



Youth Partnership

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



EKCYP-PEYR Annual Meeting

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
Summary	3
	4
Welcome and Institutional Context	5
Main conclusions of the Symposium	5
Updates on thematic clusters' research	6
Digitalisation and AI	6
Youth work and the European Youth Work Agenda (EYWA)	7
Participation, shrinking space and revitalising democracy	7
Climate change (crisis) and sustainability	9
Mental health and wellbeing	10
Working together: Strengthening the think tank function of the Youth Partnership	10
Scanning the future: Youth as future priority in the current context	11
Long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people & youth participation	11
Youth, peace, security and youth work in the context of war — youth work addressing conflict, security and peace themes	12
Implications of crises for youth policy across Europe — focusing on the national youth policies	12
Implications of crises for youth policy across Europe — focusing on the European/regional policies	13
Scanning the future – youth sector and research priorities	14
Concluding remarks and steps forward	16
	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix I: List of rapporteurs	17
Appendix II: List of participants	18
Appendix III: Resource list: The work of ECKYP & PEYR members	20
Appendix IV: Agenda	22

Summary

During their 2022 annual meeting, experts from the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCYP) and the Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR) dived into intense discussions, sharing developments in the field of youth and identifying policy gaps to inform meaningful policy responses. This included research priorities in relation to several areas affecting youth policy and the lives of young people:

- digitalisation and artificial intelligence (AI)
- youth work and the European Youth Work Agenda
- participation, shrinking space and revitalising democracy
- climate change (crisis) and sustainability
- the long-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on young people and youth participation
- youth, peace, security and youth work in the context of war
- implications of crises for youth policy at the European and national level.

Discussions highlighted that for policy makers to better support young people in facing ongoing crises we need more knowledge on the above-mentioned topics, but in particular a better understanding of young people's mental health and well-being overall. Heightened levels of anxiety and depression following the Covid-19 pandemic, digitalisation, ongoing conflicts and climate change need to be addressed through interdisciplinary and intersectoral approaches, focusing on the mid- and long-term impacts on young people.

In the context of growing inequalities, research which addresses how youth participation can strengthen the inclusion of underprivileged young people is needed to inform an effective public policy response. This entails enhancing the outreach of youth work and youth policy in addressing the burdens faced by young people in public care, migrant youth, youth from ethnic and religious minorities, homeless young people, young people with disabilities, and LGBTQI+ youth.

Overall, advocacy to mainstream youth policy and meaningful youth participation remains key. The voices of young people should be heard loudly across all sectors, including in relation to security and conflicts. Youth work and youth policy research – if given the attention and consideration by decision makers – has the potential to advance policies to serve the needs of all young people. With plenty of instruments, especially national recovery plans, there is now a certain opportunity to claim a more prominent role for the youth sector in the European agenda, and at national, regional and local levels.

Welcome and institutional context

The annual meeting of the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCYP) correspondents and the Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR) on 24 June 2022 was the first in-person meeting of the two groups since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. It brought together youth experts from 24 countries to take stock of the work that has been done in the field of youth, identify core challenges that young people face (including those that are rarely on the policy agenda), and propose ideas for future research priorities.

The welcoming and re-connecting session started with the strategy overview by Clotilde Talleu, Manager of the Youth Partnership and Babis Papaioannou, Policy Officer, European Commission Directorate General for Education and Culture.

Babis Pappaioannou presented updates from the European Commission and the European Year of Youth 2022, highlighting the EU Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers and recommendations to the member states, which include a clear legislative framework for the security of transnational volunteers, enhancing the quality of volunteering and increasing access for disadvantaged young people. Overall, the EU's youth work priorities for 2022-23 include:

- ❖ supporting initiatives on youth work through the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership
- ❖ facilitating the dialogue within the youth work community of practice
- ❖ supporting better recognition of youth work.

The discussion emphasised the need to create synergies between EU and national schemes. In terms of European co-operation, the 9th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue under the trio presidency of France, the Czech Republic and Sweden, themed “Engaging together for a sustainable and inclusive Europe”, was highlighted.

Among activities foreseen for 2022–23 are the launching of the steering group on the implementation of the European Youth Work Agenda (EYWA), support for the Bonn Process and the creation of national networks on youth work. To facilitate better knowledge and evidence about youth in Europe, a Eurobarometer study on mental health and a study on rural youth have also been foreseen.

