

Youth Partnership

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



Review of the nine cycles of the EU Youth Dialogue (2010-2022)

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November 2024

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Acronyms

DG	Directorate-General
DG AGRI	Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development
DG CLIMA	Directorate-General for Climate Action
DG EAC	Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture
DG EMPL	Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
DG ENV	Directorate-General for Environment
ESG	European Steering Group
EU	European Union
EUYD	European Union Youth Dialogue
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
INGYO	international non-governmental youth organisation
NEET	not in employment, education or training
NWG	national working group
OECD DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
YFJ	European Youth Forum

Executive summary

[The EU Youth Dialogue](#) (EUYD) is the biggest youth participation instrument of its kind. The goal of the dialogue is to involve young people on a regular basis in European Union (EU) policy making. It was introduced in 2010 as the “structured dialogue” with young people under the [EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018](#). It continues to be one of the main policy instruments of the [EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027](#), confirming the EU’s commitment to youth participation.

Each EUYD cycle takes 18 months. The cycle is co-ordinated at EU level by the European Steering Group (ESG), including the Trio of Presidencies of the Council of the EU, the European Commission and the European Youth Forum (YFJ). The European Steering Group (with support from researchers) gives national working groups (NWGs) guidelines and a methodology for consultations through which they collect young peoples’ opinions in all member states.

The European Commission provides funding for the process, participates in the governance of the EUYD and contributes to determining the priorities of the cycle. Funding for the National Working Groups and the European Steering Group is ensured through the [Erasmus+ programme](#).

In addition to the consultations in all member states, each presidency also organises an EU Youth Conference where young people share their views on the priorities of the cycle and provide a set of recommendations for policy makers. The EU Youth Dialogue results from the national level dialogue and the EU conference are reflected in Council resolutions and/or conclusions, therefore ensuring that the youth voices are included in EU policies.

Since its start in 2010 until 2023, nine cycles of the dialogue have been carried out. Since 2019, the themes of the EUYD have been based on the [European Youth Goals](#) (adopted during the 6th EUYD cycle) (Bárta and Moxon 2018). The total number of young people participating in EUYD cycles 6-9 from 2018 to 2023 exceeds 131 000.¹

Methodological note

This review of the EUYD was conducted in 2023 by the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership at the request of the European Steering Group for the 10th cycle of the dialogue, and in particular Belgium.

The review of the EUYD is based on the analysis of existing documents and policies at EU level in six selected countries within the 6th, 7th and 8th cycles (from 2018 to 2021) and individual and group interviews. The review focused on the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the process at EU level.

Interviews were conducted with (i) members of the European Steering Groups for the EU Youth Dialogue cycles 6, 7 and 8, including representatives of the European Commission, the Trio of Presidencies and the European Youth Forum; (ii) members of NWGs from eight countries; and (iii) researchers who supported the ESGs. This was complemented with case studies of the process in six member states: Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Spain and Sweden, to understand the process at the national level.²

The main findings and conclusions of the review

1. As reported by the national working groups. The number of young people participating in each cycle was not consistently recorded before the 6th cycle.

2. The countries and cycles under review have been selected considering their influence on EU youth policy (for cycles), the diversity of their youth sectors (for countries) and the availability of information (for both).

The review shows that in terms of its relevance, the EUYD is appropriate for the meaningful engagement of young people. Overall, it is perceived as a very good opportunity to structure youth engagement activities and to ensure that young people are consulted on a continuous basis. It is also an important opportunity for young people to get involved in the debate about EU policy and issues relevant for them and their peers.

In terms of its effectiveness, the EUYD includes perspectives of thousands of young people who take part in the national consultations organised by NWGs and the EU Youth Conferences organised by the Presidencies of the Council of the EU, and which are brought together into Council documents. These Council texts are considered by all EU institutions in formulating policies relevant for young people. Examples of such outcomes include the [Youth Guarantee](#), resulting from consultations on youth unemployment, the eleven [European Youth Goals](#) and the European Commission's "youth check" (Bárta and Moxon 2018). The European Commission has put forward initiatives such as the European Year of Youth and established networks of youth ambassadors in order to address young people's growing interest in contributing to EU policy making. Therefore, the effectiveness of the EUYD is high.

However, it is important to note that the EUYD's influence on EU policy is not always visible to all stakeholders, because the resulting policy documents or strategies do not always mention that such decisions are based on the outcomes of consultations with young people. On the other hand, the EUYD has a potentially profound effect on national, regional or local youth policies, because youth councils and youth organisations successfully use the results of the dialogue in their advocacy efforts.

In terms of its impact, the EUYD has had an important role in promoting youth participation in the EU since the process started in 2010. The Flash Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy 2022 shows that 13% of young people in Europe were aware of the possibility to participate in the EUYD and 37.8% of young people felt that they have their voice heard on the future of Europe, to some or a large extent.³ There is a recognition that the EUYD contributes to a general trend of increasing opportunities for youth participation by expanding the quality of youth engagement and the number of participation opportunities offered by (or with the participation of) public institutions, at the EU and national level. Moreover, it contributes directly to a better understanding and integration of young people's needs in the design of EU youth policies. It has a similar impact on bringing youth voices in the policy debate at national, regional and local level, especially when the respective authorities are involved in the dialogue.

Participating in the EUYD also has a great impact on youth leaders, young ambassadors and young delegates participating in consultations and EU Youth Conferences. In this case, there is a positive feedback loop including the EUYD in the development of the sense of active (European) citizenship among European youth leaders. In most countries and at the EU level, the EUYD is co-managed by youth organisations (youth councils, YFJ, other non-governmental youth organisations) and public authorities. This supports both meaningful youth engagement and the translation of consultation results in policy decisions.

The EUYD is [increasingly more inclusive](#) and successful in bringing voices of young people from minority groups, young people with disabilities, etc. to the policy process. This is a direct result of the focus which the EU Youth Strategy, the EUYD and NWGs place on social inclusion, and of the co-

3. European Commission (2022).

operation with different organisations representing youth minority groups, working with schools, local authorities and social workers.

In general, the review finds that stakeholders at the EU and national level are ensuring a good level of relevance of the EUYD and that the process is effective for EU and national youth policies. However, a few elements of the process can be improved.

