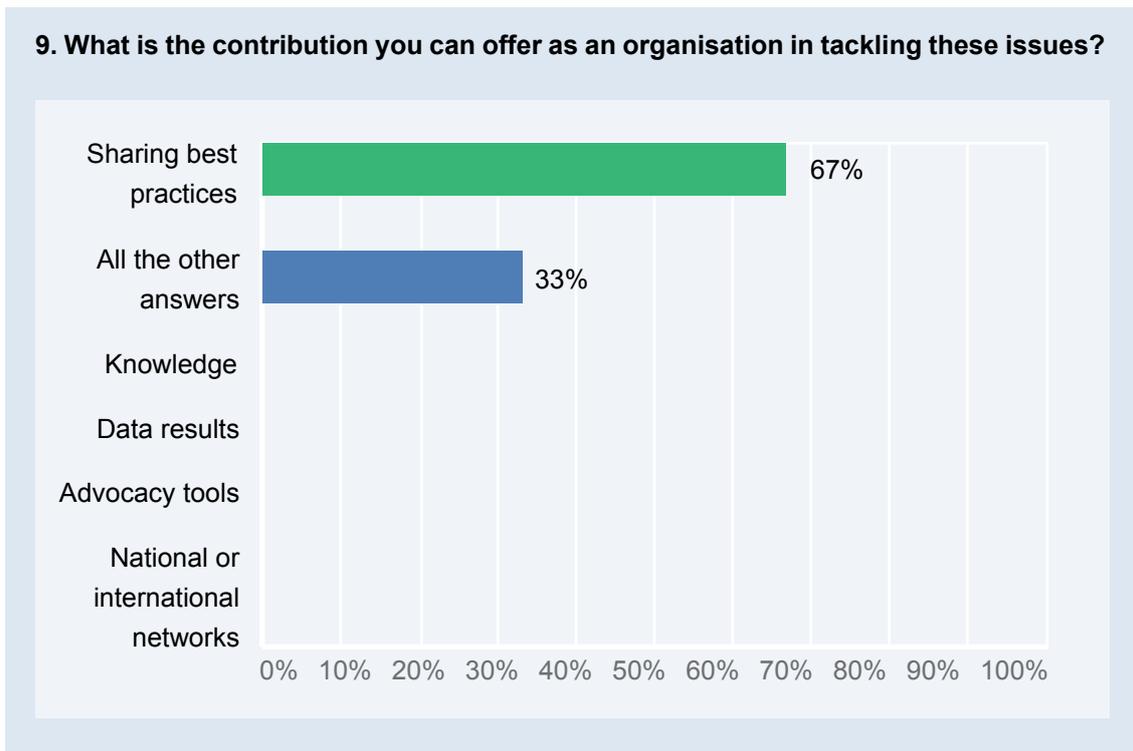
For 56% of the organisations, non-formal methods were essential in fighting marginalisation. For 67% of them, non-formal methodologies helped combat youth unemployment, and in terms of the prevention of radicalisation, 44% of the organisations considered non-formal methodologies to be very valuable to tackle the issue.

8. How valuable are non-formal methodologies to fight marginalisation, to prevent radicalisation and to fight youth unemployment?



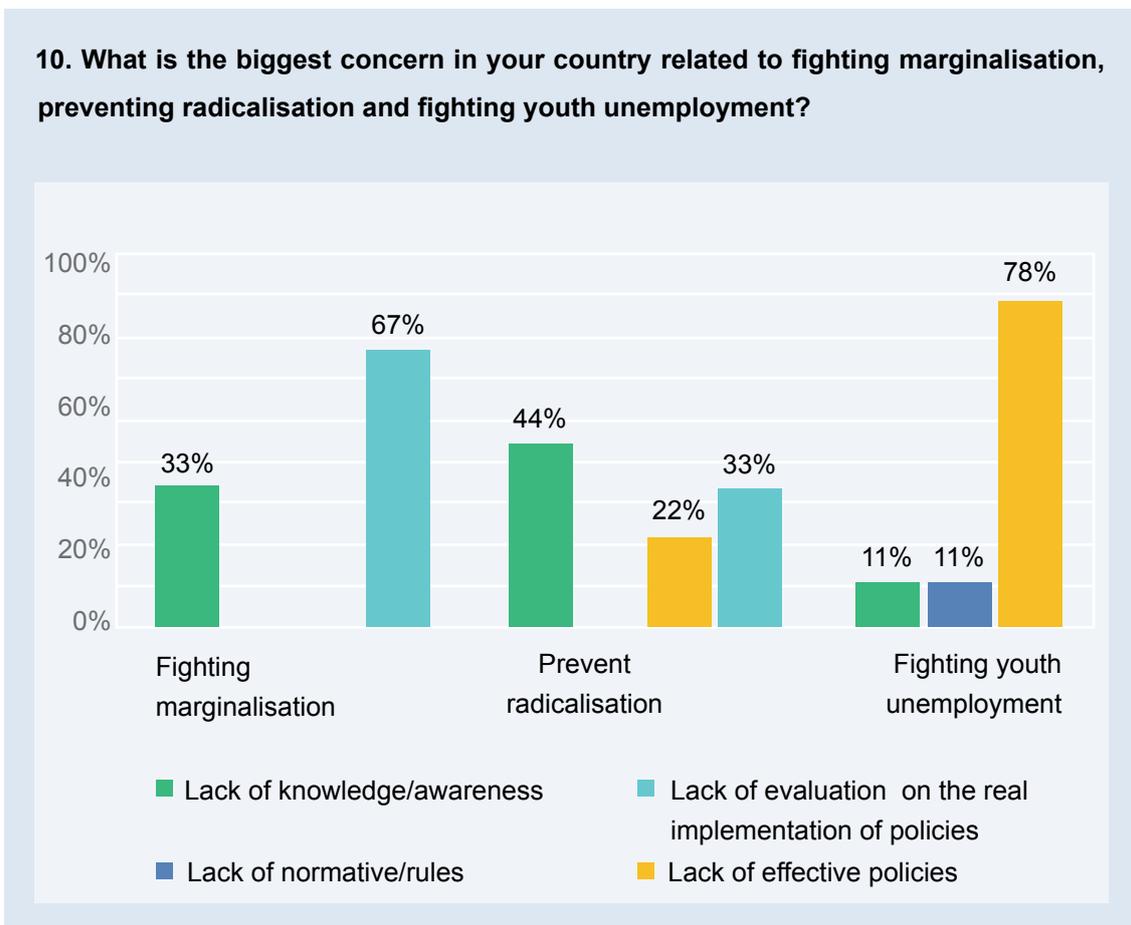
What is the contribution you can offer as an organisation in tackling these issues?

