

# Mapping Youth Work Development at European Level 2026

## Introduction and Background

Following the successful [4th European Youth Work Convention \(EYWC\)](#), held in Malta in 2025, a report and a roadmap have been proposed to guide the actions of all youth work stakeholders at European and national levels to take youth work policy and practice forward.

This roadmap aims to guide the implementation of the shared European Youth Work Agenda and build on the progress already made towards the implementation of ‘Signposts for the Future’, the results of the third European Youth Work Convention.

The conclusions of the 4<sup>th</sup> EYWC are understood within three key pillars for development:

**Youth work core:** A shared vision for youth work and its future, which focused on definitions and descriptions of youth work, values and ethics, recognition and visibility, quality and standards, and monitoring and evaluation.

**Youth work environment:** Supporting young people by addressing their needs and aspirations, ensuring their access, inclusion, participation, and empowerment. This includes advocacy in youth work; the role of employed and volunteer youth workers and youth leaders, and their education, training, and recognition, as well as youth work methodologies, tools, approaches and new technologies.

**Youth work systems:** Policy and strategy at the European, national, regional, and local levels, covering the voluntary youth sector and youth work associations, networks, centres, and service providers. It also included cooperation between state/public and voluntary sectors at different levels, state/public and EU/EYF funding and resources for youth work, and youth work’s interaction with other policy fields.

This mapping process is part of the EU-Council of Europe Partnership in the Field of Youth (Youth Partnership)’s programme of activity 2026-2028 to strengthen youth work systems.

## Mapping youth work development at European level

Building on recent work, notably [‘Mapping European youth work ecosystems’, 2024](#), the Youth Partnership will carry out [studies to assess youth work development both at European and national levels](#). These studies will be aligned with the directions outlined in **key policy frameworks** (the [Council of Europe Recommendation on Youth](#)

[Work](#), the European Youth Work Agenda (EYWA) and the conclusions and roadmap of the [4th European Youth Work Convention](#).

This study focuses on activity and developments at the European level in 2026 and will support the collection and sharing of evidence, helping to identify patterns, gaps, and opportunities for strategic development and knowledge exchange across Europe.

Through this study we aim to:

- Provide a structured **overview of initiatives and actors involved** in youth work development in Europe.
- **Identify gaps and overlaps in actions at European level** to support a coordinated approach to youth work development across Europe.
- **Inform decision-making processes and strategic planning** within member States, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, and other stakeholders.
- **Ensure wide dissemination of mapping results and insights** through the Youth Partnership's website and other communication channels.

The key source of data for this study will be the EU-Council of Europe reference group on Youth Work.

## EU-Council of Europe reference group on youth work 2026-2028

The Youth Partnership will work with the Reference Group towards synergies and complementarities between the members on the follow-up of the Convention's conclusions and roadmap at European level. Members will share their commitments, initiatives and actions, informing this mapping document, and enabling a connected and complementary approach which can be communicated across the youth work sector.

## Phases of the Roadmap

The Roadmap and accompanying timeline, as set out in the 4<sup>th</sup> EYWC report, demonstrate how the conclusions of the convention can inform, underpin and feature in European and national youth policies and strategies in the years ahead.

This study will focus on the European Level activity that supports Phases 1 and 2 of the Roadmap – 2026-2027, in which the following actions are recommended:

### Phase 1

- European institutions, National Agencies, Member States at national regional and local level, the voluntary youth sector and the wider youth work community including providers and support services to consider and take appropriate action to give effect to the convention's conclusions.

- The European Commission in making proposals for the new EU Youth Strategy, post 2027, to ensure that the convention's conclusions inform, underpin and become an integral feature of such proposals.
- The European Commission and the Council of Europe, through the Youth Partnership to strengthen cooperation and coordinate approaches in implementing the convention's conclusions. (Example: code of ethics, media, AI and Digital Literacy)
- Initiatives under the European Youth Work Agenda to be reviewed and aligned with the roadmap and conclusions of the convention.

## Phase 2

- EU Council Presidencies - in 2026 and 2027 - to propose measures, through the Youth Working Party, to give effect to the convention's conclusions, and in considering and agreeing the new EU Youth Strategy, ensure that youth work is a dedicated section or pillar of the strategy.
- During EU Council Presidencies, Directors-General for Youth to report on actions taken to give effect to the convention's conclusions at national, regional and local level.
- The EU-COE Youth Partnership to focus its future work programmes on promoting, co-ordinating and following-up the implementation of the convention's conclusions.
- The Joint Council on Youth of the Council of Europe (CMJ) to establish a Task Force to amend where appropriate the Recommendation on Youth Work, in the context of the convention's conclusions and adopt the revised recommendation by the Committee of Ministers by the end of 2027.

# Mapping youth work development at the European level 2026 – Data collection form

*Please note that contact details will not be published – they are requested so that we can check information gathered is accurate.*

*Please submit a separate form for each activity/ initiative.*

<b>Institution/organisation/ department</b>	
<b>Activity/Initiative</b>	
<b>Primary contact</b> (name and email)	
<b>Secondary contact</b> (name and email)	

## **Pillar / Conclusion addressed (check all that apply):**

- Youth Work Core
- Youth Work Environment
- Youth Work System

## **Roadmap activity: (check all that apply)**

- European institutions, National Agencies, Member States at national regional and local level, the voluntary youth sector and the wider youth work community including providers and support services to consider and take appropriate action to give effect to the convention's conclusions.
- The European Commission in making proposals for the new EU Youth Strategy, post 2027, to ensure that the convention's conclusions inform, underpin and become an integral feature of such proposals.
- The European Commission and the Council of Europe, through the Youth Partnership to strengthen cooperation and coordinate approaches in implementing the convention's conclusions. (Example: code of ethics, media, AI and Digital Literacy)
- Initiatives under the European Youth Work Agenda to be reviewed and aligned with the roadmap and conclusions of the convention.
- EU Council Presidencies - in 2026 and 2027 - to propose measures, through the Youth Working Party, to give effect to the convention's conclusions, and in considering

and agreeing the new EU Youth Strategy, ensure that youth work is a dedicated section or pillar of the strategy.

During EU Council Presidencies, Directors-General for Youth to report on actions taken to give effect to the convention's conclusions at national, regional and local level.

The EU-COE Youth Partnership to focus its future work programmes on promoting, co-ordinating and following-up the implementation of the convention's conclusions.

The Joint Council on Youth of the Council of Europe (CMJ) to establish a Task Force to amend where appropriate the Recommendation on Youth Work, in the context of the convention's conclusions and adopt the revised recommendation by the Committee of Ministers by the end of 2027.

**Brief description of the Activity/ Initiative / Process**

**Timescale**

**Intended outcomes / impact**

**Synergy with other activities** *within institution/ with other institutions*

**What will success look like and how will you know?**

**Partnerships and cooperation in place**

**Partnerships and cooperation required**

**Web links**