Clotilde Talleu presented the main updates from the Youth Partnership, including the research study “[Meaningful youth political participation in Europe: concepts patterns and policy implications](#)” and introduced the [Library on recognition of youth work](#), which covers six areas (About recognition; Inspiring recognition practices and tools; Recognition stories; National situations; European policy developments; Recognition resources). The active involvement of the partnership in the steering group on the implementation of the EYWA, the European Platform on Learning Mobility (EPLM), as well as the new edition of the massive open online course (MOOC) on youth work, youth policy and youth research were also introduced.

In view of the current war in Ukraine, the partnership created a special page on [Solidarity with Ukraine](#) with a series of *Under 30*’ podcast episodes dedicated to the impact of the war and to solidarity with young people and the youth sector in Ukraine. Lastly, the Council of Europe’s newly launched youth campaign “[Democracy here | Democracy now](#)” was introduced, emphasising that it aims to revitalise democracy and strengthen mutual trust between young people and democratic institutions and processes.

Main conclusions of the symposium

Just prior to the PEYR-ECKYP meeting, the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership held a symposium entitled “[Navigating Transitions: adapting policy to young people’s changing realities](#)” in Tirana, the European Youth Capital 2022. Its lead rapporteur, Maria-Carmen Pantea, shared conclusions with the

PEYR-ECKYP colleagues. The rapporteur reflected on youth transition patterns and experiences and noted that the Covid-19 pandemic and other large societal challenges such as war, economic crisis, shrinking space for civil society and limited channels for participation in public life have all impacted these transition pathways on political, economic, social, and personal levels. The symposium participants shared inspiring initiatives and learned about resources from the partnership (i.e. the Youth Policy Manual, the e-library on youth policy evaluation, the draft T-kit on participatory youth policy, thematic research initiatives). They developed messages and proposals for policy changes needed to support better youth transitions.

Updates on thematic clusters' research

The meeting continued with parallel group discussions and “sharing is caring” feedback session in the plenary, covering the following thematic areas:

- digitalisation and AI
- youth work and the European Youth Work Agenda
- participation, shrinking space and revitalising democracy
- climate change (crisis) and sustainability
- mental health and well-being.

Digitalisation and AI

During the workshop, researchers discussed digitalisation and its impact on democracy, social inclusion, AI in the youth sector and the implications of AI on young people and youth work. Experts highlighted the need to develop protocols on how to behave in virtual contexts that take into account security and ethics. One of the challenges identified is a lack of research on AI and youth, and the general need to:

- ❖ demystify AI, make it accessible to the youth sector and offer guidance to youth workers on what digital resources exist, how to use them and in what situations. Furthermore, address what are the optimal ways to engage the virtual world and how to create hybrid models of activities.
- ❖ There is also a need to identify ways in which the youth sector can engage in digitalisation and artificial intelligence: how to create their own resources and how to use the resources already created taking into account privacy and security issues;
- ❖ provide evidence that the youth sector has limited access to artificial intelligence, because data and the internet are not free and it is necessary to have a smart device and the skills to handle the above points. It is also necessary to identify and address the differences between AI literacy, digital literacy, and data literacy;
- ❖ delve further into the impacts the Covid-19 pandemic and digitalisation have had on the youth sector and youth. Identify what support youth workers need in the context of digitalisation and AI, taking into account the growing need to be knowledgeable about the tools for digital hygiene (performing certain digital practices in order to minimise cyber risks). Systematise youth workers' perspectives on their relationship with digitalisation and AI;
- ❖ compare the differences between youth workers who had the competencies to cope with massive digitalisation compared to those who did not or who were oversaturated or exhausted by digitalisation;
- ❖ identify the differences that exist in how girls, boys, adolescents and young people learn in school through the variety of digital resources. At the same time, address that both teachers and youth can become overwhelmed by the volume of digital resources available;

- ❖ emphasise the need to form interdisciplinary teams to work with artificial intelligence and that there is less intimidation of both the youth sector and policy makers. Promote awareness that more stakeholders need to be involved in the AI conversation;
- ❖ address the need to create flexible indicators and evaluation frameworks that can adapt to the constant updates that digital resources and artificial intelligence are undergoing.

