



## Working Group Youth Policy Development



*Erasmus+ programme KA3 - Support for Policy Reform Civil Society Cooperation in the field of Youth*

## Youth Policy Development Paper

In the context of the Working Group on Youth Policy Development of the Erasmus+ programme KA3 - Support for Policy Reform Civil Society Cooperation in the field of Youth (616411-EPP-1-2020-1-DE-EPPKA3-CSC-YOUTH), led by YEPP EUROPE, a wide range of resources and tools were discussed and are presented below. The importance of evidence-based policy making was also discussed and the fact that the EU Youth Strategy should be based and anchored in the real needs and situations of young people. This requires continuous research, knowledge development and outreach to young people and youth organisations.

The European Commission gathers and analyses data on young people and so do other organisations like the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and national authorities.

In the Working Group the representatives of partner organisations presented examples of youth policies from their country which they see as positive policies and shortcomings and/or negative policies were discussed. These policies were selected based on chosen youth goals and their relation to these goals.



In this short paper some of these national policies are presented, the main source being the Youth Wiki.

The partners in the Working Group:

- Association for a better life, Slovakia
- LOGO Jugendmanagement, Austria
- Mission Locale, Bernay, France
- Hellenic Youth Participation, Greece
- YEPP EUROPE, Germany
- YEPP Kristinestad, Finland
- Institute for Creative Education, Croatia



## YOUTH POLICY RESOURCES & TOOLS

### ➤ Youth Flash Eurobarometer

[https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2163\\_455\\_ENG](https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2163_455_ENG)

The European Union regularly surveys young people's participation in social and civic life, and their involvement in voluntary activities. This Eurobarometer survey, which entailed interviews with about 11,000 youngsters, also reports on their views on what should be the priorities for the EU.

The results by volumes are distributed as follows:

- Volume A: Countries
- Volume AA: Groups of countries
- Volume A' (AP): Trends
- Volume AA' (AAP): Trends of groups of countries
- Volume B: EU/socio-demographics
- Volume B' (BP) : Trends of EU/ socio-demographics
- Volume C: Country/socio-demographics

SOURCE: Youth Flash Eurobarometer [https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2163\\_455\\_ENG](https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2163_455_ENG)

➤ **European Statistics Office (Eurostat)**

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/main/home>

Eurostat is the statistical office of the European Union.

Eurostat produces European statistics in partnership with National Statistical Institutes and other national authorities in the EU Member States. This partnership is known as the [European Statistical System \(ESS\)](#). It also includes the statistical authorities of the European Economic Area (EEA) countries and Switzerland.

*SOURCE: European Statistics Office (Eurostat) <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/main/home>*

➤ **Dashboard of indicators**

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth/data/eu-dashboard>

The [EU Youth Strategy \(2010-2018\)](#) seeks to promote better educational and job opportunities for young people, as well as active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity. It places evidence-based policy making at the core of youth policy. According to the strategy, better knowledge and understanding of the economic and social situation of young women and men needs to be gathered and shared with other policy fields so as to enable appropriate and timely measures to be taken.

Therefore, a dashboard of EU Youth indicators was developed in order to provide a quick and comprehensive cross-sectoral view of the economic and social situation of young people in the EU. It includes data from several sources and covers the following topics:

- Education and training
- Employment and entrepreneurship
- Health and well-being
- Social inclusion
- Culture and creativity
- Youth participation
- Volunteering
- Youth and the world

The dashboard is the result of the extensive contributions and successful deliberations of the Expert Group on EU Youth Indicators and is presented in a Commission Staff Working Document on [EU Indicators in the Field of Youth](#) released in 2011. The indicators presented here are based on data from Eurostat.

*SOURCE: Dashboard of indicators <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth/data/eu-dashboard>*

➤ **EU Labour Force Survey**

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Labour\\_force\\_survey\\_\(LFS\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Labour_force_survey_(LFS))

A **labour force survey**, abbreviated as **LFS**, is an inquiry directed to [households](#), designed to obtain information on the [labour market](#) and related issues through a series of personal interviews.

The [European Union \(EU\)](#) LFS covers all citizens living in [private households](#) and excludes those in [collective households](#), such as boarding houses, residence halls and hospitals. The

definitions used are common to all EU Member States and are based on international recommendations by the [International Labour Organization \(ILO\)](#).