- The youth engagement process would be even more meaningful if young people taking part in the dialogue were informed about the ways in which results from the consultation process were translated into policies at the national or European level. This feedback is currently very limited, but it is considered important by young people and youth organisations.
- Involvement of policy makers from other fields (besides the youth policy governance structures) in the EUYD would ensure better youth mainstreaming across sectors. While this cross-sectoral co-operation can be observed in some cycles and countries, it is yet to be universally implemented and the EUYD can contribute to this process.
- The role of international non-governmental youth organisations (INGYOs) should be clarified and appropriate funding corresponding to the required tasks allocated to support their capacity to contribute to the dialogue.
- The visibility of the EUYD could be improved in order to reach more young people.
- The connection between the cycles could be reinforced, in terms of planning and promotion of activities and EUYD feedback and follow-up, to allow young people to better understand how the dialogue is integrated in decision making.
- The monitoring and data collection about the EUYD can be further improved. The handover document from one ESG to the next is useful, but it cannot cover all data and the information needed for a smooth transition from one cycle to the other. In addition to the monitoring process and the indicators proposed in this report, a more structured and regular process of reflection on the previous cycle should be planned.

Recommendations

In order to improve the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the EUYD, and the quality of the process, a number of recommendations can be made.

A. Concerning the activities of the European Steering Group

- The activities of the ESG should be further clarified by providing each new ESG with a roadmap and detailed calendar of activities and decisions to be taken.
- The ESG should provide the NWGs with a clear set of recommendations about how to organise the dialogue in a more meaningful and inclusive way and with a clearer guidance in the implementation stage. These recommendations should be accompanied by capacity building activities for the NWGs, which can be organised by the members of the ESG.
- The monitoring of the EUYD should be improved, with additional data collected by the NWGs and centralised by the ESG, according to the proposals included in this report.

B. Concerning the resources for the EU Youth Dialogue

- The allocation of additional resources to the EUYD, including the work of INGYOs, will allow for more activities and consultations at all levels.
- The NWGs should make plans and efforts to use the entire budget allocated to them through the Erasmus+ grants and to meaningfully engage as many young people as possible.

C. Concerning the overall organisation of the cycles

- Representatives of at least one country in the next Trio of Presidencies should participate in the ESG meetings in the last six months of each cycle, to ensure better handover and continuity.
- NWGs should follow the guidance and exchange information on good practices in order to ensure a better continuity of the EUYD from one cycle to the next.

D. Concerning the themes for the EU Youth Dialogue and the opportunity to increase its relevance and effectiveness beyond current expectations

- In addition to the European Youth Goals, the EUYD could be better linked to key upcoming European Commission initiatives. In its [Communication on the European Year of Youth 2022](#), the European Commission has expressed interest in aligning the dialogue's focus more closely with the European Commission work programme.

E. Concerning the participants and the inclusiveness of the EU Youth Dialogue

- To further increase the potential of the EUYD to include hard-to-reach youth and youth not in employment, education or training (NEETs), the ESG and the NWGs should take on board the recommendations of the [review of the EUYD inclusion levels](#) conducted in 2023.
- Capacity building activities should be organised by the NWGs as an introduction to EUYD events and information/education materials (infographics, short videos) should be distributed to prepare young participants in the EUYD.

F. Concerning the visibility of the EU Youth Dialogue

- The ESG should develop a communication plan about the EUYD.
- The NWGs' reports should be made available to the public.
- Policies, decisions and documents including the recommendations from the EUYD should be made available in a more accessible and youth-friendly way and/or in a variety of formats.
- A systematic review of all policy recommendations formulated within the EUYD should be carried out at regular intervals to provide young people with information on the effectiveness and impact of the dialogue.

1. Introduction

1.1. Context

The mandate for this review was given to the European Union (EU)-Council of Europe Youth Partnership by the European Steering Group (ESG) for the 10th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue, including the Trio of Presidencies of the Council of the EU (that is, Spain, Belgium and Hungary), the European Commission and the European Youth Forum (YFJ) during their informal meetings in Brussels (Belgium) on 3 and 4 March 2022 and 15 and 16 September 2022. The request for a review had come from Jan Vanhee, the co-ordinator of the Belgium EU Youth Presidency (January-July 2024).

The 10th cycle of the EUYD is taking place under the same Trio of Presidencies which hosted the 1st cycle of the “structured dialogue”, which took place from 1 January 2010 until 30 June 2011. This makes the 10th cycle a good moment to take stock of what has been done and how to proceed and strengthen the process. The aim of this review is to examine the achievements of the EUYD over the past nine cycles, acknowledge the developments, and evaluate the relevance, coherence, effectiveness (outputs and short-term outcomes) and impact (medium-long term results) of the process.⁴ The review also has the objective to propose options for strengthening the process, taking into consideration what is feasible within the upcoming cycle and beyond.

EU Youth Dialogue policy context and background

The common European youth policy agenda stems from the 2001 White Paper on youth policy.⁵ This was the first policy document setting a common framework of co-operation in the field of European youth policy. The White Paper was a result of the wide-ranging consultation, and set a ground for the method of co-ordination and co-operation in the European youth field, involving young people. Following its adoption, several EU documents continued to underline the significant role of youth participation in EU youth policy making.⁶

According to the 2001 White Paper, youth participation is a “clear demand” of young people. Therefore, the right of young people to participate is clearly stated, together with a need to establish participation mechanisms and to support youth capacity for participation. Moreover, participation is understood as a learning process. Through the exercise of participation, young people acquire the competences and confidence to exercise active citizenship, in other words to be(come) active citizens in their youth and adulthood.⁷

4. The review will follow the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria for policy and programme evaluation: relevance, coherence, effectiveness and impact. The evaluation of the relevance refers to the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to the needs of target groups and stakeholders; the evaluation of the coherence refers to the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions; the evaluation of effectiveness refers to outputs and short-term outcomes; and the evaluation of impact refers to medium and long-term outcomes/results. OECD DAC criteria are used by the European Commission’s Directorates-General for evaluations.

