

Explanatory note 11th cycle EU Youth Dialogue
1/1/2025 – 30/06/2026 Poland – Denmark – Cyprus
#EYG1 – Connecting EU with Youth

The present Explanatory Note establishes the framework for the 11th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue, as developed by an informal European Steering Group, brought together by the trio of Poland, Denmark and Cyprus. The objectives outlined below support the advancement of the rights and values enshrined in the EU treaties, particularly those set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU)¹ and Article 165(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)². They also contribute to the implementation of the European cooperation in the field of youth, as embodied in the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027³ and the EU Work Plan for Youth 2025-2027. Additionally, the work pertaining to the EU Youth Dialogue process will be guided by two researchers to enhance the inclusiveness of the cycle and analyse its outcomes and results. The EU Youth Dialogue is co-funded through Erasmus+.

1. Rationale and background

Definition: The EU Youth Dialogue (EUYD) is a participation mechanism for young people in the EU. It serves as a dynamic forum for continuous joint reflection and consultation with young Europeans on the priorities, implementation, and follow-up of European cooperation in the field of youth. This participatory process involves young people, youth organisations, policy and decision-makers, as well as experts, researchers and civil society actors, enabling a continuous partnership in the development and implementation of policies, strategies, and initiatives at local, regional, national and European level.

The dialogue is instrumental in: (a) encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe in line with Article 165 TFEU; (b) promoting equal participation between young women and men; (c) including diverse voices and to ensure openness to all young people to contribute to policy-shaping; (d) bringing about positive change in youth policy at local, regional, national and European level; (e) strengthening young people's' citizenship competencies and sense of belonging to the society and the European Union. ⁴**Cyclical approach:** The EU Youth Dialogue is organised in 18-month work cycles during which national consultations with young people and youth organisations are conducted on a specific topic. Supported by Erasmus+, each chairing Trio presidency organises an EU youth conference during

¹ The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.

² Union action shall be aimed at: [...] — encouraging the development of youth exchanges and of exchanges of socio-educational instructors, and encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe, [...].

³ Resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting with the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Strategy 2019-2027, available at https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.C_.2018.456.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AC%3A2018%3A456%3AFULL

⁴ Source: European Youth Strategy 2019-2027 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX%3A42018Y1218%2801%29>

the cycle. Each EU Youth Dialogue cycle builds on the results of previous cycles, ensuring continuity, and contributing to reaching the targets set in the Youth Goals, by linking up successive cycles.

11th Cycle: The 11th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue will run from 1st of January 2025 to 30th of June 2026 under the Trio Presidency of Poland – Denmark – Cyprus. This cycle aims at:

- Further strengthening the EU Youth Dialogue as a youth-led process ensuring meaningful and diverse participation of youth organisations and young people in decision-making processes at European and national level through the consultation and implementation phases, as well as through policy co-creation together with decision-makers at local, regional, national and European level;
- Ensure the meaningful participation of young people and youth organisations in policy co-creation, implementation and the follow-up phase; Increase the youth participation in the EU democratic processes to ensure that the European project reflects the needs and expectations of young people.
- Contribute to the multi-level and cross-sectoral implementation of the European Youth Goals, with a particular focus on European Youth Goal 1# Connecting EU with Youth;

2. Thematic Framework



#1 Connecting EU with Youth

Background: An increasing number of young people lack trust in the EU, encounter difficulties in understanding its principles, values, and functioning. Democratic deficits in EU processes have also been identified as one of the reasons for rising euroscepticism among young people.

The thematic framework of the 11th cycle is EU Youth Goal #1 - Connecting EU with Youth. The ambition is to foster the sense of youth belonging to the European project and build a bridge between the EU and young people to regain trust and increase participation.⁵

During the 6th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue entitled Europe – what's next? (2017-2018) more than 50.000 young Europeans identified eleven European Youth Goals as the next priorities for the European Union. Young people set as a priority the need to

⁵ More information <https://youth-goals.eu/yg1>

feel more connected to the EU, and opportunities to enable them to understand its principles, values, functioning and how citizens can participate in it. Although Europe has undergone significant changes since then, it appears that the need to foster a sense of belonging to the European project and to build a bridge between the EU and young people remains prominent.

During this cycle, the focus will be on the following sub-goals of EYG #1:

- Guarantee meaningful youth involvement and dialogue in all stages of EU decision making by improving existing participatory mechanisms and creating new ones.
- Build young people's trust in the EU project by addressing the democratic deficit, lack of transparency and visibility.
- Explore ways of institutionalizing the assessment of youth-friendliness, impact and effect of EU policies.

As well as on exploring and assessing the effectiveness and impact of EU youth programmes, with a focus on identifying areas for improvement to enhance their contribution to youth development.