While considering the contributions that organisations offered to tackle marginalisation, youth unemployment and prevent radicalisation, a majority of them (67%) affirmed that they contributed by sharing their best practices. Sharing the practice is highly valuable because of replicability, and this is best represented in the next section of the study. Other organisations can replicate the good practices, projects and activities performed by the organisations. This is a beneficial means to implement successful and previously tested activities which possibly can be readapted to different contexts. The remaining 33% of the respondents stated that they could give their contribution through all the other instruments proposed (supporting knowledge, providing data results, sharing advocacy tools, and belonging to a national and international network).



What is the biggest concern in your country related to fighting marginalisation, preventing radicalisation and fighting youth unemployment?

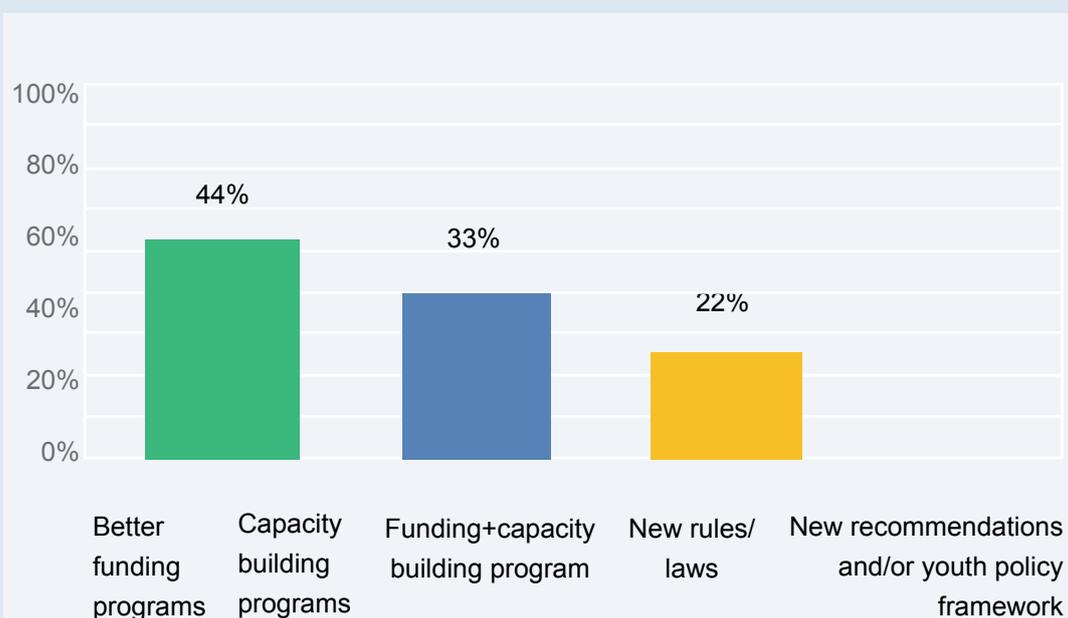
For 67% of the organisations, the biggest concern when attempting to fight marginalisation was the lack of evaluation when policies were implemented. In the same area, the remaining 33% of the organisations highlighted the lack of knowledge/awareness with regard to marginalisation, which affects the internal situation. This last aspect was also the major concern indicated by 44% of the organisations when referring to the prevention of radicalisation. Regarding youth unemployment, 78% of the organisations agreed that the lack of effective policies was the biggest concern.



What kind of support would you need from the European Institutions to tackle these challenges?

The respondent organisations believed that the European Institutions should support them in two main ways: first, by improving the funding programs (44%) and providing new capacity-building programs (33%). In terms of funding programmes, as indicated in table 5, only 33% of the respondents used the available EU funds for projects concerning the youth. To further explore this aspect, the data shown in table 11, indicates that many organisations perceived funding programmes as difficult to access. The remaining 22% of the organisations agreed with both the answers mentioned above. Indeed, they recognised that the support they needed from the European Institutions should be a combination of funding programmes and proposals that build the capacity of civil society organisations.

11. What is the contribution you can offer as an organisation in tackling these issues?



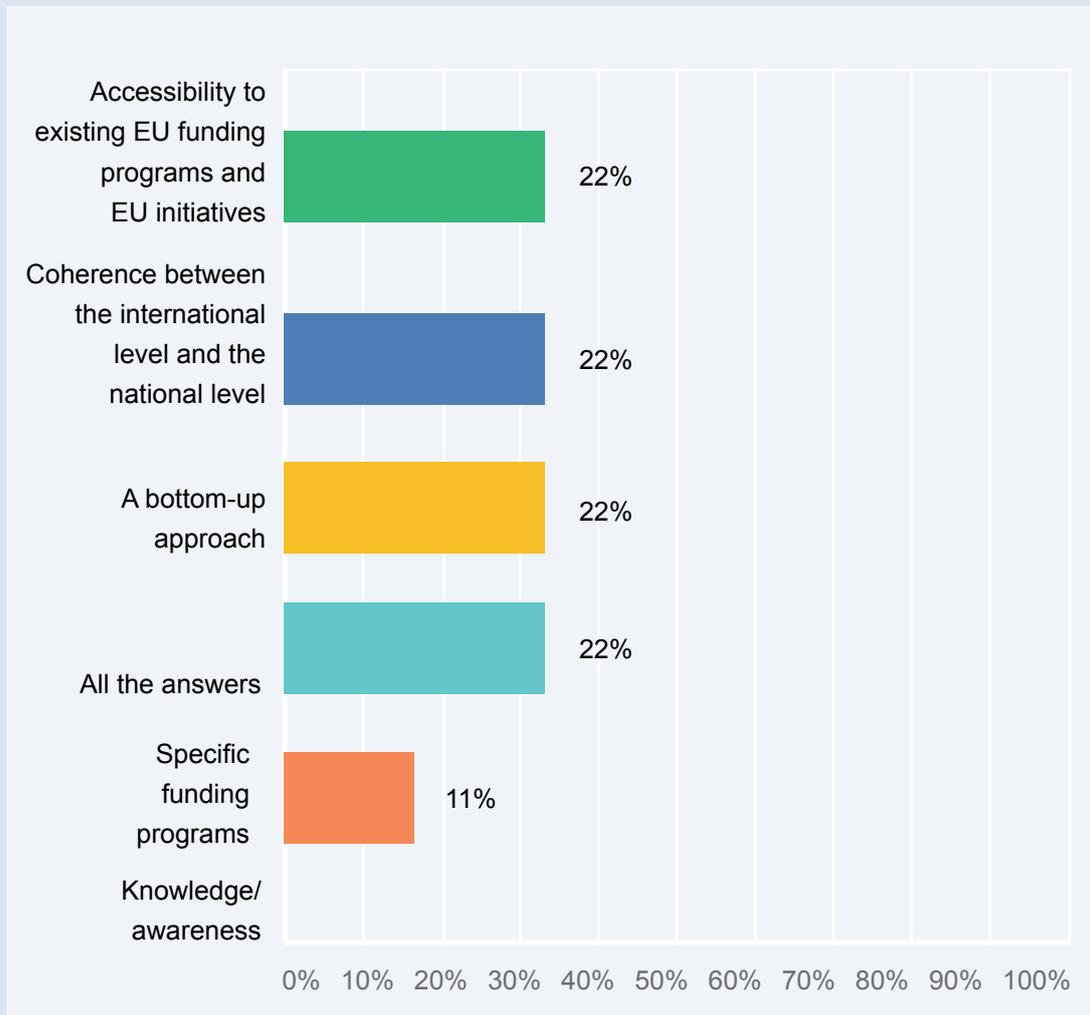
What is missing in Europe in the field of youth policies regarding the challenges mentioned above?

