

Youth Partnership

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



EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Knowledge based policy

**Better understanding of youth policy
framework**

A greater understanding and knowledge of youth is of paramount importance for policy making in the youth field – in order to meet the needs and expectations of young people, policies should be based on comprehensive knowledge and well-researched understanding of young people's situation, needs and expectations. A knowledge-based approach to policy development is particularly imperative in the context of rapidly evolving realities and permanently fluctuating circumstances of younger generations in Europe. Unquestionably, youth research plays a vital role in generating knowledge and understanding in aid of youth policy development.

In the Council of Europe, a need for youth research was first formally identified in 1967, when the Parliamentary Assembly adopted [the directive n. 165](#) calling for the study of youth problems in Europe. In 1992, the Committee of Ministers underlined the importance of youth research and called for the nomination of national youth research correspondents ([Recommendation n. R 92 /7](#)). In 2008, the role of youth research as a principle element of the youth sector's approach to generate knowledge on the situation of young people in Europe and promote evidence-based youth policies was reaffirmed by the Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth in the frame of its [Declaration on the Future of the Council of Europe Youth Policy – Agenda 2020](#), and the Committee of Ministers in its [Resolution 2008 \(23\)](#) on the youth policy of the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe activities are based on three approaches, methods and instruments:

- youth research and co-operation between youth researchers and policy makers in order to promote evidence-based youth policies and support the work of practitioners in the youth field, with a special focus on the recognition of competencies and skills acquired in non-formal education and youth work: "[The Portfolio for Youth Leaders and Youth Workers](#)";
- the carrying out of studies and the production of publications and educational and training material in order to support youth work and policy, with an emphasis on supporting youth policy development at national level through [policy reviews](#);
- the further development of the [European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy](#) in the framework of its youth partnership with the European Commission.

Since 2008, the Council of Europe co-publishes [Forum 21](#) – European Journal on Child and Youth Research, a project of IJAB, Germany, INJEP, France, and The NYA, United Kingdom. Forum 21 publishes [summaries of research results](#) that are relevant for policy makers and practitioners in English, French, German and Russian.

The publications [Eggs In A Pan - Speeches, Writings and Reflections by Peter Lauritzen](#) and [Supporting young people in Europe \(Volume 2\)](#) are two examples of the understanding and knowledge of youth generated by the Council of Europe.

In the European Union, knowledge and a greater understanding of youth grew to become an enduring priority with the Commission's White Paper [A new Impetus for European Youth](#) in 2001, when it was made one of four priorities to which the [Open Method of Coordination of the 1st EU youth policy cycle](#) was applied. Within this framework, the Council of Youth Ministers agreed upon the following [common objectives in 2004](#):

- to identify existing knowledge in priority areas of the youth field (namely participation, information and voluntary activities) and implement measures to supplement, update and facilitate access to it,
- in a second stage, to identify existing knowledge in further priority areas of interest to the youth field (such as autonomy, non-formal learning, the fight against discrimination, education & training, employment, entrepreneurship, creativity, transition from education to employment, social inclusion and health) and implement measures to supplement, update and facilitate access to it,
- to ensure quality, comparability and relevance of knowledge in the youth field by using appropriate methods and tools,
- to facilitate and promote exchange, dialogue and networks to ensure visibility of knowledge in the youth field and anticipate future needs.

In 2009, the EU Youth Strategy "[Youth – Investing and Empowering](#)" suggested to employ a cross-sectorial approach in eight fields of action, outlining possibilities to generate more youth knowledge, share youth research findings and facilitate youth research networks to strengthen evidence-based policy-making.

The EU Youth Strategy also called for an expert group on youth indicators, which was established in 2010. Based on its work, the European Commission released a staff working document entitled "[EU indicators in the field of youth](#)" in March 2011. The document presents a 'dashboard of 40 youth indicators' summarising key data for the EU Youth Strategy and its eight fields of action.

[The renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field](#) (2010-2018) identifies knowledge building and evidence-based youth policy as the first of seven instruments to support both the implementation of specific initiatives in the youth field and cross-sectorial approaches aimed at mainstreaming a youth perspective in other related policy fields. The framework states:

"Youth policy should be evidence-based. Better knowledge and understanding of the living conditions, values and attitudes of young women and men needs to be gathered and shared with other relevant policy fields so as to enable appropriate and timely measures to be taken" (See: [Final Report for the European Commission DG Education and Culture on Assessing practices for using indicators in fields related to youth p.20](#))

In recent years, the EU has initiated several instruments to strengthen evidence-based policy-making in the youth field. These instruments, which are generally intended to be published regularly, are current examples of the understanding and knowledge of youth generated by the EU:

- [The 2007 Flash Eurobarometer Young Europeans](#);
- [The 2009 Eurostat Statistical Youth Portrait](#);
- [The 2009 European Research on Youth Report](#);
- [The 2009 EU Youth Report](#).
- [The 2012 EU Youth Report](#).

In 2003, both institutions – the Council of Europe and the European Union – agreed to enhance their co-operation in view of developing a common and better knowledge basis in

the youth field through networking and collecting research knowledge in order to inform both European youth policy and educational practice.

In the framework of this co-operation, the EU-CoE Youth Partnership coordinates a [Pool of European Youth Researchers](#), organises [thematic research seminars](#) usually followed by [research publications in the youth knowledge series](#), and oversees the implementation of the [European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy](#), which facilitates the availability and visibility of knowledge on youth across Europe.

[The Pool of European Researchers](#) was established in 2011 to succeed the European Network of Experts on Youth Knowledge. It aims at providing a platform for consultation, exchange and advice from a research perspective.

The European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy intends to provide the youth sector with a single access point to reliable knowledge and information about young people's situation across Europe. By doing so, it enhances knowledge transfers between research, policy and practice in the youth field and contributes to [the recognition of youth work and non-formal education](#).

The wide range of contributions by the Youth Partnership to the generation of understanding and knowledge of youth include the publications [Youth employment and the future of work](#) and [The history of youth work in Europe](#).