5. Commission of the European Communities (2001).

6. Among the most important official documents on the youth structured dialogue: (a) Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 27 June 2002 regarding the framework of European cooperation in the youth field (2002/C 168/02); (b) Commission of the European Communities (2003); (c) Commission of the European Communities (2004); (d) Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on addressing the concerns of young people in Europe — implementing the European Pact for Youth and promoting active citizenship (2005/C 292/03).

7. Appendix 1 to Commission of the European Communities (2001).

The White Paper was followed by the Communication from the Commission to the Council of 22 October 2004 – Follow-up to the White Paper on a New Impetus for European Youth: evaluation of activities conducted in the framework of European cooperation in the youth field (COM(2004) 694 final) – in which the European Commission, besides taking stock of the progress made since the publication of the White Paper, also suggests to the Council that “young people should be consulted regularly, in a structured and effective way, at both national and European levels”.⁸

The introduction of the Structured Dialogue with Youth and Youth organisations became tangible with the Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) (2009/C 311/01). The goal of the dialogue was to involve thousands of young people and their opinions, on a regular basis, in EU and member states’ policy making. The first cycle of the structured dialogue was run from 1 January 2010 with the Trio of Presidencies mentioned above. It included a focus on youth employment, which influenced the creation of the Youth Guarantee. Youth participation was also a key area of the previous EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018.⁹ The consultation process was included in the further policy instruments in November 2018, when the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 was adopted by the Youth Ministers in the Council of the EU for the period 2019-27. Youth engagement is an essential part of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, which focuses on three main dimensions under the titles “connect”, “engage” and “empower” and encourages cross-sectoral co-operation in respect to issues concerning young people. The strategic pillar “engage” aims “towards a meaningful civic, economic, social, cultural and political participation of young people”¹⁰ and especially inclusive youth participation.¹¹ The strategy includes specific appendices on the EUYD and the EU Youth Goals, among others.

The EUYD is a flagship youth participation mechanism at EU level aiming to bring youth voices to EU policy making.¹² Its main element is the dialogue between young people, youth organisations and policy and decision makers, as well as experts, researchers and other relevant civil society actors. It serves as a forum for continuous joint reflection and consultation on the priorities, implementation and follow-up of European co-operation in the field of youth. It builds on the achievements of past dialogue processes (Structured Dialogue), with the aim of including more decision makers and young people in dialogue activities. Particular attention is given to the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in decision-making processes.

Inclusion is central to meaningful youth participation and effective engagement of young people in policy making. The commitment to inclusive participation is further underpinned by the guiding principles of the EU Youth Strategy. These acknowledge that given that “young people are not a homogenous group, and thus have diverse needs, backgrounds, life situations and interests, the EU Youth Strategy should promote activities and policies that are inclusive for all young people, especially those with fewer opportunities and/or those whose voices may be overlooked.” This EU Youth

8. Commission of the European Communities (2004).

9. Available at https://europa.eu/youth/strategy/strategy-2010-2018_en, accessed 12 November 2024.

10. Available at https://youth.europa.eu/strategy/engage_en, accessed 12 November 2024.

11. Appendix 1 to Commission of the European Communities (2001), as well as the Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on addressing the concerns of young people in Europe — implementing the European Pact for Youth and promoting active citizenship (2005/C 292/03) and the Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) (2009/C 311/01).

12. The EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (available at https://europa.eu/youth/strategy_en, accessed 12 November 2024) and the Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council establishing guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue – European Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (2019/C 189/01).

Strategy further invites member states to “encourage and promote inclusive democratic participation of all young people in society and democratic processes” and “include diverse voices of young people in decision-making processes on all levels” through the EUYD. Youth Goal No. 3 “Inclusive societies” also has the target to “ensure that marginalised young people are participating in all decision-making processes and are key players, particularly in processes concerning their own rights, wellbeing and interests”.

There are three elements of European co-operation in the youth field that have been formulated in 2009 but are still valid today:¹³ (i) the work cycles of three years subdivided in youth dialogue cycles of 18 months; (ii) the priorities;¹⁴ and (iii) seven implementation instruments including both youth-specific and universal policy tools.¹⁵ Among these instruments are the consultations and structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations, with themes aligned with policy priorities. All implementation instruments, including the youth dialogue, are proposed in a format that encourages co-ordination and co-operation between the member states as well as flexibility for member states to adapt the instrument to their specific institutional and policy framework.¹⁶

The specific objectives of the EUYD are to:

- a) encourage the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe in line with Article 165, Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union;
- b) promote equal participation between young women and men;
- c) include diverse voices and ensure openness to all young people to contribute to policy shaping;
- d) bring about positive change in youth policy at local, regional, national and European level;
- e) strengthen young people’s citizenship competencies and sense of belonging to society and the EU.

EU Council Resolution 2019/C 189/01 outlines the governance of the EUYD with regard to the role of the ESG and NWGs. The EUYD includes the “consultation of young people on topics relevant to them”,¹⁷ but it also includes a “continuous partnership in the governance of the process at local, national and European levels”. This partnership is ensured by (1) the ESG (including representatives

13. Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) (2009/C 311/01). See also Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council establishing guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue – European Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (2019/C 189/01).

14. The priorities are the main political instrument for advancing the implementation of the EU youth policy in the framework of the open method of co-ordination, ensuring that the EU youth policy, implemented jointly by the member states and EU institutions is “evidence-based, pertinent and concrete”, and aligned with the needs of young people.

15. These tools are: 1. Knowledge building and evidence-based policy, reflected in the youth field by the youth indicators, youth Eurobarometers, the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy and the Pool of European Youth Researchers and their work (analysis, reports, etc.), Youth Wiki; 2. Mutual learning, facilitated by SALTO-YOUTH; 3. Progress reporting, reflected in the EU Youth Report; 4. Dissemination of results; 5. Monitoring of the process, linked with knowledge building and progress reporting tools, based on the youth indicators; 6. Consultations and structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations; and 7. Mobilisation of EU programmes and funds.

16. See: Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council establishing guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue – European Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (2019/C 189/01). However, the first mentioning of these instruments, although not their development, appears in the Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) (2009/C 311/01).