22% of the organisations affirmed that the accessibility to programmes and initiatives concerning youth policies in Europe is still lacking, even though funding is available in the three areas identified by the study (marginalisation, youth unemployment and prevention of radicalisation). However, the lack of accessibility could lead to two main consequences: it could reduce the potential impact that funding programmes such as Erasmus+ have on designing better youth policies, which is a potential that was recognised by 67% of the organisations, as indicated in table 13. Secondly, it could affect the implementation of projects concerning the youth that, according to the organisations (see table 16) contribute to, above all, tackling youth marginalisation and preventing radicalisation.

For 22% of the organisations, there was also a lack of coherence between the international level and the national level in each country, which also resulted in a gap between the countries. Another 22% of the respondent organisations highlighted the need for a bottom-up approach in terms of the youth policy in Europe.

Among the organisations that chose “all the answer” as the answer to this question, we can see a combination of the factors mentioned above. To those factors, the organisations added the monitoring of the activities implemented through the funded programs in the field.

12. What is missing in Europe in the field of youth policies regarding the challenges mentioned above?

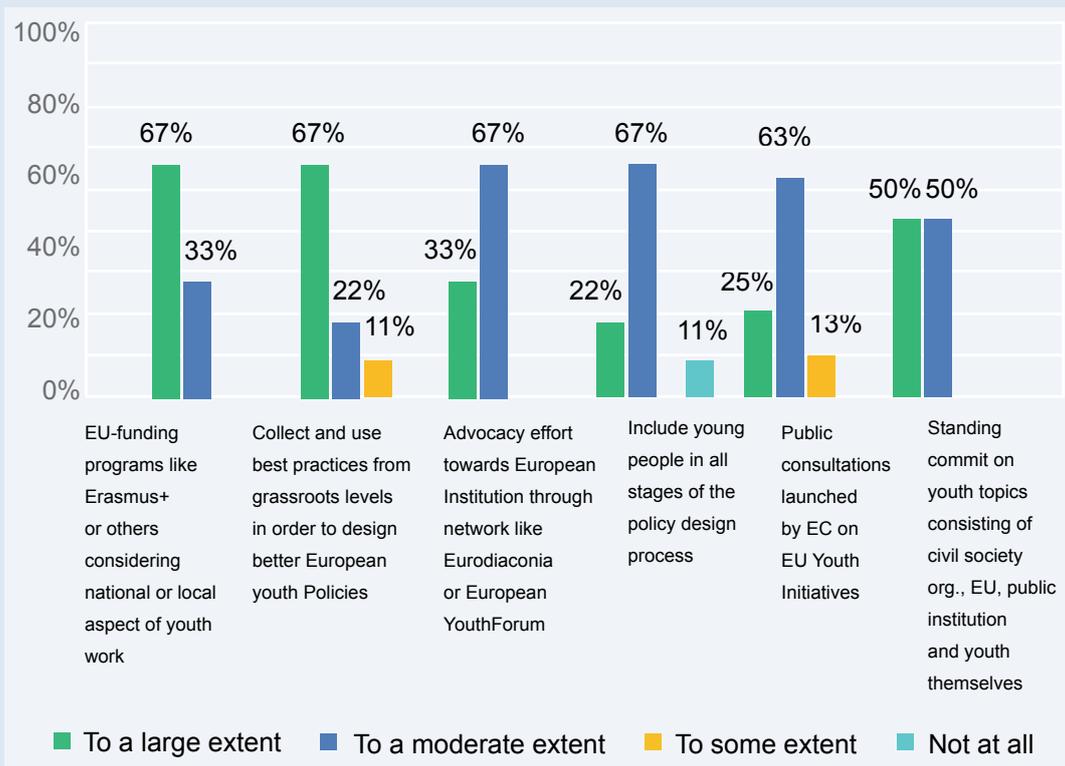


How would you evaluate the usefulness of the following instruments employed by youth work organisations and European policymakers to design better youth policies, while focusing especially on marginalisation, radicalisation and unemployment?

Among the existing instruments employed to design better youth policies, 67% of the respondent organisations found EU-funding programmes

such as Erasmus+ and the collection of best practices from grassroots organisations to be useful to a large extent. Another 67% found the advocacy effort towards the European Institutions through networks and the inclusion of young people in all the stages of the policy design process to be helpful to a moderate extent. Public consultations that were launched by the European Commission on European youth initiatives were considered to be very useful by 25% of the respondents and moderately useful by 63% of them. 50% of the organisations considered standing committees on specific youth topics involving civil society organisations, public authorities, the European Commission and young people to be extensively useful instruments for designing youth policy, while the other 50% thought they were valuable instruments to a moderate degree.

13. how would you evaluate the usefulness of the following instruments employed by youth work organisations and European policymakers to design better youth policies, while focusing especially on marginalisation, radicalisation and unemployment?