The survey is conducted in European countries by National Statistical Institutes as the "Labour Force Survey".

*SOURCE: EU Labour Force Survey [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Labour\\_force\\_survey\\_\(LFS\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Labour_force_survey_(LFS))*

### ➤ **The Youth Wiki**

<https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/countries>

The Youth Wiki is an online platform presenting information on European countries' youth policies. The main objective of the Youth Wiki is to support evidence-based European cooperation in the field of Youth. It does so by providing information on national policies in support of young people - in a user-friendly and continuously updated way.

The overall purpose is to help the European Commission and Member States in their decision making, by providing information on reforms and initiatives. It allows the exchange of information and innovative approaches and can substantiate peer learning activities.

Currently, 33 countries participate in the Youth Wiki.

*SOURCE: Youth Wiki <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/countries>*

### ➤ **EU Survey on Income & Living Conditions**

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/european-union-statistics-on-income-and-living-conditions>

The European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) aims at collecting timely and comparable cross-sectional and longitudinal multidimensional microdata on income, poverty, social exclusion and living conditions.

The EU-SILC project was launched in 2003 based on a "gentlemen's agreement" in six Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg and Austria) and Norway. The EU-SILC legal basis entered into force in 2004 and covers now all EU countries, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland; some other countries participated on the voluntary basis.

*SOURCE: EU Survey on Income & Living Conditions <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/european-union-statistics-on-income-and-living-conditions>*

### ➤ **European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCYC)**

<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/knowledge-/-ekcyp>

As agreed between the partner institutions the EU-CoE youth partnership will develop a "think tank" function aimed at increasing the knowledge about the contexts and needs of young people in Europe, current and upcoming challenges they face in support of the activities of the partnership.

The European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCYC) is an on-line database intended to provide the youth sector with a single access point to reliable knowledge and information

about young people's situation across Europe. EKCYP aims at enhancing knowledge transfers between the fields of **research, policy and practice** through the collection and dissemination of information about youth policy, research and practice in Europe and beyond.

Linked to EKCYP is a network of national correspondents, who are youth policy specialists responsible for collecting national data.

*SOURCE: European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCYP) <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/knowledge/-ekcyp>*

### ➤ **The Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR)**

<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/peyr>

PEYR network consists of **35 researchers and experts from across Europe** who possess a **wide range of expertise in different policy areas** connected to youth. PEYR members were selected on the basis of an open call in 2017.

PEYR is used by both the European Commission and the Council of Europe, but is also open to any other interested stakeholder as a source of expertise and knowledge on youth.

Besides providing expertise on demand, PEYR members also meet once a year to discuss broader issues connected to youth research and provide input to policy initiatives of the two partner institutions.

*SOURCE: The Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR) <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/peyr>*

### ➤ **YOUTH POLICY LABS**

<https://www.youthpolicy.org>

Youth Policy Labs is the leading global think-tank specifically focusing on youth. Founded and initially hosted by the Berlin-based NGO Demokratie & Dialog e.V, we are now an independent non-profit association. We operate at the junction of research and journalism, producing high-quality and well-researched knowledge with the aim of improving public policies that affect the lives of young people. We champion the development of youth policies, promote young people as researchers, facilitate international discussion on youth policies, and advocate for stronger coherence within the United Nations and donor agencies on youth rights, policies and programmes. Our team is made up of youth policy experts, youth researchers, and young journalists. Our publications are published under Youth Policy Press, a global publishing house on youth issues.

*SOURCE: Youthpolicy.org <https://www.youthpolicy.org>*

# YOUTH POLICIES IN EUROPE

The following short summaries are a compilation of youth policy framework in the countries which participated in the Working Group. They are taken from the from the **YOUTH WIKI platform** (<https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/countries>). On this YOUTH WIKI platform you can find further details about the youth policies in the different youth policy areas in each country.



Slovakia with its high number of young population belongs to the youngest countries in the European Union.

Official youth policy has existed since 1992. Current Government in its Manifesto (2016-2020) promotes better conditions for the wellbeing of young people and development of their potential, especially through educational and training opportunities outside school classes, support of young families, young farmers and new opportunities for young people employment.