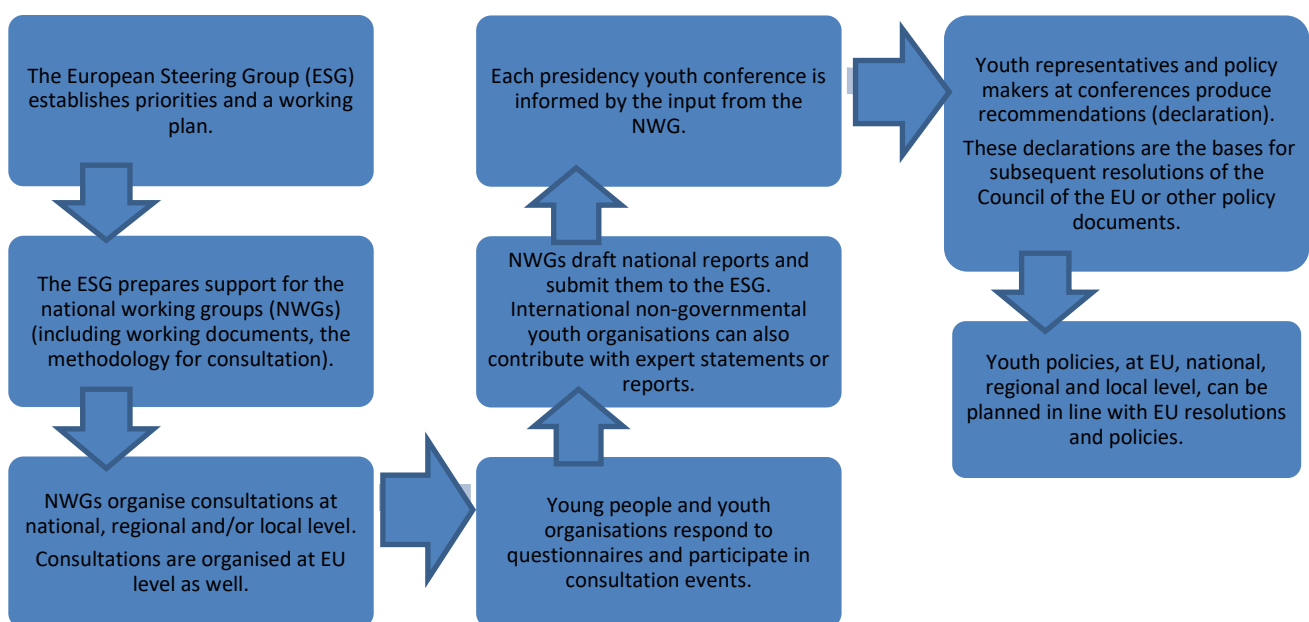
17. Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council establishing guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue – European Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (2019/C 189/01).

of the Trio of Presidencies, the European Commission, the National Agencies from the member states that form the Trio of Presidencies, the YFJ and other youth civil society representatives) and (2) NWGs (including government officials, national and/or local/regional youth councils, youth organisations, youth workers and, in some cases, youth researchers).¹⁸ INGYOs often contribute providing a European perspective where needed. Through the ESG, the Trio of Presidencies, the European Commission and the YFJ take the lead role with regard to steering the implementation of the EUYD. The European Commission is participating in the discussion and decisions on priorities, methodologies, the implementation progress, results and conclusions of the dialogue in the ESG. The European Commission is also providing funding, through Erasmus+ grants, for the EUYD at EU level, including funding for EU Youth Conferences and for all activities of the NWGs for the implementation of EUYD activities.

NWGs are the entities at member state level that are tasked with contributing to the organisation of consultations, promotion and impact of the dialogue with youth. INGYOs active at EU level in the field relevant to the priorities of the cycle can participate in the process in different phases, from planning to consultation and implementation stages. However, their contribution is not consistent and structural and the level of involvement varies from one cycle to another.

In a nutshell, the process is both top-down and bottom-up in several steps.

Figure 1: The EU Youth Dialogue process and integration in the policy-making process¹⁹



As part of the support from ESG to NWGs, the methodology for consultation and other working guidelines and documents are developed with the input of researchers, involved in a systematic way in the EUYD since the 6th cycle. After establishing the methodologies, consultations and events with young people are organised by the NWGs and INGYOs.

18. Ibid.

19. Representation based on the presentation of the process by Williamson (2015).

Before starting to organise consultations in their countries, NWGs apply for funding to the European Commission. The way the NWGs are organised and the way their projects are planned and implemented generate differences at national level, even despite the use of a common methodology. In the use of the available EU funding, as well as in the organisation of the dialogue events and other forms of consultation, the organisational capacity of the national authorities in charge of youth issues and of the NWGs' members is also important. These issues are addressed by this review in the light of existing data and the opinion of the consulted stakeholders.

In this process, concerns about the legitimacy of the EUYD are often voiced. "The process has been agreed democratically and involves the democratic structures of youth representation in Europe",²⁰ but the majority of voices represented in the consultations are youth organisations present at local, regional, national and international level. Unorganised, hard-to-reach young people, young people with fewer opportunities, are not (equally) included according to some sources.²¹ This can influence the needs and recommendations resulting from the entire participatory process. Thus, the same sources underline that the needs of young people with fewer opportunities are, often, not incorporated enough in the conclusions of the EUYD. These concerns will be addressed by this review. This paper analyses these claims in the light of existing data and the opinion of the consulted stakeholders.

Short history of the EUYD

The structured dialogue was conceived in 2009 at multiple levels (local, regional, national and EU level) and it was planned to be "as inclusive as possible", including young people, youth organisations, youth researchers and "those active in youth work". The 2009 Council resolution states that "clear objectives and realistic procedures should be established for each cycle of dialogue in order to ensure continuity and follow-up".²²

Since 2019, the European Youth Goals are the main inspiration for establishing the EUYD themes. The EUYD represents "the dialogue with young people and youth organisations involving policy and decision makers, as well as experts, researchers and other relevant civil society actors, as appropriate. It serves as a forum for continuous joint reflection and consultation on the priorities, implementation and follow-up of European cooperation in the field of youth."²³

The ESG, the European Commission, NWGs and INGYOs are active actors in the EUYD since the first cycle in 2010, performing different roles: the ESG is steering the process, being the governance body for the entire EUYD; the European Commission participates in the ESG but is also the main donor for the process, providing the Erasmus+ grants needed for the implementation of the dialogue activities; the NWGs are organising the dialogue in each member state supported by Erasmus+ funding; and INGYOs are organising consultations with young people at transnational and EU level. All contributions from national and EU level are debated during the EU Youth Conference.