Good practices concerning the youth

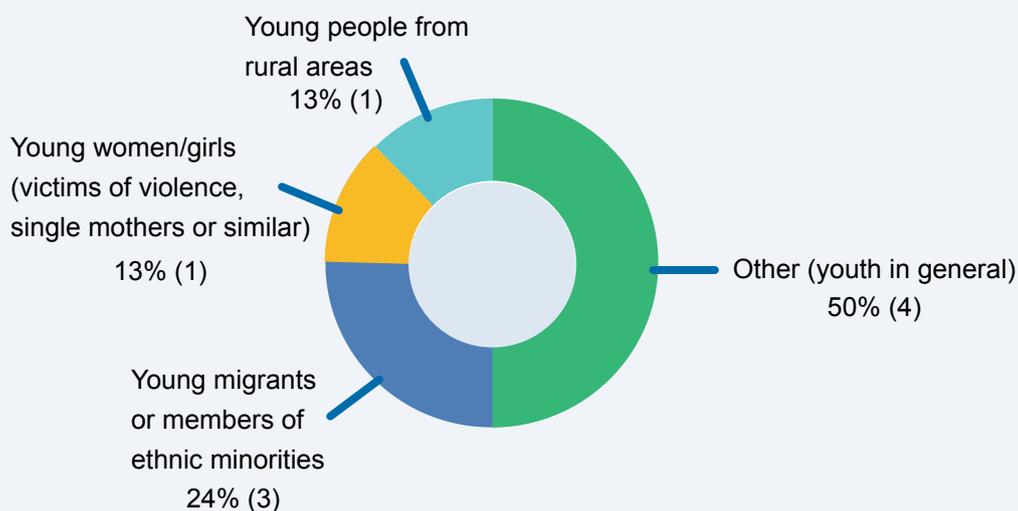
The survey focused its attention on the projects carried out by the respondent organisations to evaluate their replicability, transferability and the impact on their reality.

Nine projects were collected in total – one project from each organisation participating in the survey.

Target group involved in the projects

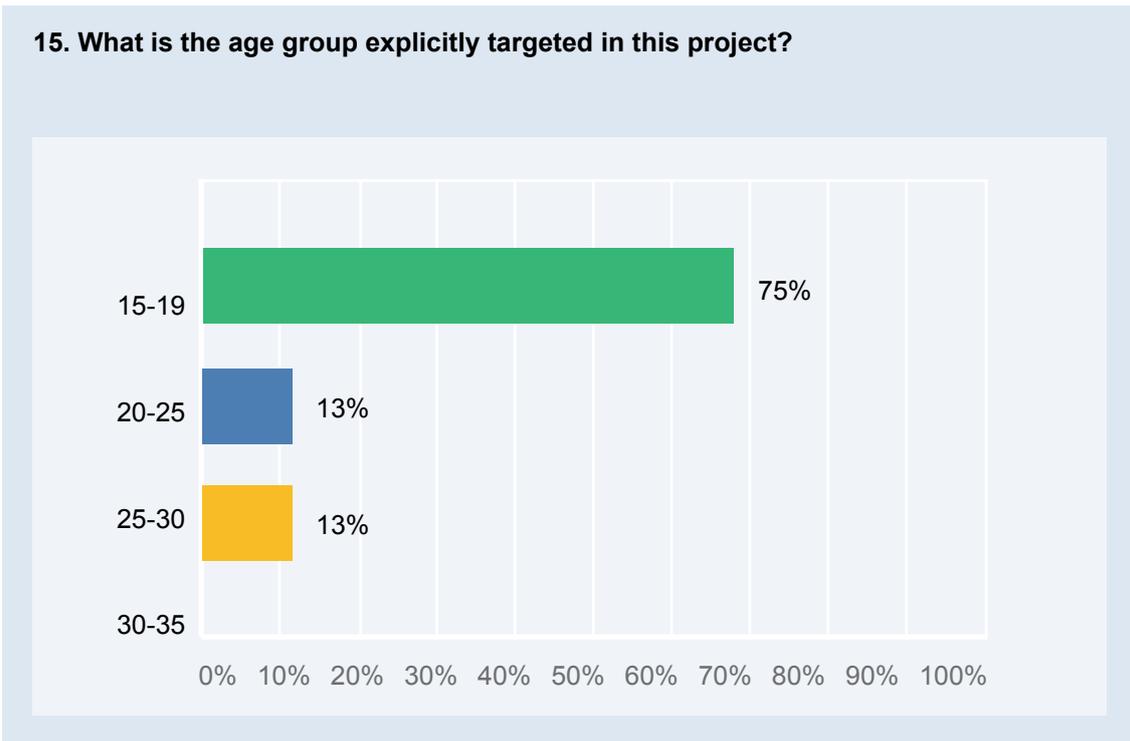
Among the proposed target groups involved, young migrants or members of ethnic minorities were present in 25% of the projects described, and young people from rural areas and young women/girls were each identified in 13% of the projects described. 50% of the respondents deal with youth in general, which includes especially young people with fewer opportunities.

14. Target group involved in the projects



What is the age group explicitly targeted in this project?

In line with the target groups that the organisations were generally involved within their activities, 75% of the people involved in the projects described were 15–19 years old — furthermore, none of the projects catered to people who were 30–35 years old.

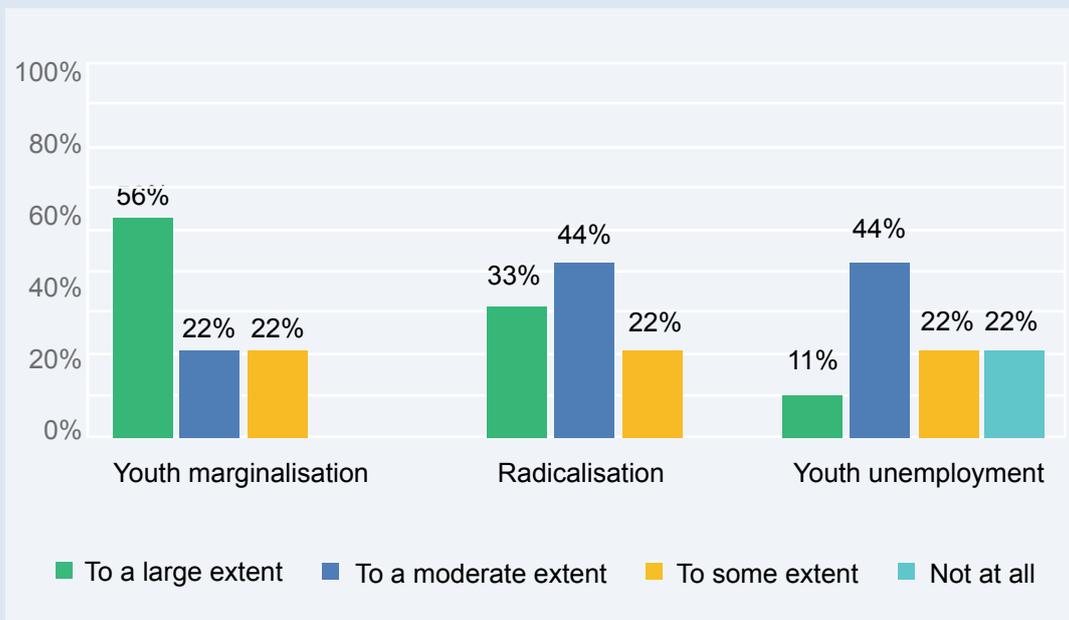


From your experience, to what extent do you think your youth projects and activities contribute to tackling youth marginalisation, radicalisation and youth unemployment?