3. Core principles

The 11th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue is based on the following principles:

Cooperation

Ensuring a meaningful cooperation and continuity between the three involved EU Presidencies and its respective National Youth Councils, the European Youth Forum and the European Commission in a cohesive approach throughout the cycle based on appropriate means, trust, transparency and exchanges at every step of the process.

Contributing to the continuity of the EU Youth Dialogue in cooperation with the previous and the upcoming Trios.

Youth-Led and Co-Created

Bringing young people and youth organisations into the core of the planning, implementation and follow-up of the cycle and regarding all activities at different levels. The EU Youth Dialogue is a youth-led process. National Youth Councils should have a key role in the National Working Groups and the European Steering Group.

Ensuring that participants in the EU Youth Conferences, youth delegates, ministerial delegates and decision-makers, have the required time and knowledge to engage in meaningful dialogue.

Having a real dialogue between decision makers and young people in the cycle and during the EU Youth Conferences by providing means for meaningful engagement.

Impact

Ensuring a real impact for the cycle by not only thinking together about what we want to achieve but also committing to taking actions and practically bringing about change for young people in Europe.

Being transparent on the expected outcomes of the cycle towards all involved stakeholders, notably young people that take part in the EU Youth Dialogue activities.

Connecting the outcomes of the cycle with relevant processes at local, national and European levels, making the EU Youth Dialogue more accessible and well-known in Member States.

Focusing on the European Youth Goal #1, making it more visible, measurable, and accountable within and outside of the EU Youth Dialogue.

Inclusivity and Diversit

Being inclusive, ensuring the participation of diverse voices, including especially those from marginalised and underrepresented groups. Efforts will be made to reach young people from various backgrounds, including rural areas, minorities, and those with fewer opportunities and not in education, employment or training (NEETs).

Transparency and Informed Participation

To facilitate meaningful discussions and exchanges, it is essential that both young participants and policy or decision-makers are adequately prepared and well-informed about the EU Youth Dialogue process. Ensuring transparency regarding the process and the anticipated outcome of the cycle is crucial for all stakeholders involved, particularly for the young people, as well as policy and decision-makers. Transparency via appropriate informational materials and adequate preparation among all parties foster constructive cooperation and realistic and tangible outcomes.

4. Governance

Stakeholders involved in the implementation of the EU YOUTH DIALOGUE:

- **Young people** – young Europeans participating in the EU Youth Dialogue are at the heart of the Dialogue. Their needs, demands and concerns, their ideas and opinions are captured during the national consultations and discussed in dialogues with the relevant policy / decision-makers at local, regional, national and European level. Possible solutions based on their inputs will be developed and changes will be sought, where feasible; Youth delegates are the young people mandated to participate in the EU youth conferences of the cycle and represent the voices of the young people consulted;

- **National Youth Councils** – Youth representation is central in the EU Youth Dialogue. Respective National Youth Councils of the trio partners co-chair the meetings of the European Steering Group (ESG) together with Ministry Representatives, they are actively involved in the national consultations, they also support the coordination of the ESG work and its meetings and ensure that the EU Youth Conferences are youth-led and in line with the goals defined;

▪ **European Youth Forum** – The European Youth Forum provides support to the work of the European Steering Group with its expertise and by communicating with the National Working Groups and INGYOs involved in the process, ensuring that they receive the information they need, supporting them to exchange good practices, as well as bringing their concerns and requests to the European Steering Group. The European Youth Forum assists in the coordination of the dialogue within the European Steering Group;

▪ **International Non-governmental Youth Organisations (INGYOs)** – INGYOs bring in diverse European perspectives to the policy dialogue. They ensure quality input on the transnational dimension of European Youth Goal #1 and provide perspectives of young people from a wide geographical reach through the following activities: to disseminate information about the dialogue and promote active pan-European engagement, contribute to making the EU Youth Dialogue more visible on the European level, collect ideas on how to realise European Youth Goal #1 through roundtables with the EU institutional stakeholders, as well as sharing their expertise in relation to the topic addressed. Selected INGYOs will be invited to contribute to the EU Youth Dialogue either by participating in the EU Youth Conferences or by contributing with written input to the Dialogue.