20. Ibid. p. 88. In this case, "democratic structures" refers to youth councils, the YFJ and youth authorities based on the democratic constitutions of each EU member state.

21. European Youth Forum (2017); Pušnik and Banjac (2022).

22. Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) (2009/C 311/01).

23. Appendix 1 of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027.

An assessment of the EUYD process and results should take into consideration the last nine cycles, as the process is structured in a clear format that has been in place since January 2010.

Table 1. Previous EU Youth Dialogue consultations

Cycle	Period	Trio of Presidencies	Theme	Main policy outcome
1	01/01/2010 - 30/06/2011	Spain, Belgium, Hungary	Youth employment	Council conclusions – Promoting youth employment to achieve the Europe 2020 objectives The process started the debate that generated the Youth Guarantee Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on youth work
2	01/07/2011 - 31/12/2012	Poland, Denmark, Cyprus	Overarching thematic priority: “Youth participation in democratic life in Europe”, with each of the presidency countries	Joint recommendations from the 3rd cycle of the EUYD Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the overview of the structured dialogue with young people on youth participation in democratic life in Europe
3	01/01/2013 - 30/06/2014	Ireland, Lithuania, Greece	Social inclusion	Council Resolutions on social inclusion and youth entrepreneurship
4	01/07/2014 - 31/12/2015	Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg	Youth autonomy, with a particular attention to their access to rights and political participation	Joint recommendations from the 4th cycle of the EUYD
5	01/01/2016 - 30/06/2017	Netherlands, Slovakia, Malta	Enabling all young people to engage in a diverse, connected and inclusive Europe. Ready for life, ready for society	Joint recommendations from the 5th cycle of the EUYD The efforts to expand youth participation to new types of organisations start showing positive effects with an increase in the number of public bodies and civil organisations involved ²⁴
6	01/07/2017 - 31/12/2018	Estonia, Bulgaria, Austria	Youth in Europe: What’s next?	European Youth Goals (Moxon and Barta 2018)

24. Information published on the European Youth Portal, available at https://europa.eu/youth/get-involved/eu-youth-dialogue/previous-eu-youth-dialogue-consultations_en, accessed 12 November 2024.

Cycle	Period	Trio of Presidencies	Theme	Main policy outcome
7	01/01/2019 - 30/06/2020	Romania, Finland, Croatia	Creating opportunities for youth with a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - quality employment for all - quality youth work for all - opportunities for rural youth 	Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the Outcomes of the 7th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 Participation in the EUYD further extended, with 50 000 participants forming a diverse and inclusive sample, with 12.5% identifying themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex (LGBTI), 9.5% as ethnic minorities and 4.7% as disabled ²⁵ (Moxon and Barta 2020)
8	01/07/2020 - 31/12/2021	Germany, Portugal, Slovenia	Europe for YOUth – YOUth for Europe: space for democracy and participation	Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the outcomes of the 8th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue The first EUYD process fully online, due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Moxon and Pantea 2021)
9	01/01/2022 - 30/06/2023	France, Czech Republic, Sweden	A sustainable and green Europe	Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the outcomes of the 9th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue

1.2. Methodology

The review is organised using the following criteria for policy and programme evaluation and reviews: relevance, coherence, effectiveness and impact. Review questions²⁶ on the EUYD process are added in order to provide evidence for decision making on how better relevance, coherence, effectiveness and impact can be reached.

The research design, and especially the formulation of the review questions, was determined by the reconstructed theory of change and it follows the realist evaluation methodology (presented in appendix to this report). Although the EUYD process was constantly redefined in EU policy documents between 2001 and 2019, the aim of the EUYD and the “theory” about how the aim can be achieved has been “reconstructed” in a unitary manner based on the content of the main documents and the consultation of the ESG for the 10th cycle of the EUYD.

25. Ibid.

26. The review and research questions are the high-level questions that a research project is designed to answer. The authors of the report answered these questions, based on the research methodology, data collected from stakeholders and data analysis. Review questions are not the specific questions that are asked in an interview or questionnaire. Formulating review questions makes it easier to decide what data to collect, and how to analyse and report these data.

According to the Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field, “the structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations serves as a forum for continuous joint reflection on the priorities, implementation and follow-up of European cooperation in the youth field”.²⁷ This joint reflection should ensure that:

- specific needs of young people are taken into account by policy makers at local, regional, national and European level;²⁸
- young people develop a greater sense of active citizenship.²⁹

The EUYD has two main functions:

- it conveys a powerful symbolism about the place of young people in platforms for decision making in the youth field;
- it provides a real opportunity for young people to shape the agenda for youth policy at the European level.³⁰

Starting with these insights, the entire theory of change has been presented to the ESG for the 10th cycle of the EUYD and validated together with the review questions.

For data collection, specific tools – interview guidelines and questionnaires, annexed to the report – have been designed, based on the review questions but with an appropriate formulation for each stakeholder.

Although not in the objectives and scope of the EUYD, this review also analyses the relevance and effectiveness of the EUYD at national, regional and local level. These elements have been added to the scope of the research following the recommendations of the ESG for the 10th cycle of the EUYD in order to explore if good practices that are important for the meaningful engagement and participation of young people to decision making can be identified when connecting the EUYD with the regional and local level.

Focus of the research

A sample of EUYD cycles could be analysed to focus the research on the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the EUYD and the process at EU level. Other EUYD cycles have not been excluded, but the in-depth analysis and the bulk of collected data have been related to the selected EUYD cycles. Moreover, the case study of the selected cycles was combined with case studies of the process at national level in six member states. Therefore, interviews have been conducted with stakeholders in selected countries: representing the presidencies in the selected cycles and the selected member states for case studies. Desk research used documents produced by all NWGs in cycles 6-8 and the available documents for the other cycles.