Youth work and the European Youth Work Agenda (EYWA)

In terms of research, besides the preliminary study of Frederike Hofmann-van de Poll (PEYR) & Marko Kovacic (ECKYP) on the Bonn Process, there are limited data on the EYWA and its implementation. However, there are many initiatives on the quality of youth work. The researchers discussed the lack of visibility of the EYWA, since not many stakeholders know what it is about. This challenge is followed by the level of states' commitment to continue implementing it.

The relevance of the wording “Bonn Process” and “EYWA” have also been addressed. Participants also discussed the question of what is the goal of research and mapping of youth work. In this regard, we have to keep in mind that reactions like “Why is the Bonn Process relevant?” or “The Bonn Process is not relevant to me” are based on a European division:

- ❖ countries which have an established system of youth work and do not see the relevance of the EYWA because they have their own discourses on youth work;
- ❖ countries which do not have this established system of youth work and are building systems wonder what the EYWA can contribute and may be overwhelmed by the European debate.

Future research needs on youth work could include:

- ❖ mapping youth work ecosystems at the European level;
- ❖ qualitative research: inviting representatives from three countries with different histories and contexts to come together and discuss what they think the future of youth work will be;
- ❖ collect narratives: look into what is happening across different countries on youth work and bring them together to discuss, reflect and share it back at the local level.

Participation, shrinking space and revitalising democracy

Exacerbated by the pandemic, the civic space for participation has been shrinking: we have witnessed legislation restricting rights to freedom of association, expression and access to funding for civil society actors. This process should be addressed and reversed as it bears strong long-term consequences not only for young people, but also for the democratic societies, human rights and the rule of law in Europe overall.

Existing research partially covers:

- ❖ young people's participation in elections – youth participation is usually lower than the turnout rate for older persons, but not in all countries (e.g. Austria is an exception). Participation of young people in elections during the Covid-19 pandemic has changed – e.g. in Bulgaria, young people were less afraid of the virus, therefore the level of youth turnout was higher compared to other age groups;
- ❖ impact of voting rights at 16 – reducing the voting age can boost youth participation in elections as voters and increase the number of young candidates as well;

- ❖ the profile of young people involved in protests and the civic movement on climate is not fully inclusive. Those who are underprivileged and the most vulnerable to climate change are sometimes not able to make life changes which are advocated by other activists (e.g. young people living in urban areas protest against the use of cars, but without the right infrastructure, young people living in rural areas are still dependent on cars to access services in cities). This situation promotes divisions among different youth groups (one exception is in Portugal, where youth in rural areas is a government priority and many volunteers are connected with forest/environmental projects);
- ❖ research on the space for youth organisations (youth civil society) shows that the main issue for these organisations is funding, not the lack of rights or the limitation of liberties;
- ❖ social exclusion, marginalisation, belonging to a discriminated minority (Roma and Travellers,¹ LGBTQI+, etc.) and poverty are proven limits to participation. However, policies encouraging participation do not take these hindering factors into account;
- ❖ top-down initiatives to encourage youth participation are creating spaces for young people to participate “in the sandbox” – that is, limited within the existing system, without taking into account that young people do not want to participate, they want to make changes. Most initiatives to encourage youth participation are top-down, including in education – in school curricula, mandatory participation of young people in school boards, mandatory youth councils in cities and towns, laws amended to ensure student participation in school and university decisions;
- ❖ other publications and messages on youth participation from more radical youth movements (such as young people active on climate or social inequalities, or even from radicalised nationalistic groups) promote youth participation against the establishment;
- ❖ youth wings of political parties are (often) not an alternative for participation for young people. They are often seen as reproducing the same political options and behaviour patterns as existing political elites.

Research needs include:

- ❖ investigating the link between youth participation in youth activities/projects, youth work and political participation in promoting European values, human rights and democracy;
- ❖ addressing the discrepancy between identifying youth as a vulnerable group, while young people are actually strong and resilient. Research should investigate how these qualities can be encouraged for youth participation;
- ❖ further exploring the connection between (limited) youth participation and their perception of corruption and the lack of fairness of the political “game”;
- ❖ addressing the research gap on participation of young people from migrant/diaspora communities and specific barriers to their participation.
- ❖ identifying how topic-based participation (i.e. protesting for climate change) is linked to specific

1. The term “Roma and Travellers” is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term “Gens du voyage”, as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. The present is an explanatory footnote, not a definition of Roma and/or Travellers.

political parties and/or ideologies. For example, in school councils, right-wing attitudes are not strongly represented, but we know they exist;

- ❖ exploring the influence of social media on participation: is social media a tool for participation or a disengagement tool for participation without involvement?
- ❖ addressing migration and participation: there is a strong contradiction between promoting political and civic participation among young migrants who are not allowed to vote.