Slovak main statement of youth policy is contained in the Strategy for Youth (2014 - 2020). Promotion of youth is primarily responsibility of Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport (MESRS). Due to transversal nature of youth policy, different Ministries are responsible for particular policy fields that affect young people. Age range for youth policy is 0 - 30 (Strategy for Youth), but different Ministries can address different age ranges as well, depending on the peculiarities of their fields. IUVENTA - Slovenský inštitút mládeže (IUVENTA- Slovak Youth Institute) is the institution of MESRS responsible for various activities concerning youth policy preparation and implementation.

The municipalities are generally responsible for all citizens (including young people) and their task is to implement national policies (concerning also young people) in their territories. Local committees dealing with different themes including “youth” are working at all local governments.

Work with young people and their upbringing is divided between public (NGOs) and state sector (e.g. youth centres.). Public sector is represented by non-profit organizations, some of them working only with children and youth. In 1990 Youth Council of Slovakia was established, having currently 25 member organizations with more than 60 000 membership base.



Youth policy-making is under the responsibility of the national government. At the federal level, the Federal Chancellery is primarily responsible for youth policy, with particular emphasis on the upbringing of young people outside the school sector.

Youth promotion and youth work outside the school sector is primarily the responsibility of the federal states. The Provincial Youth Departments (Landesjugendreferate) located in the

provincial governments have the task of implementing the youth policy measures of the province in youth work outside the school sector.

Additionally, it has to be mentioned, that Austria is strongly depending on private associations and NGOs, that have not been initiated by the state, but are at least partially funded by the federal government or the federal states governments.

The Austrian Federal Ministries Act (Bundesministeriengesetz) determines what ministry is responsible for youth-related issues. Even though a former ministry might be mentioned in youth-related laws, issued in previous legislative periods, the institution determined in the recent Austrian Federal Ministries Act is actually responsible.



**Social, professional and civic inclusion** of young people along with protection and educational development of youth have long been key themes of French public policies. Although there is no **definitive or permanent model for political strategy on youth**, as its form very much depends on successive governments, youth policies are nonetheless a constant in public action, whether they are promoted by a ministry responsible for youth affairs or by the Ministry of National Education, all the more so as youth policies are not only decided at **national and territorial (regional) level** but are also implemented at **local level** by the authorities concerned (Regions, *Départements* and municipalities).

Local authorities act in **complementarity** and interdependence with State policies in the implementation of youth policies that relies on overlapping the various levels of public action and upon **interministerial, intersectoral and multi-partner** operation.

Youth policies have been the responsibility of the Ministry of National Education, youth and sports, which, in particular through its Department for Youth, Non-Formal Education and Voluntary Organisation (DJEVPA - Direction de la Jeunesse, de l' Education Populaire et de la Vie Associative), focuses on the design and implementation of youth policies.

Combating youth unemployment (26.2% of under 25 y/o in 2016 according to Eurostat) and the **precarity** that affects some of France's young people is one of the public authorities' major concerns. It should be emphasised, however, that such phenomena do not affect all young people and do not have the same consequences on their individual life paths. **Continued inequalities** between young people themselves and the **resulting fragmentation of French youth** is another challenge to be taken into account in youth policies.



The official document addressing the needs and/or rights of young people and youth issues is the Social Code, Book VIII - Child and Youth Services [Sozialgesetzbuch Aachtes Buch Kinder- und Jugendhilfe, SGB VIII]. It is a federal law. It is also called the Child and Youth Services Act [Kinder- und Jugendhilfegesetz (KJHG)]. It came into force in January 1991 (in

the newly formed German Länder in October 1990). Each federal state (Bundesland) has an implementation act pertaining to the Child and Youth Services Act.

Youth policy-making takes place at different levels. At national (Bund) level, it is under the responsibility of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, BMFSFJ). The Ministry is responsible for encouraging and supporting youth (and child and youth welfare) policy activities in cases where it has supraregional significance and cannot be encouraged and supported by a federal state alone.

The cooperation between public and non-public institutions and organisations is determined by the principle of subsidiarity. This principle says that a central authority performs only those tasks that cannot be executed by a person, group or organisation at a more local level. A joint youth strategy of the Federal Government was developed and introduced in December 2019. It aims at involving young people in all decisions concerning them. In doing so they shall be offered the best possible conditions to cope with the challenges of this independent phase of life called youth. The youth strategy is based on the 'new youth policy' that has been pursued by the Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, BMFSFJ) for a couple of years. Thus it makes the shared interests of millions of young people and adults between 12 and 27 visible.