56% of the respondents affirmed that their projects and activities concerning the youth contributed to tackling youth marginalisation to a large extent. Regarding the prevention of radicalisation, 44% of the organisations recognised that their projects and events helped to avoid the phenomena to a moderate extent. None of them considered their projects and events to

be instruments that did not contribute at all to tackling marginalisation and the prevention of radicalisation. When examining youth unemployment, the situation appears to be more complicated, as reflected by the more fragmented opinions of the organisations. 44% of the organisations affirmed that their projects and activities contributed to tackling youth unemployment to a moderate extent. Nevertheless, only 11% of the organisations believed that their projects contributed to tackling youth unemployment to a large scale. It is worthy of reflection that 22% of the respondents affirmed that their projects and activities in the field of youth did not contribute to tackling youth unemployment at all.

16. From your experience, to what extent do you think your youth projects and activities contribute to tackling youth marginalisation, radicalisation and youth unemployment?



The projects⁵²

Armenia

Organisation and country: *World Council of Churches Armenia Inter-Church Charitable Round Table Foundation*

Title of the project: *Improving Livelihoods of Syrian Refugees in Armenia*

Duration/period: 2015–2018

Target group involved: Young women/girls (victims of violence, single mothers or similar)

Age group targeted explicitly in this project: 25–30

Objective and summary of the project: The project contributed to the improvement of livelihood and integration of Syrian refugees in Armenia. The project aimed to assist refugees in improving their living and working opportunities in Armenia and in developing the socio-economic conditions of the most vulnerable refugee families of Syria through the communication of marketable skills and job creation initiatives.

The activities included conducting vocational training in crafts, languages and IT programming, provision of tool-kits and awareness-raising workshops on legislation, business and marketing. People who had experienced trauma were assisted through psychosocial sessions with priests and psychologists.

Results: More than 150 people improved their employment. More than 2000 people received psychosocial support. More than 150 refugees found a job.

⁵² Self-description by member organisations

Why do you think it is a good practice? The project tackled one of the most pressing issues faced by young people – finding employment and sustaining life. In this sense, the project measures were relevant and effective as the communication of marketable skills and psychosocial support assisted people in regaining control over their lives and making a change on the individual level. The project contributed significantly to those involved in vocational courses, and the psychosocial support improved their resilience capacity and helped them integrate and settle down in the country. The project assisted refugees in settling down in Armenia. Trained refugees improved the well being of their families as they found permanent employment and some established their own businesses. As a result of the psychosocial sessions, some of the refugees started women's clubs and peer support groups.

Main challenges faced (logistical, funding, topic- related, etc...): Housing and lack of financial means for social and economic participation are the main challenges for refugees in Armenia. Lack of employment is a major challenge for young people, and such a problem required a strong partnership.

Website: www.roundtable-act.am

Publications: <http://roundtable-act.am/en/our-publications/other-publications>

Contact person: Alla Sarkissova

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E-mail: alla.sarkissova@gmail.com; alla.sarkissova@roundtable-act.am

Can another organisation replicate this project? Yes

Were EU funds received for this specific project? No

Italy

Organisation and country: *Commissione Sinodale per la Diaconia*

Title of the project: *Tell Me – Youngsters discovering interreligious communities*

Duration/period: 2019

Target group involved: Young people in general

Age group targeted explicitly in this project: 15–18

Objective and summary of the project: The project promoted interreligious dialogue. It proposed a learning path for teenagers based on direct knowledge of local religious identities to encourage interreligious dialogue and multiculturalism through a Training for Youth Worker programme which was followed by a Youth Exchange programme, where the methodology could be applied later. The partnership brought together church-related organisations from a religious context and other lay organisations. Therefore, it guaranteed interreligious and intercultural learning both for the participants and the partners involved. The participating countries were characterised by diverse religious traditions and national multicultural histories – both European ones (Spain, Italy, Portugal, Estonia and Romania) and non- European ones (Kosovo, Turkey and Ukraine).

Results: The exchange offered the participants a reciprocal learning path, a reflection about the role of religion in everyday life and a representation on their own identity through meetings with diverse religious groups and realities, moments of activism and active citizenship in the transmission of a message of dialogue and openness to the local communities. The method was tested on the youngsters during the exchange in a mixed and intercultural environment that intensified the dimension of diversity and dialogue. Youngsters were actively involved in spreading project results and contents and encouraging an open attitude and dialogue toward the “other” in their local context.

Why do you think it is a good practice? The project produced an innovative methodology that was practical and transferrable on several national contexts and at European and non- European level. This method was studied and analysed by Youth Workers, who will achieve specific competences in the field of non- formal education by learning how to develop new and creative strategies to address the challenging situations of the contemporary world.

Main challenges faced (logistical, funding, topic- related, etc...):

No issues faced

Website: <https://giovaniterritorio.org/tell-me-scambio-giovanile-erasmus/>

Contact person: Laura D'Apote

tel – 0121 91318, 348 2966054

e-mail: geteuropa@diaconiavaldese.org

Can another organisation replicate this project? Yes

Were EU funds received for this specific project? Yes – Erasmus+ program

Finland

Organisation and country: *Helsinki Deaconess Foundation, Finland*

Title of the project: *Trail of Involvement for Immigrant Youths*

Duration/period: 2016–2019

Target group involved: Young migrants or members of ethnic minorities

Age group targeted explicitly in this project: 20–25

Objective and summary of the project: The project Trail of Involvement for Immigrant Youth contributed to the prevention of discrimination and deprivation in the target groups. The project activities supported the social involvement of these youth in the Finnish society. The main activities carried out were networking, outreach work for youth with immigrant backgrounds and individual support, locally organised joint development workshops for the public sector and NGOs, startup of local youth development groups in the project cities, analysis of effectiveness and impact data.

The gender perspective was mainstreamed into the project. In practice, young people were encouraged to make career choices based on their aptitude and talent rather than gender-bound traditional expectations. The project promoted equality by guaranteeing possibilities for better health, education, employment and livelihood, to unemployed young people. Furthermore, the project respected the principles of sustainable development.

Results: In consequence of the project, 477 youth with an immigrant background had been reached, and their social involvement had increased significantly. 66% of the targeted youth were involved in education, work or preparatory employment activities through holistically developed methods and events. Also, the youth were provided timely services that supported their social involvement, physical health and rehabilitation.