Climate change (crisis) and sustainability

The EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership's research on climate and sustainability, including the [sustainability checklist](#) and the study on sustainability and learning mobility of the EPLM platform were presented (including preparation of the [Sustainability and Learning Mobility conference](#) which will take place from 26 February to 1 March 2023). The research tackled the topic of climate justice in the context of geographical inequalities, racism and capitalism.

The following needs were highlighted.

- ❖ Research on social inclusion linked to climate justice is missing the youth perspective and further research on intersectionality of the effects of climate change is needed.
 - Since climate change is connected to post-colonial history, geographical inequalities and their connections to climate change (e.g. a global South/North perspective) should also be addressed. For example, the landmark report by the European Network Against Racism, "[The climate crisis is a \(neo\)colonial capitalist crisis: experiences, responses and steps towards decolonising climate action](#)" highlights how a dangerous pesticide called chlordecone was forbidden in mainland France in 1990, but was granted a 3-year extension to be used by plantation owners in the overseas territories, Guadeloupe and Martinique. Currently, this carcinogenic pesticide can be found in the blood of the majority of people on the said islands, and the health consequences are still unfolding. How does this influence local young people? There are different motivations for young activists to fight for climate justice depending on their location.
 - Underprivileged young people in Europe are more likely to be exposed to the effects of climate change and environmental degradation. For example, Roma and Traveller communities are disproportionately more likely to be affected by forced evictions and to end up in environmentally polluted areas, such as landfills, contaminated industrial sites or in areas prone to climate hazards such as floods (see the European Environmental Bureau and European Roma Grassroots Organisations Network report "[Pushed to the wastelands: environmental racism against Roma communities in Central and Eastern Europe](#)").
- ❖ There is a need for mainstreaming and creating space for discussions of climate justice within the youth sector. Young people talk a lot about these issues and are aware of them; however, there is not enough political will and institutional support for new policies and thematic priorities in this area.
- ❖ The need to address the link between the climate crisis and mental health of young people, including climate anxiety, activist burnouts, activist criminalisation and the effects of long-term civic participation in the area of climate change (i.e. exhaustion of climate protesters when there is limited meaningful change in institutional climate regulations and policies).

Mental health and well-being

Young people's mental health has been explored through research and policy briefings from the [Covid-19 Knowledge Hub](#). A recent review of recovery and resilience facility plans (RPF) shows that mental health, social issues and "core youth topics" (i.e. non-formal education and youth work) are not explicitly mentioned in these plans. Youth is mainly considered from the micro-economic perspective as an economic concept. Mental health is mentioned in the framework of Global Health Security – this is the only RPF pillar that makes direct reference to youth mental health. Otherwise, there are no age-specific recovery measures available in the RPFs.

The following points were highlighted.

- ❖ We should not only collect data on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic but start using it to address policy gaps and inform meaningful policy responses. Advocacy is needed (based on evidence) to address identified policy gaps and put youth mental health on the policy agenda for recovery and resilience plans (and beyond). Advocacy across ministries (cross-sectoral) is essential.
- ❖ Young people need to be included in the development of recovery measures.
- ❖ Stigma regarding the use of psychosocial services or reaching out for help among youth should be addressed. Youth workers could play a role in identifying problems and guiding young people towards support services, since young people trust them and open up to them more easily. Training of youth workers is needed in order to raise their capacity to identify mental health issues and to address them to specialist services. Co-operation and relationships with other professionals needs to be improved.
- ❖ There is a need to address the knowledge gap when it comes to "hard-to-reach" youth groups (i.e. youth in care, young carers, young migrants).
- ❖ It is important to explore how youth services need to be designed (online and offline) and what is the role of digitalisation in addressing mental health services.
- ❖ The topic of mental health is even more relevant right now, especially in light of the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, the current war in Ukraine and the potential future financial crisis. Research about the mid- and long-term impact of various crises on youth mental health is essential.
- ❖ Further attention should be given to ethics in youth work: values, principles, boundaries, self-care, professionalism, etc.

Working together: strengthening the think-tank function of the Youth Partnership

The participants held a discussion on working together and strengthening the think-tank function of the Youth Partnership.