Finland is famous for a variety of reasons, one of those being that the country has its own law to respect the rights of young people. The Youth Act promotes social inclusion, opportunities to participate in the decision-making over matters of concern, development of individuals' abilities, improvement of living conditions, and access to free-time hobbies and youth work – to name a few. The Government Decree supports the implementation of the act by, for example, specifying the allocation of the duties involved at the national, regional and local levels.

The National Youth Work and Policy Programme has its basis in the Youth Act, but it is also informed by the Government Programme. The Government Programme for the year 2019-2023 'Inclusive and competent Finland - a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society' includes the pledge for fair and equal treatment across generations and highlights participation and inclusion. The social inclusion and participation of children and young people will be promoted with digital means, and efforts will be made to improve their media literacy. According to the Government Programme, 'the main themes for the national programme for youth work and youth policy are to prevent social exclusion and bolster inclusion among young people.' The newest National Youth Work and Policy Programme was published in 2020 and is outlined in Youth Wiki/Finland 1.9 Current Debates and Reforms.

In addition, the Government has launched a cross-administrative democracy programme extending until 2025. One of the key priorities of the democracy programme is to develop school teaching and other school practices, as well as to support children's and young people's ability to have a say in their local environment and society. (For more information, see Youth Wiki/Finland 5.5 National strategy to increase youth participation). Currently, the Youth Wiki chapters include information also about the earlier Government Programme,



National Youth Work and Youth Policy Programme and Democracy Programme. For that perspective, all chapters will be updated in 2020-2021.

Like other countries, Finland is also currently suffering from the Covid-19 epidemic (see [Government's information and advice on the coronavirus](#)). Youth employment has been strongly hit by the Covid-19 epidemic (see more in [Youth Wiki/Finland 3. Employment and Entrepreneurship Overview](#)). For that reason, the amount of study places in universities, for example, has been raised. At the same time, a reasonable amount of teaching activities at a variety of levels is being offered only online - in some regions, these periods of online activities have several months by February 2021. Moreover, the regular offer of face-to-face health services for young people, normally offered alongside educational services has been reduced (YLE NEWS 27.1.2021). Several organisations have reported that many are seeking online support. For the research project "How young people have experienced the time of Covid -19 epidemic, a thousand Finnish young people were interviewed. Those who report the negative impact of distance learning are those experiencing loneliness, those who have been hurt most by the restrictions regarding social contact, reported researcher Jenni Lahtinen from [Finnish Youth Research Network](#) (About the study in Finnish [Yksinäisyys yhteydessä etäopetuksen kielteisiin kokemuksiin - Nuorisotutkimusseura ry](#)). In addition to employment, health, and education the Covid-19 epidemic will change the landscape of all public activities, and these changes will be progressively taken into account in all the chapters of Youth Wiki.

There are also some structural changes coming related to the organisation of public services in Finland. The Government is starting preparations for restructuring health and social services, taking into account the work done during previous electoral terms and making sure that relevant constitutional requirements are met. (For more information, see [Youth Wiki/Finland 7.8 Current Debates and Reforms](#)).



National youth policy falls within the scope of the [Central State Office for Demography and Youth](#) and is regulated by the department of youth within this ministry. Even though recognized as a unique field, youth policy is still a shared domain across other ministries, predominantly [Ministry of Science and Education](#) and [Ministry of Labour and Pension System](#).

The needs, potentials and possibilities for young people are not defined nor supported by the Law on Youth but with the strategy ([The National Youth Strategy](#)) which is considered to be the focal point for youth policy in Croatia. Nevertheless, the only normative act within the youth field is the [Law on Youth Advisory Boards](#) which conceptualizes the basic aspects of local youth policy.

Youth policy is made through the participatory process of consultation with relevant youth organization and tends to be supported in evidences produced by scientific research.

In Croatia, the share of young people, aged 15-30 is declining, while at the beginning of the 1990s there was around 21%, according to the last census (2011) there the share of young people in the population is around 18,6%.