The project produced a new working platform which can reach out to the youth from 12–29 years of age, who are in the most challenging stage of integration. A service manual was produced. The public services in the City of Helsinki, City of Turku and City of Kuopio have been reinforced. Moreover, the ability of the immigrant organisations and communities to strengthen the integration of the targeted groups to Finnish society has increased and advanced their path towards education and employment.

Why do you think it is a good practice? Earlier, we did not have many immigrant youths in our services, and we needed to find new ways to reach them and to make them involved in our services and with society as a whole.

Main challenges faced (logistical, funding, topic- related, etc...):

HR-related issues – the project had three project managers

Customer-related issues – the youth were in more complex situations than was expected.

Website: <https://www.hdl.fi/en/blog/2019/09/26/the-trail-of-involvement-for-immigrant-youth/>

Publications: <https://s3-eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/evermade-hdl/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/29140903/The-trail-of-involvement-for-immigrant-youth.pdf>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFv89m8NL30&t=6s>

Contact person: Katri Angeria

e-mail: katri.angeria@hdl.fi

Can another organisation replicate this project? Yes

Were EU funds received for this specific project? Yes, the European Social Funds 2016–2019

Germany

Organisation and country: *Diakonie Düsseldorf, Germany*

Title of the project: *Alle Mann*

Duration/period: 2019 running for three years

Target group involved: Young boys in general

Age group targeted explicitly in this project: 15–19

Objective and summary of the project: The project aims to help teenage boys who struggle in their everyday life. The project provides a safe space where they “can be boys” and try out different activities, such as creating and performing rap songs or doing DIY projects. The goal is to reach out to the boys so that, in the end, they also open up about their issues; e.g., problems at home/with their parents. If necessary, further social support can be organised for the boy and, or the family.

Results: The project is still running, so we do not have final results yet. However, we expect to support young men in the transition from childhood to autonomy. We expect them to be able to find a job, manage their money and live in their house alone or sharing spaces with others while taking care of themselves and others.

Why do you think it is a good practice? Boys are often neglected in the provision of youth services. Furthermore, statistics show that boys lose out in contrast to girls when it comes to being successful at school – it is harder for them to start their working life successfully. At the same time, young men are uncertain about what kind of masculinity and what type of role models are accepted these days. Hence, this project is a good practice because it responds to specific needs that are too often forgotten with a holistic and practical approach.

Main challenges faced (logistical, funding, topic- related, etc...):

Funding – so far it is being funded by donations raised from our fundraising department.

Website: <https://www.diakonie-duesseldorf.de/jugend-familie/jugendliche/beratung-und-hilfe-in-krise/alleman/>

Contact person: Birgit Brandsen

e-mail: Birgit.Sittermann-Brandsen@diakonie-duesseldorf.de

Can another organisation replicate this project? Yes

Were EU funds received for this specific project? No

Greece

Organisation and country: *Evangelical Church of Greece (ECG), Greece*

Title of the project: *Horizon Project*

Duration/period: 2018 (6 months)

Target group involved: Young migrants or members of ethnic minorities

Age group targeted explicitly in this project: 15–19

Objective and summary of the project: Our plan was part of a more significant project that supports unaccompanied young migrants in Greece and provides several services, including shelter, day centre, psychological support and training and education. Our project focused on providing training and trade skills to teenage refugees. Our education and training centre offered a unique program to unaccompanied minors and refugee youth. We taught them several soft skills that can be used in all situations, and the education component focused specifically on finding creative solutions to the problems that the participants or those around them might be facing. The main field of our work is vocational training.

Results: Thanks to the project, we have managed to train 30 young people by providing professional and transversal skills that will be beneficial to them. We trained our participants in tailoring, carpentry and 3D printing constructions. The most prominent result was being able to concretely help young people with limited formal education since these persons are also fleeing education.

Why do you think it is a good practice? The approach used is also fundamental as we have helped unaccompanied children and refugee youth find safety, discover their worth and build a future perspective. We worked holistically and took responsibility for each refugee child and youth and provided individually tailored care. Through this, we wish to see every

unaccompanied child and refugee youth live with dignity and hope and be equipped to make a positive change in society.

Main challenges faced (logistical, funding, topic- related, etc...):

The main challenge was funding. In fact, though the more significant project received some funding, we provided for our services with our own resources.

Website: <https://faros.org/>

Contact person: Dan Biswas

e-mail: biswas@faros.org.gr

Can another organisation replicate this project? Yes

Were EU funds received for this specific project? No

Kosovo

Organisation and country: *Diakonie Kosova, Kosovo*

Title of the project: *Interreligious dialogue*

Duration/period: 2019 (Ongoing)

Target group involved: Young migrants, youth from rural areas, youth workers and students

Age group targeted explicitly in this project: 15–19 and 20–25

Objective and summary of the project: The project aims to fight radicalism. The young people involved in this project are from different ethnicities (Kosovo Albanians, Kosovo Serb, Roma, Ashkali and other minorities), and they do not know much about each other's cultures or religions. They may be scared of each other due to lack of information and may also be victims of stereotypes or prejudices that exist between the religions. During the project, we invite representatives from all the regions in Kosovo (Muslim, Catholic, Orthodox Catholic, Dervish and Protestant) to inform and discuss with young people about the differences, shared values and the need for tolerance. After the debates, the young people had the opportunity to visit the religious institutions' or monuments (Mosques, Churches and dervish centres) to be better informed about the religious practices and services. We also use other methods, such as theatre, movie nights and art (during peace weekend activities) in a way that the young people had fun during the process of learning as well the work and development of these activities together.

Results: We realise that this project concretely focuses on fighting the radicalism in our context. Through it, we are providing a better understanding of diversity to our participants, and we have managed to foster tolerance and respect among participants.

Why do you think it is a good practice? This project contributes to breaking down the stereotypes and the prejudices that young people have not only in religious contexts but also in cultural ones. Knowing each other's religion and culture better opens ways for interethnic and intercultural cooperation and reconciliation.

Main challenges faced (logistical, funding, topic- related, etc...):

Thanks to the donations from our donors, we haven't faced any difficulties in the implementation of the project.

Website: <https://www.diakoniekosova.org>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/diakonieyouthcenter/>

Contact person: Miradin Bajari

e-mail: info@diakoniekosova.org

Can another organisation replicate this project? Yes

Were EU funds received for this specific project? No

Sweden

Organisation and country: *Church of Sweden, Diocese of Västerås, Sweden*

Title of the project: *St Michael and the Dragon*

Duration/period: 2017 – 2020

Target group involved: Ice hockey players and 8th-grade pupils

Age group targeted explicitly in this project: 15–19

Objective and summary of the project: Throughout the school year, the project works with two groups work together and independently – a group of pupils aged 15 years, who are aided within the school curriculum, and a group of elite hockey players from another school. The church, municipality and local hockey club collaborate and work with groups on topics such as tolerance, values, racism and democracy. During the second year of the project, the group had almost 75 participants.