▪ **National Working Groups (NWG)** – NWGs are typically composed of representatives of Ministries, of National Youth Councils, of National Agencies, Youth researchers and other relevant actors according to the theme addressed and of the national context. NWGs put the implementation of European Youth Goal #1 into their national contexts and realities and develop strategies and approaches on how the ideas and inputs of young people can be implemented. The aim is to bring the EU Youth Dialogue to relevant policy / decision-makers and connect it with the right processes to make the EU Youth Dialogue a meaningful instrument of participation throughout the whole EU. NWGs are incentivised to reach out to young people with fewer opportunities in their national consultations. They will be provided with guidance and tools to support them in this effort. As the EU Youth Dialogue is a youth-driven process, the National Youth Councils should be leading stakeholders in the National Working Groups;

▪ **European Steering Group (ESG)** – The ESG governs the process on the EU level by e.g. providing steering and overall guidance; providing input, tools and support for the implementation where appropriate and ensuring wide dissemination of the EU Youth Dialogue results. Its detailed functions are outlined in the Council Resolution on the Governance of the EU Youth Dialogue. It consists of Trio Presidencies' teams (Ministry and National Youth Council representatives), the European Commission and the European Youth Forum. The European Steering Group may involve other actors in its work, depending on the specific needs of each cycle (e.g. Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps National Agencies, Youth Researchers, EU-CoE Youth Partnership, SALTO's, etc.);

▪ **European Commission** – The European Commission supports the preservation of the institutional memory of the EU Youth Dialogue and ensures its continuity. The institution brings the European perspective in the consultations including by aligning

the dialogue's focus with the Commission work programme and disseminates the outcomes of the EUYD at EU level;

- **Policy and decision makers** (local, regional, national, European) – in all phases and at all levels of the EU Youth Dialogue, policy and decision makers, but also ministry representatives, should participate and engage in meaningful interaction with participants.
- **European Facilitator** – EU Youth Conferences are supported by an experienced European facilitator. The European facilitator is selected by the European Steering Group and its role is to ensure that there is continuity and coherence between different EU Youth Conferences throughout the 11th cycle. This European facilitator will be working on designing and implementing the methodology for the EU Youth Conferences together with national facilitators and organisers from each Presidency country. The facilitator also co-moderates with respective national facilitators the EU Youth Conferences;
- **Researchers** – Two researchers will be contracted in the framework of this cycle to help developing the methodology for consulting young people, draft the guiding questions, analyse the data collected and draft the report of the consultation and implementation activities. Researchers may be involved in relevant discussions of the ESG, ensuring an evidence-based approach in the EU Youth Dialogue cycles.

5. Overview of the process

For 18 months, three Presidencies in two phases, the 11th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue focuses on European Youth Goal #1 – Connecting EU with Youth. The EU Youth Dialogue is comprised of two main phases: The consultation and the implementation phase. Each chairing presidency is responsible for organising an EU Youth Conference that is thoroughly integrated into and aligned with the EU Youth Dialogue process. Therefore, in a well-structured participatory process, young people, youth organisations, and EU policymakers engage in discussions on issues significant to young people and work together to implement the outcomes of these dialogues.

Consultation phase

The consultation phase will be developed at the European level in collaboration with the European Steering Group (ESG) and a team of researchers. To ensure inclusivity a consultation package will be designed containing good practices, tools and methodologies. However, each National Working Group will have the flexibility to conduct their own consultation at national level.

Priority should be given to qualitative consultations, including dialogue events and workshops. While quantitative consultation can serve as a tool for disseminating information, communicating, and mainstreaming the 11th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue, it should not be the primary focus of the consultation phase.

The consultation period will commence at the start of the cycle, aligning with the beginning of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU. The Danish Presidency

of the Council of the EU will be responsible for receiving and analysing the aggregated results.

The National Working Groups and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations involved in the process will also be required to submit brief reports on how the recommendations of the previous cycles have been implemented.

6. EU Youth Conferences

The three EU Youth Conferences to be organised during the 11th cycle are:

- EUYC Poland: consultation phase
- EUYC Denmark: end consultation / start implementation phase
- EUYC Cyprus: end implementation phase and translation to policy recommendations within the Council of the EU

This collaboration transforms Youth Goals into tangible policy recommendations.

Consultation phase – Poland

Poland will focus on strengthening the European identity among all young Europeans based on universal values. The aim is to bring all Europeans closer to the European Union and to each other. By emphasising these values enshrined in the EU Treaties, the Polish presidency aims to foster a deeper sense of unity and common purpose among the youth across Europe.

The second key aspect of Poland's focus will be enhancing the governance of European Youth Dialogue in line with the interim evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027. Additionally for this process Polish National Agency conducts a study on the current state of the governance of EUYD. The study will involve National Working Groups, Youth Ministers, International Non-Governmental Youth Organizations (INGYOs), the European Commission, the European Youth Forum, and all relevant stakeholders.

The ultimate goal is to develop the Resolution of the Council of the EU on Enhancing of the Governance of the European Youth Dialogue. This Resolution will improve guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue, ensuring that the process becomes more effective, inclusive, and aligned with the evolving needs and aspirations of young Europeans.