The secretariat informed the participants about the upcoming call for tender, to ensure better contracting procedures for the researchers. The researchers were invited to provide feedback and noted suggestions for increasing the daily fees.

The Youth Partnership team shared important points concerning the style, structure and quality of the contributions from experts and provided clear guidelines on submissions, to ensure higher quality of work and better use of research outputs by the sector.

- ❖ outlining mechanisms to effectively restart learning mobility.

Recommendations for the future research and advocacy included the following.

- ❖ Making the most of knowledge instead of only expanding it: there is plenty of knowledge on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, lots of findings and conclusions – the main question now is how to use them in a structured, helpful and predictive manner for policy making.
- ❖ It is time to advocate for a more visible role of the youth sector on both national and European level. With plenty of instruments, especially national recovery plans, there is now a certain opportunity to claim a better-respected role for the youth sector in the European agenda.

Youth, peace, security and youth work in the context of war

Key takeaways of the discussion were as follows.

- ❖ Young people are usually included either in “traditional youth topics” (i.e. education, international mobility, culture) or in a superficial way in other topics. The voices of young people, however, should be heard loudly across all sectors, especially in the area of security, stability and conflict.
- ❖ “Reconciliation” has become a controversial term. Many young people perceive it as imposed by adults who come from a different geopolitical and cultural background. Young people do not necessarily feel the need to talk about the past, at least in the way they are being asked to. Reconciliation models exist and could be used, provided that they are adapted to local realities and standards (Franco-German, Irish model, etc.).
- ❖ The overarching narratives justifying conflict for alleged reasons of patriotism should be challenged.
- ❖ Trainers, youth workers and other practitioners working directly with youth within the wider realm of youth work do not need to be neutral. Providing concrete answers and disclosing one’s position can be a sound strategy, especially in the era of digitalisation, where finding information about a person’s stance (e.g. their political preferences, stance on climate change, etc.) is quite easy.
- ❖ There are always crises; youth work should come to terms with that fact and prepare accordingly. In this sense, trainers should be equipped with adequate skills, perhaps more than what they would be expected to have had in previous years: knowledge of diplomacy and politics and conflict resolution skills are indispensable for any youth worker and not only for those active in conflict-affected settings and audiences.
- ❖ Radicalisation is always a relevant topic, especially now, in our digitalised era. Youth workers should have the skills to identify instances of radicalisation (or susceptibility to it) and to seek help and guidance from experts if needed.

Implications of crises for youth policy across Europe – focusing on the national youth policies

Most countries continue to struggle with effective co-ordination, not only within government but also between government and civil society, blocking the more responsive development of youth policies in the face of changing circumstances and needs of young people. The relevant issues – some new and triggered by the crises, but most, older but exacerbated by the crises – can be encapsulated as follows:

- departure (outward migration/brain drain)
- division (within youth, between generations, between host and immigrant populations, sometimes regarding language, and many other factors)
- dislocation (losing a sense of place and purpose)
- disadvantage
- digitalisation
- development.

Overall, concerns about inclusion, cohesion and integration were expressed, contextualising this with the need to explore what kinds of facilities and opportunities within a given country needed improvement to strengthen young people's pathways to adulthood.

- ❖ Research should focus on the principles, policies and practices relating to youth participation as part of that inclusion agenda.
- ❖ A better understanding is needed of the extent to which digitalisation has reached young people, especially about equity and equality of access and opportunities to engage in the digital sphere. Research should focus on better understanding young people's mental health and well-being, given all the unfolding awareness of heightened levels of anxiety and depression following the Covid-19 crisis. There is a growing discussion about young people's isolation and loneliness, although an in-depth understanding of the issue is still missing. Now that the Covid-19 crisis is supposedly "over", should young people be expected to get "over" their worries, and perhaps now face greater stigma should they reveal their persisting anxieties?
- ❖ There is a need for renewed attention to be given to understanding the post-Covid characteristics of youth unemployment. For example, Azerbaijan may have well-resourced youth policies, but the World Bank reports that 23% of young people in Azerbaijan are not in employment, education or training (NEET): who are they, and why? In Ireland, there has been a fall in youth unemployment, but we do not yet understand the reasons: have young people left the country, returned to education, got jobs, or something else?
- ❖ The most marginalised groups of young people have experienced the most disproportionately negative consequences as a result of the crises, but who exactly is part of these groups:? They are young people in and from public care, migrant youth, young people from ethnic minority communities, homeless young people, young people with disabilities and LGBTQI+ young people. In addition, there are also those who live alone and have experienced profound loneliness, those who lost their jobs during the pandemic and those who had to live in substance-misusing households. We need to remain sharply attentive to new contexts of marginalisation and disadvantage. Safety nets are needed to make sure the basic needs of young people are met.

