

## Proposals for a quality EU Youth Dialogue

During the European Union Youth Conference (EUYC) in Bucharest in March 2019, the first EUYC of the new EU Youth Strategy 2019 - 2027 and in the first in the new EU Youth Dialogue, a discursive plenary discussion about the future and the aims of the EU Youth Dialogue, including the EUYCs as well as the future of the Youth Goals, took place.

Out of that, a group of **youth delegates from both National Youth Councils (NYC) and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations (INGYOs), the European Youth Forum (YFJ) secretariat, NYC representatives, ministry representatives and European Commission representatives** came together to start a feedback and reflection on the last Cycle, last EUYCs and the Structured Dialogue to guarantee a continuity of improvements and ensure a quality process for the new EU Youth Dialogue.

We, as youth delegates, as representatives of INGYOs and NYCs, developed, in a strong dialogue with ministry and European Commission representatives, proposals to tackle several concerns about the EU Youth Dialogue which were brought up at the EUYC Bucharest. We want to ensure the quality of this process which brings a lot of still unused potential.

To use this potential better, we call for

1. A **coordination group [steering committee]** on the European level is needed in a form of a permanent body, ensuring sequence, consistency and common objectives of each of the Cycles.
  - a. It should consist of the Trio presidency [involving the NYCs and their National Working Groups (NWGs)], the YFJ, the European Commission and other identified actors when relevant
  - b. In its mandate, a consensual approach and joint solutions should be the foundation of the process, putting partners on an equal footing;
  - c. The Quality management should be improved;
    - i. Ensure a good handover between Cycles and phases of transition e.g. by having the previous trio-presidency involved in the beginning of the next Cycle to provide feedback and good practices.
    - ii. Ensure thematic consistency by ensuring that the whole cycle follows one thematic priority that is closely linked to the European Youth Goals, as agreed upon in the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027.
    - iii. Create a long-term feedback loop and reflection process to make sure the Cycles build on each other and learn from previous challenges and good practices, by
      1. Establishing an evaluation mechanism of the previous and the ongoing process e.g. by having off- and online consultations with all relevant actors on a regular basis and ensure that their results have to be considered during and after the current cycle.
      2. Offering counselling for new presidencies to learn about the processes and build on already taken improvements
      3. Strengthen the role of the NYCs, NWGs and the YFJ as they are permanently involved actors in all Cycles and are closely linked to young people.
2. Involvement of the **National Youth Councils (NYCs) and National/ European Working Groups (NWGs)** in the presidency and governance process. In states where no such Council structures exist, steps should be taken to set up these bodies as soon as possible.
  - a. Ensure the NYCs as representing bodies of young people are recognised as such.

- b. Consult NYCs and the NWGs on a regular basis to ensure their contribution and expertise is recognised and included:
    - i. NYCs and the NWGs hold the responsibility to include and reach young people through the dialogue and participatory approaches.
    - ii. NYCs bring the knowledge about non-formal, informal and pedagogical methods how to ensure meaningful youth participation.
    - iii. NYCs are informed about topics important for youth and the needs of youth.
    - iv. NYCs are low threshold and in close contact with young people.
  - c. Ensure NYCs get the needed financial support for participating in the process and fulfilling the political demand of including wider groups of young people. There should be conditions attached to the EU grant which finances the EUYCs that mandate the participation of young people at all levels and stages of the Dialogue process.
  - d. NYCs and the NWGs should be involved and should shape the process and methodology of the EU Youth Dialogue and the Conferences; by
    - i. Guaranteeing a direct constructive dialogue between policy makers and youth on EU, national and regional level and on a regular basis
    - ii. Making sure that the Cycle as a process has an overall sequence and that the conferences build on each other
    - iii. Making the EU Youth Dialogue youth-friendly, accessible, inclusive, participatory and meaningful with regards to policy processes
    - iv. Ensuring that NYCs receive enough financial means, time and guidance to conduct valuable consultations before the conferences.
3. **Connecting National Working Groups (NWGs)** and facilitating the exchange of best practice
- a. There should be regular international meetings between the NWGs, International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations and their coordinating body and other actors in different participating countries aiming to build the capacity and ensure regular exchange of best practices and agreement of minimum standards. These meetings need clear and structured financial support.
4. Support a **cross-sectoral approach** for the whole process
- a. Recognize that all policy issues have an impact on youth and that young people have an opinion on all these issues.
  - b. Ensure that consultations and dialogues are not limited to youth policies in youth departments but that they are open, and their results are considered in various policy fields.
  - c. Make sure that cross - sectoral stakeholders and actors are involved in the process.

We hope that in this way, we can establish a European spirit of working together on a **meaningful EU Youth Dialogue** and ensure a constantly **improving participation of youth on all levels** of decision-making. Building on the agreed language in the EU Youth Strategy especially Annex 1, we hope to strengthen the **implementation of the Youth Goals** and ensure that no ideas will be lost in ineffective structures. We hope for an inclusive and long-term effective European Youth Dialogue. We hope for a better Europe.