

Youth Partnership

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



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

Concept note and Terms of Reference

Context

Following the successful [4th European Youth Work Convention](#), 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. To contribute to the follow-up to the Convention's outcomes, the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership work plan 2026-2028 foresees a [stronger focus on youth work](#) and several policy, research and practice-oriented actions.

In this context, an EU-Council of Europe's reference group on youth work development will be established, building on the rich experience of the Steering Group on the 4th European Youth Work Convention, which was coordinated by the Youth Partnership.

This reference group will serve as a platform for dialogue and regular exchange of information between the European Union and the Council of Europe, and key stakeholders active in youth work development at European level. It is rooted in the shared commitments of the two institutions, as reflected in the European Youth Work Agenda and will build on the roadmap following the 4th Convention European Youth Work Convention. The Youth Partnership will work 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, as well as support communication and the promotion of the Convention's outcomes. The reference group will also contribute to the implementation of the Youth Partnership's youth work activities planned for 2026–2028.

Objectives

The reference group aims to:

- Contribute to the definition and implementation of the Convention's roadmap, as well as to the promotion, dissemination, and practical application of its conclusions.
- Support coordination, information sharing, policy alignment and implementation action among European-level stakeholders.
- Foster synergies and complementarities among actors involved in youth work at the European level and avoid duplication.

- Contribute to a shared vision for youth work development at European level, guided by the roadmap and conclusions of the 4th European Youth Work Convention.
- Promote the work of the Youth Partnership across Europe and support it where relevant, especially in the context of the communication action to promote the importance and value of youth work across Europe.

The members of the reference group are expected to:

- Actively participate in all the meetings (one in-person and one online meeting per year) and contribute to achieving the objectives of the group;
- Contribute to specific projects agreed by the partner institutions in the Youth Partnership work plan (ex. preparation and dissemination of the [communication action on the importance and value of youth work](#));
- Share regular updates and contribute to the [mapping of youth work development at European level](#);
- Make links between the Reference Group work and other youth work development initiatives and the European standards on youth work policy development;
- Make thematic inputs, based on their expertise, in youth work related events and webinars organised by the Youth Partnership;
- Support youth work policy actions at national or local levels initiated by the members of the [network of national correspondents](#).

Membership

Members of the group will be invited from the following organisations:

Council of Europe

European Commission

Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ)

European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ)

European Youth Forum

Alliance of Youth Workers Associations (AYWA)

SALTO Resource Centres

Network of Erasmus+ National Agencies Youth (and relevant SNACs)

Quality Labelled Youth Centres Network

EU and Council of Europe's presidencies will also be invited and can be renewed on rotation basis, depending on their youth work related initiatives, to ensure connection to policy cooperation initiatives on youth work

ERYICA

EYCA

Eurodesk

Indicative timeline

2026

- 31 March p.m. – 1 April all day: 1st meeting of the EU-Council of Europe Reference Group on youth work development, Brussels, Liaison Office of the Council of Europe to the European Union.
- Autumn (date to be confirmed): 2nd meeting (online)

2027

- Two meetings of the EU-Council of Europe reference group (in person / online)

2028

- Joint meeting (in-person) of the EU-Council of Europe reference group and network of national correspondents on youth work to take stock of progress made since the last Convention, assess achievements, and begin shaping ideas and priorities for the next one.
- Meetings of the EU-Council of Europe reference group (online)