Considering their influence on the EU youth policy and the design of the EUYD itself (especially for the 6th cycle that contributed to the EU Youth Strategy), as well as the availability of information (for the

27. Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) (2009/C 311/01).

28. Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on addressing the concerns of young people in Europe — implementing the European Pact for Youth and promoting active citizenship (2005/C 292/03).

29. Ibid.

30. Williamson (2015), p. 88.

7th and 8th cycles all NWG reports and EU level analysis are available), three cycles have been selected for an in-depth analysis of the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the EUYD:

- the 6th cycle of structured dialogue (1 July 2017 – 31 December 2018) dedicated to the European Youth Goals, that contributed to shaping the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027;
- the 7th cycle of the EUYD (1 January 2019 – 30 June 2020), on creating opportunities for youth, the first cycle of the EUYD;
- the 8th cycle of the EUYD (1 July 2020 – 31 December 2021), “Europe for YOUth – YOUth for Europe: space for democracy and participation” considering its innovative approach with methods used (forced by the Covid-19 pandemic). Analysing the 8th cycle also allows for a comparison between the structured dialogue (under the previous Youth Strategy) and the EUYD and understanding if the difference in name and procedures also determined different types of results.

Considering the differences of how the youth sector, especially youth civil society, is organised and the existence of youth participation platforms,³¹ the countries selected for the case study are the six countries in the Trio of Presidencies for the 9th and 10th (and 1st) EUYD cycles:

1. Belgium
2. Czech Republic
3. France
4. Hungary
5. Spain
6. Sweden

Research methods

The methodology for this research was based on a mixed methodology including:

- a survey of organisations part of the NWGs in all member states. The questionnaire for the survey was sent to the co-ordinators of all NWGs with support from the YFJ. There are 31 answers registered to the survey, with two-thirds of the answers provided by youth councils or non-governmental organisations and one-third provided by public authorities. The small number of answers to the survey represents a limitation of the review process and for this reason the collected answers have only been used to confirm information collected from other sources (interviews and documents);
- interviews with selected members of the ESG in charge of the three EUYD selected cycles for case studies. In total, 18 persons have been interviewed, including eight representatives of youth councils and other organisations, and 10 representatives of public institutions;
- interviews (group interviews or individual interviews) with members of the NWGs in the selected countries for case studies. In total, 21 persons have been interviewed, including eight representatives of youth councils and other organisations, and 13 representatives of public institutions;

31. See Youth Wiki comparative overview, available at <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/comparative-overviews/participation/online-platforms-for-e-participation/2021>, accessed 12 November 2024.

- three interviews with representatives of youth researchers involved in the EUYD;
- the study of documents produced at EU level and in the selected countries within the three selected cycles for case studies and additional study of available documents produced within other EUYD cycles. This allowed the analysis of review questions on relevance, effectiveness and impact for all EUYD cycles, before focusing in-depth on the selected cycles.

The most important sources of information for the review have been the interviews, complemented by the written documents. The volume and wealth of information collected through interviews is very rich: we conducted over 50 hours of interviews with a total of 42 persons, covering a large diversity of stakeholders and experiences related to the EUYD. As the research methodology and data sources are qualitative, the analysis is not focused on identifying representative data but on convergence of opinions and detailed descriptions of the process under review: the EUYD. Data collection through the interviews arrived at the point of information saturation, meaning that through the course of interviews the same themes and insights were repeated. This allows the researchers to be confident that enough information was collected for valid findings and conclusions.³²

Data have been analysed using the realist evaluation methodology, an approach that emphasises the importance of context for a programme or process outcomes, as presented in the appendix.³³

Note on the terminology

Two important choices have been made concerning the terminology used when drafting this report.

- The term “EUYD” is used as a general denomination to cover the policy of the EU to conduct regular and systematic dialogue with young people, therefore including both the structured dialogue cycles, namely cycles 1-6, and the EUYD, namely cycles 7-9. Only when the report is referring specifically to one of the first six cycles, the words “structured dialogue” are used.
- The EUYD is conceived as having two main phases, in line with the more detailed plans prepared by the ESG. However, in the past, plans of the ESG have been called (1) dialogue and (2) implementation. In order to avoid confusion between the dialogue phase and the entire EUYD as a comprehensive process, the report refers to the two phases in the same way as the 9th EUYD cycle: (1) consultation and (2) implementation.
- The report also uses the terms “policy making”, referring to the process of public problems assessment, elaboration of policy solutions and evaluation of policies. Usually, policy making is undertaken by technical staff in ministries and other public authorities. The report uses “decision making”, referring to the decisions regarding public policies and usually, decision making is undertaken by politicians.

32. Saturation is accepted as a methodological principle in qualitative research. It is commonly taken to indicate that, on the basis of the data that have been collected or analysed hitherto, further data collection and/or analysis are unnecessary, and conclusions can be drawn.

33. Realist approaches assume that nothing works everywhere or for everyone, and that context really does make a difference to programme outcomes. Consequently, policy makers and practitioners need to understand how and why programmes work and do not work in different contexts, so that they are better equipped to make decisions about which programmes or policies to use and how to adapt them to their respective contexts.

Limitations

The review draws findings and conclusions and formulates recommendations based on the assessment of the selected cases representing three cycles of the EUYD and six countries. These case studies are complemented by the analysis of other documents, from other countries or cycles, but the review did not undertake a comprehensive data collection covering all countries and all cycles. Designing and conducting evaluations or reviews of large programmes and processes (like the EUYD) based on selected cases is a standard evaluation practice and it is supported by the methodology recommended by the European Commission³⁴ and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The number of stakeholders consulted for the review through in-depth interviews (42 persons from 12 member states and representing EU level stakeholders) is large enough to allow for robust findings, conclusions and recommendations in a qualitative research design.

The main limitation of the research is related to the quantitative data available. Initially, we planned a survey of young people participating in EUYD activities across Europe or at least in the countries selected for in-depth focus. It was impossible to conduct this survey because contact data of young participants are not systematically collected and because General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) prevents sharing these data, when existing. Therefore, the impact of the EUYD at the level of individual young people participating in activities could not be assessed based on the direct consultation of young people. A limited analysis was conducted based on the interviews with the EUYD stakeholders and their informed opinions.