Overall, there needs to be a move away from classical youth strategies to more proactive and responsive approaches that not only address the consequences of present crises but are better prepared for the crises that are to come.

Implications of crises for youth policy across Europe – focusing on European/regional policies

Participants discussed the connection between (1) the shrinking space for civil society, (2) European values, human rights and democracy and (3) political debate in European forums. Part of the group discussion looked into the challenges generated by the existing divisions/disagreements on issues "we used to take for granted", such as European values, human rights and democracy values and practices. The other part of the discussion sought to identify opportunities that should be created when, in time of

crisis, coalescence is reached in response to the crisis.

The tools of European youth policies are not fit for the crisis. There is a need to evaluate and adapt each tool and programme to the current realities experienced by young people. However, current evaluations have some problems.

- ❖ They are often not done in a timely manner and/or not conducted at the moment when they can best influence the policies.
- ❖ They do not always take into consideration unintended effects of the policies and programmes evaluated and do not always take into consideration the need for reform in relation to the current crisis.
- ❖ They are often conducted by experts/teams that are not specialised in youth policies.

On the other hand, the financial and economic crisis and the energy crisis affect young people more strongly (because they do not own assets and inflation is affecting them more than other age groups). Research does not cover the evaluation/assessment of the impact of financial, economic and energy policies on young people. The upcoming mid-term evaluation of the EU should keep in mind the following.

- ❖ Values (human rights, democracy) need to be strengthened.
- ❖ Governance structures need to be analysed and, where possible, structural reforms could be recommended.
- ❖ The tools for European youth policies need a (radical) reform based on evaluations, especially rapid assessments and process evaluations delivered in a timely manner.

Scanning the future – youth sector and research priorities

Howard Williamson gave the closing remarks, addressing youth sector research priorities and highlighting the unpredictability of the future – socially, politically, technologically. He noted the complexity of forecasting and imagining the future of the youth sector: challenges are multifaceted and range from precarity, stability and prosperity to issues with migration and exploitation of migrants in Europe.

Responsibility — Community — Technology — Personality — Climate — Economy

Notably, not all young people will be passionately committed to the values of the Council of Europe and the EU. Although left-wing/"trendy" action for climate is taking place (e.g. Fridays for Future), there are many young people who feel displaced in the modern world and make up a big recruiting ground for far-right and white-supremacist identities. It is essential to strengthen outreach to young people who feel disengaged, because often potential beneficiaries of what we offer do not always have access to it.

Creative, entrepreneurial, dynamic portrayal of young people is one-sided. The other side represents "generation Frankenstein" – gang culture; knife and gun crime, which also signify the need to find better pathways out of the criminal justice system for perpetrators. Notably, this has also contributed to the concept of safety for a community, meaning "safety from young people", although for young people security is within their communities.

Challenges in this area include:

- ❖ acknowledging the challenge of mental health and vulnerability of young people;

addressing the lack of action (i.e. community resilience support) in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, despite the considerable research that took place;



- ❖ questioning fidelity and our sense of outwardness/openness to other people (or do we only take responsibility for ourselves?) Young people are impacted by anxiety that the world is going to end/whether tomorrow is coming (i.e. do we want to have children? Why care for oneself if we believe we will not live a long time?) Significant challenges affecting young people include unbalanced diets, high costs of living, etc., which impact mental and physical health;
- ❖ questioning sexuality and whether young people will become more authoritarian or liberal about it;
- ❖ questioning meritocracy. If young people think they have raced to the top based on merit and ability alone, without addressing their privileges, it may pose challenges to democratic societies. Challenges associated with keeping “the other” out (e.g. in some countries Eastern European refugees are seen and treated very differently than Syrian refugees);
- ❖ perceiving the democratic world as full of solidarity and inclusion or as one of conflict and hostility. There are no standard transitions from youth to adulthood across history – they vary dramatically. Significant portions of the current generation of young people are affected by precarity, risk and marginalisation. Notably, precarity has extended from working-class children to a much wider generation and population of youth, posing a big challenge on how to reverse that process. We

need to work much harder and with more patience to extend positive policy opportunities to the most vulnerable and marginalised;

- ❖ addressing technology (in the follow/up discussion). One could argue that the future is predictable because AI knows us incredibly well. Questions were raised on how information technology influences the development of personality, identity and feelings of community. Technologies challenge the idea of autonomy and agency at all levels, and we must prepare ourselves to address the influence of the technology sector. Also, it is essential to note that one does not have to maintain an online presence to be “datified”.