Consultation/implementation phase – Denmark

In Denmark, the results of the qualitative consultation process will be compiled and discussed in different formats. Youth delegates will take point of departure on these and contribute to the forthcoming discussions on the future EU Youth Programmes (Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps) which aim to foster a sense of belonging to the EU project, and strengthen mobility.

End of Implementation phase – Cyprus

Cyprus will conclude the phase of implementation by looking at and evaluating the whole 11th cycle EU Youth Dialogue process. All results, findings and outcomes of the 11th cycle will be formulated into policy recommendations in order to foster the sense of youth belonging to the European project and build a bridge between the EU and young people so as to regain trust and increase their participation.

7. Expected outcomes

The overall expected outcomes of the 11th cycle are:

- **Enhanced Youth Engagement**

Foster a sense of ownership and active participation among young people in EU processes. This will help build a more inclusive and engaged European community.

- **Stronger European Identity**

The dialogue aims to foster a sense of European identity among young people, promoting unity and understanding across different cultures and regions.

- **Actionable Insights**

Gather valuable insights and suggestions from young people on how to enhance the connection between the EU and its youth. These insights will be used to inform policy recommendations and future initiatives.

- **Policy Recommendations**

Develop concrete policy recommendations based on the discussions and feedback gathered during the dialogue. These recommendations will be aimed at improving youth engagement with the EU and ensuring their voices are represented in policy-making.

During the PL Presidency, the following documents will be created:

- Resolution of the Council and Member States on enhancing the governance of European Youth Dialogue under the review of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027
- Council Conclusions on a community of young Europeans based on universal values for a common and secure Europe.
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During the DK conference, the following documents will be created:

- Policy paper on the new Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes

During the CY Presidency, the following policy documents will be created:

- Resolution on the EU Youth Strategy Work Plan 2025-2027 (revision)
- Resolution on the outcomes of the 11th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue
- Council Conclusions on the priority of Cypriot Presidency

- **Awareness Raising**

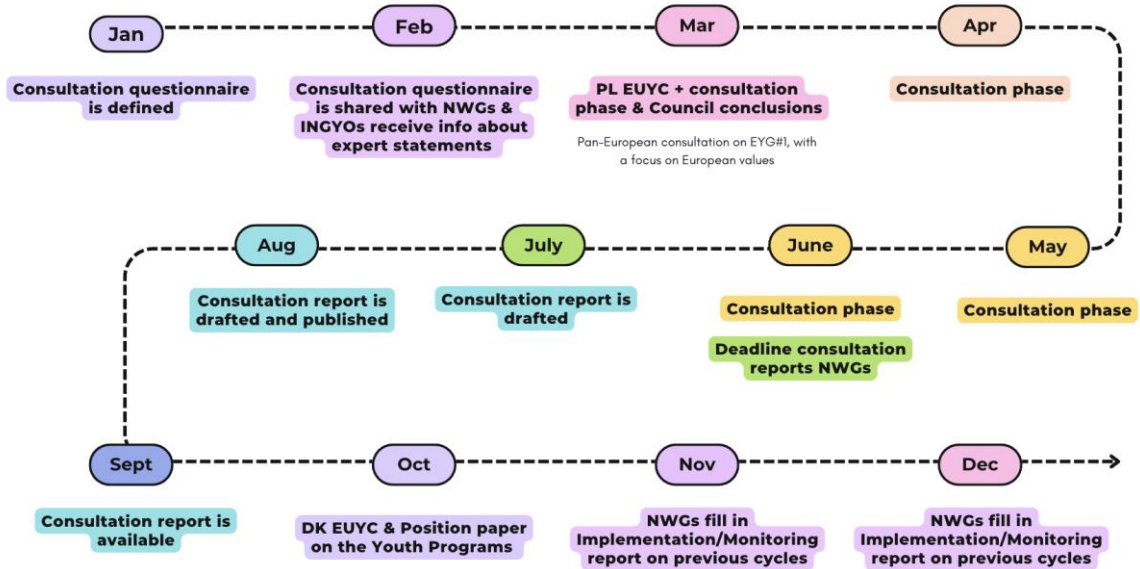
Increase awareness among young people about the EU's role, opportunities available to them, and the importance of their involvement in shaping its future. These will contribute to a more informed and proactive youth population.

The success of the 11th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue depends on the active participation and honest contributions from all stakeholders involved in this process. By focusing on European Youth Goal #1: "Connecting EU with Youth," this cycle aims to build a more inclusive, responsive, and youth-friendly European Union.

Together, we can ensure that the voices of young people are heard and that they play a crucial role in shaping the future of Europe!

Annex I: Preliminary timeline of the EU Youth Dialogue process

Timeline 11th cycle EUYD (2025)



Continuation (2026)...