The survey of organisations part of the NWG only received 31 answers after four reminders sent to the NWG co-ordinators. In several cases, the answers we received to the survey have been filled in after consultation of the NWG members. But in other cases, we received either only the answer from the NWG co-ordinator or the answer from several NWG members. Therefore, it was difficult to use the statistics from the survey, as the answers are not fully comparable. Considering these limitations, the results of the survey of NWG members are not presented directly in the report. The analysis took the survey answers into account and we noticed that they are supporting the findings from the interviews: when the interviews show stakeholder agreement on some issues, the survey results concur; when the interviews show a diversity of opinions on some issues, the survey results show a wide range of opinions about the same issue. Therefore, the survey has been used to confirm the information from the interviews but not as a main source of data.

34. See for example [Evalsed](#), the resource for the Evaluation of Socio-Economic Development of the European Commission and the EU "[Better regulation: guidelines and toolbox](#)".

2. Findings

2.1. The relevance of the EU Youth Dialogue

Review question 1: Is the EUYD process appropriate to answer young people's needs to participate in policy making in the EU, at local, regional, national and EU level?

The review takes into account the criteria for meaningful youth engagement and participation which have been developed as a result of the 8th EUYD cycle.³⁵ Analysis is done based on the following three questions.

- How appropriate is the EUYD process to ensure that EU, national, regional and local institutions meaningfully engage young people in the design, implementation and evaluation of EU policies?
- Are the activities and outputs of the EUYD process consistent with the overall objective of meaningfully engaging young people in policies in the EU, at local, regional, national and EU level?
- What other activities and outputs are needed to ensure a more comprehensive meaningful youth engagement with policies in the EU, at local, regional, national and EU level?

In general, the information collected for the review shows that the EUYD is appropriate for the meaningful engagement of young people. It is perceived as a very good opportunity to structure youth engagement activities and to ensure that young people are consulted on a continuous basis. It is also an important opportunity for young people to get involved in the debate about EU policy and issues relevant for them and their peers. While the engagement of young people in debates about national and regional policies is not one of the main objectives of the EUYD, in some circumstances this result is also achieved.

The EU institutions involved are the European Commission, through its representatives in the ESG, and the Council of the EU, involved through the rotating presidency that is also part of the ESG. This ensures a direct link between the EU priorities on youth participation and the EUYD. Since the 6th cycle, the EUYD is linked with the EU Youth Strategy. The 6th structured dialogue cycle contributed directly to the youth strategy, and the following cycles are organised around one or several European Youth Goals, included in the strategy. The EUYD is, therefore, very relevant for EU youth policy making.

There are two important elements regarding the relevance of the EUYD for national policy making: (1) the participation of national policy-making institutions in the dialogue; and (2) the themes of the dialogue. In all member states, the main national policy-making institutions are part of the NWGs, but their involvement can differ greatly. The information collected for this report shows that, in some countries, the activities of the NWGs are co-managed by the national youth policy authorities and the

35. Meaningful youth engagement and participation should check the following criteria: (1) preparing the engagement/participation through citizens' education; (2) allowing young people to express their ideas and opinions freely, therefore including qualitative formats of engagement/participation (not only using questionnaires, surveys and closed-ended questions); (3) offering safe spaces for young people to participate and express their ideas and opinions; (4) organising the dialogue in a format to allow the exchange of views with young people on an equal footing; (5) encouraging feedback from decision makers to young people and from young people to decision makers; (6) considering inclusion, as well as the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the engagement/participation; and (7) integrating the outcomes of the youth engagement/participation in decision making as much as possible.

national youth councils or other youth organisations.³⁶ In other countries, the process is rather led by the national youth councils, with very limited participation of public authorities.

The themes of the dialogue are, since 2019, linked with the European Youth Goals, formulated by young people during the 6th cycle. However, according to all interviews with representatives of presidencies in the ESG and researchers, the selection of the specific Youth Goal(s) and the theme(s) for each cycle of the dialogue is determined mainly by the agenda of the countries forming the Trio of Presidencies. The selection of one overarching theme for the EUYD in all member states makes sense from the EU perspective, but it will align differently with youth needs and interests in different countries. For the member states that are not part of the Trio of Presidencies, these themes can be disjointed from the national, regional and local agendas and priorities of some young people.

The EUYD is not designed to include regional and local institutions in the dialogue, thus its relevance to these levels is beyond the scope of the consultations. In general, the EUYD process has limited capacity to ensure that regional and local institutions meaningfully engage young people. But there are some exceptions to this general finding. In some countries, where youth policies are mainly within the realm of regional or local governments, the NWGs make significant efforts to add a regional dimension to consultations to make them more relevant for young people and their participation in policy making in their country. As a good practice, the consultation and dialogue of the EUYD are conducted together with consultation activities on issues relevant for the national, regional and local agendas. For example, in the Czech Republic and Spain, the regional youth ambassadors organise events and communicate with regional authorities with responsibilities in the field of youth policy.

Overall, especially at EU and national level, the EUYD is perceived as a very good opportunity provided to authorities to structure their youth engagement activities and to ensure that young people are constantly consulted.

The table below gives an overview of criteria of meaningful youth engagement, developed during the 8th EUYD cycle, and to what extent they are implemented during the consultations. The findings are based on the interviews and the reports of the NWGs in cycles 6-8. The analysis shows that the EUYD is mostly appropriate for the meaningful engagement but there is also room for improvement.

Table 2. The EU Youth Dialogue and meaningful youth engagement

Criteria of meaningful youth engagement		General findings and comments
1	Preparing the engagement/participation through citizens' education	<p>Although in some countries there are additional activities, the EUYD is organised independently of learning activities about the EU, policy and decision making, civic education, etc.</p> <p>Moreover, the lack of citizens' education activities preparing the EUYD process is considered, by many stakeholders, a limitation.</p> <p>Educating and informing young people about participation has been an objective of activities during the implementation phase of the 8th cycle, focused on Youth Goal No. 9. Consequently, they have not been</p>

36. In very few cases the opposite situation is encountered, with the NWG led by the national youth policy authorities and very limited involvement of the youth civil society, but this is analysed under review questions 9 and 20.