Concluding remarks and steps forward

The secretariat congratulated all the researchers on the successful meeting with a diverse group of experts, highlighting that it has been fruitful to connect younger researchers with more experienced ones.

Some of the upcoming projects and activities of the Youth Partnership of relevance to researchers include:

- the upcoming MOOC on youth research;
- giving more dynamism to the perspectives on youth and trying to bring up topics that are of concern to young people, but are not (yet) on the agenda of the youth sector (i.e. homelessness during the Covid-19 pandemic, mentoring, co-housing; digitalisation and AI discrimination);
- supporting the implementation of the European Youth Work Agenda (EYWA).

Lastly, Tanya Basarab thanked the researchers for their commitment and noted that, although we may not be able to predict the future, we will keep in mind the complexity of the challenges ahead. Hopefully, they will be more easily addressed with the support of connections established among a diverse community of researchers from across Europe.

During the evaluation, participants described the meeting as being inspiring, highly informative and connective, with many being grateful for the opportunity to catch up in person with the community of practice. Since the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership will celebrate 25 years of existence in 2023, the experts expressed their best wishes for its future work, highlighting the important role of the partnership in facilitating knowledge gathering and sharing.

Appendix I: Rapporteurs

Thematic discussion	Rapporteur
Digitalisation and AI	Alonso Escamilla (PEYR)
Youth work and the European Youth Work Agenda (EYWA)	Frederike Hofmann-van de Poll (PEYR) & Marko Kovacic (ECKYP)
Participation, shrinking space and revitalising democracy	Irina Lonean (PEYR)
Climate change (crisis) and sustainability	Marzena Ples (PEYR)
Mental health and well-being	Sladjana Petkovic (PEYR AG)
Long-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on young people & youth participation	Parvan Simeonov (PEYR)
Youth, peace, security and youth work in the context of war - youth work addressing conflict, security and peace themes	Mary Drosopoulos (PEYR)
Implications of crises for youth policy across Europe - focusing on the national youth policies	Howard Williamson (PEYR AG)
Implications of crises for youth policy across Europe - focusing on the European/regional policies	Guy Redig (PEYR AG) & Irina Lonean (PEYR)

Appendix II: Participants

European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKCY) correspondents

Name	Country
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Liliya Topalova	Bulgaria
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Janaïna Paisley	France
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Tomislav Gajtanoski	North Macedonia
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Marija Petronijevic	Serbia
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Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR)

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Marzena Ples	Poland
Irina Lonean	Romania
Aleksandra Djurovic	Serbia
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PEYR Advisory Group

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Maria-Carmen Pantea	Romania
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Howard Williamson	UK

Experts and contributors

Name	Country/role
James O'Donovan	Malta/Ireland
Babis Papaioannou	Greece/European Commission
Bodgan Marinescu	Photographers and videographers
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EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership

Name	Role
Clotilde Talleu	Manager

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Lana Pasic	Research and Youth Policy Officer
László Milutinovits	Research and Youth Policy Officer
Marietta Balasz	Junior Youth Project Officer
Mojca Kodela Lesemann	Research and Youth Policy Assistant:
Estelle Glessinger	Administrative Assistant

Appendix III: Resource list: the work of ECKYP and PEYR members

Digitalisation and AI

[The limits of digital youth work: new podcast](#), 2022

[The emerging digital divides: Covid-19 and European youth work](#), Alicja Pawluczuk, 2022

[Technology and the new power dynamics: limitations of digital youth work](#), Alicja Pawluczuk & Adina Marina Şerban, 2022

[Girls' digital inclusion design and Delivery: Insights from the field \(Report\)](#), Alicja Pawluczuk & J. Lee, 2021

[Young people, social inclusion and digitalisation. Emerging knowledge for practice and policy](#), Dan Moxon (Chief editor), Adina Marina Şerban, Dunja Potočnik, Nuala Connolly, Lana Pasic and Veronica Ştefan, 2021

