



Shaping youth policy in practice

A capacity-building project for strengthening youth policy
2023-2024

Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth



Concept note

Definitions and realities of youth policy vary across countries, within countries, and also over time. Youth policy is a strategy implemented by public authorities with a view to providing young people with opportunities and experiences that support their successful integration into society and enable them to be active and responsible members of their societies, as well as agents of change.

In general, youth policy addresses various and interlinked dimensions in young people's lives: wellbeing, learning, democratic participation, and inclusion. Youth policy can offer opportunities for young people to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes to find their place in society, to be autonomous, to play a role in civil society and the labour market.

Youth policy is an important topic for international institutions. The Council of Europe promotes youth policies based on human rights and democratic standards. It also promotes youth participation in youth policy. The European Union supports policies that create opportunities for young people. It also highlights the role of youth work and non-formal learning.

Among the principles of youth policy, there are some which are at the heart of our project:

- Young people are seen as a resource in both the work of the Council of Europe and of the European Commission and this is the approach promoted also in their respective Member States;
- Co-operation between different actors, governmental and non-governmental and research is fundamental for developing youth policies;
- Inclusion and youth participation are significant elements that youth policy needs in order to be close to young people and involve them in all policy phases;
- Cross-sectoral co-operation is needed to make sure policies reaching young people are coherent and that different professionals link with each other.

In reality, while some of these principles are present, quite often youth policy practices are fragmented, co-operation between actors does not happen on a structural basis, and the role of young people is not sufficiently recognised. In other cases, different youth policy areas need more attention and co-operation.

In this context, the aim of the project is to build capacities of those involved in youth policy in different countries and from different angles (governmental, non-governmental and research) with a vision to strengthen their youth policy work based on the know-how and principles promoted by the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership and its two partner institutions.

The project brings together a limited number of national delegations with a special composition of actors from the different angles of youth policy. Bringing these actors together is important as, according to the youth policy principles promoted by the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership, youth policy should be

based on evidence, should listen to the voice of young people and should be based on the cooperation between different actors involved in the youth field in order to respond to young people's needs and aspirations.

The project will start in 2023 with a two-day residential seminar, followed by work by the country delegations on a national plan they have agreed, with guidance and an online meeting in the 2nd half of 2023. The Youth Partnership will propose a 2nd residential seminar in 2024, pending partner institutions agreement to the next biennial programme.

Project objectives:

- Build capacities of youth policy actors to strengthen youth policy based on the know-how and principles promoted by the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership and its partner institutions;
- Share and use in practice resources developed by the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership, notably the [Youth Policy Manual](#), [Youth Policy Essentials](#), [elibrary on youth sector evaluation](#), MOOC on Essentials of Youth Policy and T-kit on participatory youth policy, as well as the learning from previous editions of the Shaping youth policy in practice project;
- Contribute to a culture of co-operation among different actors for supporting youth policies within each participating country;
- Create a space for in-depth peer exchange on youth policy;
- Accompany and build the capacity of national delegations to develop and implement a delegation plan within each country's national context.

Participants:

The project involves around 35 participants, from 6 countries (Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Moldova, Portugal and Ukraine), recruited as national delegations on the basis of interest and relevance for their current youth policy practice and roles.

Project phases:

- Phase 1 online and offline (January to March 2023)
 - First planning meeting with delegation leads from the participating countries.
 - Two-month online phase, bringing participants to a common level of understanding of youth policy concepts, principles, approaches.
 - Meetings of the delegations to prepare their delegation ideas and plan.
- Phase 2 residential two-day training seminar (29-30 March 2023, Moldova)
 - A training seminar aiming to strengthen competences on youth policy, enhancing cooperation in the national delegations and the preparation of their delegation plan, supporting networking and peer learning among delegations.
- Phase 3 co-operation phase (April 2023-spring 2024)
 - Implementation of delegation plans and support measures for the delegations in this process
- Phase 4 a consolidation seminar (2024, hosting country to be identified)
 - A 2-3 day seminar, consolidating the learning from the project previous phases and bringing new knowledge on youth policy.