Results: In the first year of the project, 25 participants had enrolled in the program. In 2018–2019, the program expanded a lot more. The results of the programme is the realisation of a significant need for young people to talk and explore different topics. It also showed an increased understanding of “the other” and trust for the leaders/trainers of the program. All the stakeholders appreciate the program and will continue to support it.

Why do you think it is a good practice? It is a relevant subject for young people. The hockey coaches push for it because the young participants get an opportunity to meet leaders with an empowering perspective. The project design has been constructed so as to reach the highest possible level in every organisation and so that the board can make decisions and choose priorities.

Main challenges faced (logistical, funding, topic- related, etc...):

Funding is still a challenge even though the Church of Sweden has funded the program substantially. The need to make quick decisions and lack of stability in terms of funds are also challenges. It is also a struggle for the operative personnel to get credit for their work inside the organisations.

Contact person: Petter Karlsson

e-mail: petter.karlsson@svenskakyrkan.se

Can another organisation replicate this project? Yes

Were EU funds received for this specific project? No

Organisation and country: *Hela Människan, Sweden*

Title of the project: *Suntprat*

Duration/period: Ongoing

Target group involved: Young people in general

Age group targeted explicitly in this project: 15–19

Objective and summary of the project: The projects offer young people an opportunity to talk about the mechanisms of addiction, which is not only related to drugs or alcohol but also gaming, pornography, social media and cell-phones. There is a pressing need to talk to adults about these matters.

Results: We work together with churches, youth groups, the scouting movement and schools, which enables us to be well known by young people all over the country as a platform where the queries of adults are addressed, and young people who need to talk about addiction are engaged with.

Why do you think it is a good practice? We have created methods for youth groups to use, such as playing cards with icebreaking questions on rights. We also have several films on our website www.suntprat.se that address different addictions.

Main challenges faced (logistical, funding, topic- related, etc...):

The project has been going on for two years and will come to an end in six months. The biggest challenge has been obtaining funds.

Website: www.suntprat.se

Contact person: Anna Karin Hergren Wirdheim

e-mail: anna.karin.herngren.wirdheim@equmenia.se

Can another organisation replicate this project? Yes

Were EU funds received for this specific project? No

Ukraine

Organisation and country: *Living Hope NGO, Ukraine*

Title of the project: *Creating change together – The sparkle project*

Duration/period: 2012–2013

Target group involved: Young people from rural areas

Age group targeted explicitly in this project: 15–19

Objective and summary of the project: Our fundamental approach was providing an opportunity for the participation and inclusion of all people connected to “Living Hope”. We want to motivate and teach everyone, including children, that engagement in community work adds great value to personal development and to the development of the context they live in. Encouraged by the regional government of Odessa and by the positive results showed in the wellbeing of the young people who had spent a part of their life in the Living Hope daycare centres, “Living Hope” decided to establish a third centre in a small settlement that is 60 km northeast of Odessa and was called “PETROVKA”. The “Sparkle Project 2013” served as a starting point for the new centre, which was opened in the autumn of 2013 and which has involved young people from the very beginning. With our project, we aimed to remove the gap between young people living in urban and rural areas and initiate everyday activities. Another aim is to provide the younger generation with opportunities to play an active part in their community and create places for volunteering in local and international contexts.

Results: IThrough our “Sparkle Project”, we had a chance to involve the local young people in analysing the local context, defining issues and finding solutions for the problems in their settlement. We wanted to teach them essential project planning and implementation skills through a practical example. We managed to encourage the youngsters to create a safe environment for learning and sharing ideas as well as get them

involved in local projects. This idea, once again, proved the value of the interdiaconal network and the importance of the participatory approach because young people were filled with enthusiasm.

Why do you think it is a good practice? It was a successful example of how to involve marginalised young people in creating useful projects for their local community. We took their role seriously and gave them the tools and resources required to create a change they had never imagined to be possible. The working methods of ensuring a high level of participation and empowerment are useful in any context. This programme was not a one-time project; besides, living in the village has an entirely different trend now where children have a place to stay and meet.

Main challenges faced (logistical, funding, topic- related, etc...):

The main difficulties were the infrastructure and the poor accessibility to the rural area (bad roads and long distances) as well as the stereotypes that the young people from the village had about people from the city and vice versa. It also took some time to build trust within the local community.

Publications: <https://www.interdiac.eu/resources/working-with-young-people-reports-from-seven>

Contact person: Nicole Borisuk

e-mail: borisuk@web.de

Can another organisation replicate this project? Yes

Were EU funds received for this specific project? No

Conclusion

We can identify some important elements regarding the peculiar aspects of diaconal work concerning youth thanks to the information provided by the member organisations of Eurodiaconia. Hence, we can come to the following conclusions:

- The work of diaconal organisations among the youth in Europe focused on supporting young people aged 15–25 years in the following:
 - Fighting marginalisation through social inclusion;
 - Unemployment.
- The results of the projects realised by the diaconal bodies are relevant to tackle youth marginalisation and radicalisation.
- The organisations were keen to offer their expertise and knowledge to support other realities. They were willing to contribute to the development of youth work further in Europe, particularly in terms of countering marginalisation and radicalisation.
- The work done by the EU concerning youth creates value, but organisations still feel underconfident and incapable of accessing the funding programmes available for youth work activities.
- Organisations should be able to access more capacity-building programs to be able to translate EU opportunities in concrete actions at the local level. This shift will allow to empower more young people in their areas of interventions.
- There is a lack of knowledge/awareness about opportunities for young people and a more significant concern about the lack of active policies

in some countries.

- The respondent thinks that the EU institutions should evaluate and monitor the implementation of measures and activities promoted by allocated funds to make sure that they are confronting marginalisation, unemployment and radicalisation.
- According to the respondent, a bottom-up approach and a more coherent dimension between the national and international level is missing in the EU youth policy.
- The following elements can be handy for the organisations to persevere in their work in the youth field (in order of importance):
 - EU-funding programmes, such as Erasmus+ or others that consider the national and regional aspects of youth work;
 - Collection and use of the best practices from grassroots organisations for the design of better European youth policies;
 - Standing committees on specific youth topics that consist of civil society organisations, public authorities, the European Commission and young people themselves.