[AI and Youth 2020: Win the Battle, Lose the War?](#), Jonnie Penn, 2021

[Social inclusion and digitalisation. Study](#), Adina Marina Şerban, Veronica Stefan, Dunja Potočnik, Dan Moxon, 2021

Covid-19

[Surviving \(and even thriving\) during a crisis: the experiences of youth organisations during the Covid-19 pandemic](#), by Viviane Ogou Corbi and Gianluca Rossino, 2022

[Meta-analysis of research on the impact of Covid-19 on the youth sector](#), Alonso Escamilla, Irina Lonean, Rūta Brazienė, Sladjana Petkovic, 2021

[Briefing 4: Review of research on the impact of COVID-19 on the youth work, youth organisations and the digitalisation of services and activities for young people](#), Alonso Escamilla, Irina Lonean, 2021

[Types of learning mobility – Blended, hybrid and online](#), Snezana Baclija Knoch, 2021

[Is it time to develop digital and smart youth work strategies? A youth worker's perspective](#), Michele Di Paola

[Impact of COVID-19 on young people and the youth sector – cross-country analysis based on a survey carried out in spring 2021: Policy Brief](#) by Ivana Boskovic and James O'Donovan, 2021

[Perspectives on youth, issue 4: "Young people in a digitalised world"](#), Matina Magkou, Reinhard Schwalbach and Bram Spruyt, 2018

Climate change (crisis) and sustainability

[Greening the youth sector: Sustainability checklist](#), Neringa Tumenaite, 2021

[Disobedient youth: Lessons from the youth climate strike movement](#), Jamie Gorman, 2021

[Sustainability in Learning Mobility: an exploratory study](#), Ondřej Bárta and Marzena Ples, 2021

[T-kit 13: Sustainability and youth work](#), Ellie Keen, Justina Pinkeviciute, Alan Hayes, Agi Berecz, Burcu Meltem Arık Akyüz, 2018

Youth work and the European Youth Work Agenda

[Massive Open Online Course: Essentials of Youth Work \(2021 edition\): Final Report](#)

[European youth work policy goals analysed](#)

[Step back & Make room. The role of youth work in formal education settings](#), Agenzija Zghazagh, 2021

Participation, shrinking space and revitalising democracy

[Young people revitalising democracy: Podcast](#), 2022

[Can citizenship education inspire youth participation in democratic life?](#), Dan Moxon and Alonso Escamilla, 2022

[Meaningful Youth Political Participation on Europe: Concepts, Patterns and Policy Implications](#), Ondřej Bárta, Georg Boldt, Anna Lavizzari, 2021

[Shrinking democratic civic space for youth](#), Tomaž Deželan and Laden Yurttaguler, 2021

[The role of youth work in supporting young refugees and their political participation: education, social capital and agency](#), Simon Williams and Charlie Hughes, 2021

Appendix IV: Agenda



EKCY-PEYR Meeting

Agenda

Thursday, 23 June

Time	Activity
19:00	Interactive Dinner (Welcome & Getting to know each other evening)

Friday, 24 June *(Re)Connecting...*

Time	Activity
09:00-09:30	Welcome & Let's talk strategy Youth Partnership (Clotilde) & European Commission (Babis)
09:30-09:45	Coming back from the Symposium
09:45-10:50	Parallel discussions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Youth work and EYWA</i> - <i>Digitalisation and AI</i> - <i>Participation, shrinking space and revitalising democracy</i> - <i>Climate change (crisis) and sustainability</i> - <i>Mental health and wellbeing</i>
10:50-11:20	Coffee break
11:20-11:50	Plenary: sharing is caring
11:50-12:35	Working together: <i>Strengthening the think tank function, contribution and quality guidelines</i>
12:35-14:10	Lunch break
14:10 - 15:10	Scanning the future Youth as future priority in the current context (parallel sessions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The long-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on young people & youth participation. Is pandemic a game changer, catalyst or a catastrophe (is there room for post-covid optimism?)</i> - <i>Youth, peace, security and youth work in the context of war</i> - <i>Implications of crises for youth policy across Europe (impact on CoE/EU policy priorities and EU-CoE Youth Partnership; and review of the strategies)</i>
15:10-15:40	Sharing in the Plenary
15:40-16:00	Coffee break
16:00-16:30	Scanning the future – youth sector and research priorities
16:30-17:00	Farewell & See you again