In conclusion, we learned that the diaconal youth work in the local European context is essential not just for the results that they provide but also for the significant potential that is yet to be expressed. Although a majority of the projects happen without the contribution of the EU funding programmes, the possibility of increasing the impact of diaconal work may be significant if EU youth policies/programs become available and more accessible.

Policy Recommendations

3

The following policy recommendations have been built on the results of this study where data have been cross-referenced between the online survey and the telephone interviews.

1. The EU youth policies lack a coherent framework at the national and international level. Therefore, the Eurodiaconia members urge the implementation of a bottom-up approach for youth policy development, especially when it comes to fighting unemployment, marginalisation and radicalisation.
2. The Eurodiaconia members call for more funding to be made available to support the youth work sector substantially at the local level. Moreover, the Eurodiaconia members experience difficulties in using the actual programmes, and the local communities perceive the EU agencies to be too far from the reality experienced.
3. Eurodiaconia calls on the European Commission to increase fiscal spending to realise capacity- building programs and specific training to enable NGOs and local organisations to work with young people to improve their impact at the local level.
4. Eurodiaconia urges the European Commission to raise awareness of already existing platforms and offer additional opportunities to create transnational networks to share the best practices. Such measures play a pivotal role in tackling unemployment, fighting marginalisation and preventing radicalisation.
5. It is also necessary to increase the monitoring and evaluation system to ensure that funds are allocated to projects that are implementing

what they promise. Transparency and trust need to be at the centre of the debate regarding all the policies and actors involved.

6. The Eurodiaconia member organisations ask for the provision of better and more effective policies to concretely fight unemployment and give local entities and NGOs the tools needed to support young people in their transition to autonomy and their place in the labour market.
7. Eurodiaconia and its members strongly urge the European Commission, the member states and the local representatives to share their vision and to collect and use the best practices from the grassroots organisations to design stronger and more sustainable European youth policies. It is crucial to understand that these measures can only be implemented through long-term investment and programmes.
8. Eurodiaconia, in line with the opinion of its members, also highlights the need to strengthen the standing committees that consist of civil society organisations, public authorities, the European Commission and young people themselves on specific topics concerning the youth with the particular objective of creating effective youth policies and programs with a bottom-up approach.
9. Eurodiaconia urges the European Commission to support the member states in conducting information campaigns to raise awareness amongst EU citizens on the existing policies and programs for youth to prevent radicalisation, unemployment and marginalisation.

Official Documents

- Treaty on European Union (1992) available from https://europa.eu/europeanunion/sites/europaeu/files/docs/body/treaty_on_european_union_en.pdf
- European Commission White Paper: A new impetus for European youth (2001) available from <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a3fb3071-785e-4e15-a2cd-51cb40a6c06b>
- Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - An EU Strategy for Youth: Investing and Empowering - A renewed open method of coordination to address youth challenges and opportunities (2009) available from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A52009DC0200>
- Communication from the Commission Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (2010) available from <https://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/COMPLET%20EN%20BARROSO%20%20%20007%20-%20Europe%202020%20-%20EN%20version.pdf>
- Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (2012) available from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012E%2FTXT>
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Useful portals

- Extremism and radicalisation leading to violence <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/extremism-and-radicalisation-leading-to-violence>
- European Youth Forum <https://www.youthforum.org/>
- Erasmus + Programme portal https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en
- Co-management approach <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/co-management>
- EU–CoE youth partnership’s activities <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/activities>
- EACEA National Policy Platform <https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/youthwiki>

- EURES: the European job mobility portal. <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/homepage>
- Radicalisation Awareness Network. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network_en
- The European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCYP) <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/knowledge/-/ekcyp>
- Eurostat – Key European Statistics Portal <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/home?>

ANNEX I – Instruments of the New EU Youth Strategy⁵³

5

- Evidence-based youth policy-making and knowledge building. Policymaking should address the youth's real needs. In this respect, they need to be based on research knowledge development and outreach to young people and youth organisations.⁵⁴
- Mutual learning activities involving member states, the European Commission and relevant stakeholders.
- The establishment of expert groups, practical tools and sharing of good practices.⁵⁵
- Participatory governance based on the involvement of young people and their representative organisations in the different phases of implementation of the EU Youth Strategy. To favour participation, an EU Youth Strategy Platform will be used.
- EU funding programmes that connected to the strategy, in particular, are as follows:
 - *Erasmus+*⁵⁶

⁵³ https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy_en

⁵⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy/evidence_en ⁵⁵https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy/mutuallearning_en

⁵⁶ https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus_en

- *the European Solidarity Corps* ⁵⁷
 - *European Structural and Investment Funds* ⁵⁸
 - *Horizon 2020* ⁵⁹
 - *Creative Europe*⁶⁰
- Monitoring of EU funding with a more effective system of reporting;
 - Communicating the EU Youth Strategy, its purpose and the content in a comprehensive way;
 - Future National Activities Planner through which member states can share their priorities in line with the EU Youth Strategy as a way to increase transparency in the implementation of youth policies at regional, national and EU level and to help the identification of appropriate partners for mutual learning activities.⁶¹
 - EU Youth Dialogue should build on the achievements of the Structured Dialogue with young people and youth organisations and include more decision-makers, young people and, above all, people who have not reached so far and young people with fewer opportunities.⁶²
 - The establishment of an EU Youth Coordinator within the European Commission to enhance cross- sectoral cooperation, as well as

⁵⁷ https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en

⁵⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes/overview-funding-programmes/european-structural-and-investment-funds_en

⁵⁹ <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en>

⁶⁰ https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe_en

⁶¹ https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy/futurenatplanners_en

⁶² https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy/euyouthdialogue_en

knowledge development and exchange on youth issues within the European Commission services.⁶³

- Youth Information and Support to provide quality youth information services and platforms at all levels along with the European Youth Portal to favour equal access to quality information.⁶⁴
- EU Work Plans for Youth, which is set by the Council together with the Commission and cover a triennial period. The work plans aim to present the priorities and actions for the respective working period. The current work plan covers the period 2019–2021.⁶⁵
- Monitoring, reporting and evaluation through triennial reports, Youth Wiki (a tool that allows the gathering information on the development of national youth policies) and the involvement of youth organisations and other relevant stakeholders through an EU Strategy Platform.
- Mid-term review of the EU Youth Strategy by the Council.⁶⁶

⁶³ https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy/euyouthcoordinator_en

⁶⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy/euyouthstrategyplatform_en

⁶⁵ <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14080-2018-INIT/en/pdf>

⁶⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/youth/sites/youth/files/youth_swd_168_1_en_autre_document_travail_service_part1_v6.pdf https://ec.europa.eu/youth/sites/youth/files/youth_swd_168_1_en_autre_document_travail_service_part1_v6.pdf



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