Criteria of meaningful youth engagement	General findings and comments
	<p>implemented in preparation of the consultation but as a result of them, in order to support more youth participation in the future.</p>
<p>2 Allowing young people to express their ideas and opinions freely, therefore including qualitative formats of engagement/participation (not only using questionnaires, surveys and closed-ended questions)</p>	<p>The EUYD allows young people to express their ideas and opinions freely and is not limited to questionnaires or surveys.</p> <p>However, the number and size of the events organised in the consultation (and using qualitative methods, for example focus groups, visual methods as Photo Voice, etc.) and implementation phases (debates, conferences, etc.) vary greatly among member states. Along all nine cycles, the largest number of young people involved in the EUYD is the number of young people answering the questionnaire. In most countries, a comparatively small number of young people participate in face-to-face, qualitative events. For example, in the 6th cycle, from a total of over 48 000 participants, 24% participated in qualitative events and 76% participated in the survey. In a small number of countries, during some cycles, no qualitative events have been organised.</p> <p>The information collected for this review shows that in the most recent cycles much more attention has been paid to qualitative formats.</p>
<p>3 Offering safe spaces for young people to participate and express their ideas and opinions</p>	<p>The EUYD offers safe spaces for young people to express their ideas and opinions. All consulted stakeholders show a good understanding of the need for safe spaces for young people and the concern with providing them. The EU Youth Conferences are safe spaces where participants – young people, policy and decision makers – can express and share their ideas and opinions freely, and co-create the output of the conferences.</p>
<p>4 Organising the dialogue in a format to allow the exchange of views with young people on an equal footing</p>	<p>By concept and design, the EUYD allows decision and policy makers and young people to exchange views on an equal footing.</p> <p>However, several representatives of NWGs underlined that the concrete form of organising consultations matters greatly. For example, organising consultations during school hours or holidays is actually limiting the opportunities for participation of young people.</p> <p>On the other hand, some interviewed stakeholders expressed the opinion that the EUYD is allowing organised young people and youth organisations to exchange views and to enter into dialogue with public institutions, but the situation is different for the unorganised young people.</p>
<p>5 Encouraging feedback from decision makers to young people and from young people to decision makers</p>	<p>Although there is a concern to provide young people with feedback from decision and policy makers, this is only partly taking place and mostly during the EU Youth Conference, when only a small number of youth delegates are present.</p> <p>Not all member states implement EUYD activities in the same way and in some countries the interaction between young people and decision makers is very limited beyond the EU Youth Conferences.</p>

Criteria of meaningful youth engagement	General findings and comments
	<p>Moreover, the EUYD time frame does not provide opportunities for meaningful interaction after consultations. This is because there are only a few months available for the implementation phase within the cycle. Afterwards, the process transitions to another theme in a new cycle. Thus, there is no time to provide young people with consistent feedback about how their opinions, expressed in consultations, have been integrated in policies.</p>
<p>6 Considering inclusion, as well as the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the engagement/participation</p>	<p>The concern for a more inclusive process is present in most member states and stakeholders consulted for this review offered many examples of activities that bring as many young people as possible “to the table”. However, most of the consulted stakeholders agree that more inclusion should be achieved, especially concerning young people that are socially and economically marginalised. Moreover, in some cases, young people that are marginalised or excluded have been consulted separate from the rest of the participants to the EUYD.</p> <p>Starting with the 6th cycle, the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the engagement/participation are taken into account as a result of the connection between the EUYD, the EU Youth Strategy and the Youth Goals.</p>
<p>7 Integrating the outcomes of the youth engagement/participation in decision making as much as possible</p>	<p>The results of the EUYD are integrated in Council resolutions and/or conclusions at the end of each presidency and, in this way, they inform and support future decisions. However, the link between the EUYD and the decisions that affect young people’s lives is not clear for most stakeholders and not apparent for young people. This seems to be linked also with the lack of information/education/awareness about the decision-making process and its complexity, as well as the management of young people’s expectations regarding their involvement in the consultation process.</p> <p>On the other hand, as mentioned, the EUYD timeframe does not provide space for communicating feedback to young people about their influence on decision making, because the cycles are too short to cover an entire policy-making process.</p>

Considering the findings regarding the EUYD relevance (as analysed through the definition of “meaningful youth engagement”), the EUYD could benefit from:

- activities informing and preparing young people for engagement in policy making, including knowledge and capacity building. NWGs could embed these learning activities in the EUYD process, given that they receive necessary guidance and methodological support from the ESG, and, if necessary, funding from the European Commission;
- a more visible connection between the process at national level (both the consultation and implementation phases) and the EU Youth Conferences. It would be beneficial to provide more information to young people involved in the dialogue at national level about how the

conferences work as a drive belt between young people and EU decision makers. Youth delegates to conferences need to be prepared in a consistent way and ready to pass the input from national consultations to the decision makers they meet. Although this is done in some countries, there is no general rule regarding how the young delegates are prepared for the EU Youth Conferences, in different member states;

- a clear set of recommendations about how consultations should be organised to ensure that young people can freely express their ideas and opinions, in safe spaces. The recommendations should cover the way the EUYD can better allow the exchange of views, on an equal footing, between young people and decision makers. Moreover, the same set of recommendations should cover how the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the engagement/participation can be increased;
- a clearer guidance on the implementation stage;
- a clearer follow-up stage within the implementation phase, where decision makers are informing young people on their decisions.

2.2. The coherence of the EU Youth Dialogue

Review question 2: To what extent is the EUYD aligned and co-ordinated with other youth engagement interventions at EU level?

The EUYD is the largest consultation process in the EU for all ages and the largest youth participation process organised regularly and systematically in the world. The total number of EUYD participants across EUYD cycles 6-9 reported by NWGs is over 131 000. In the 7th cycle alone, the report on the results shows that an estimated 56 287 young people from all over Europe took part in the consultations. The 8th cycle engaged in each of its phases – consultation and implementation – about 11 000 young people around Europe, and this happened in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the 9th cycle, over 20 000 young people participated in the EUYD, in both face-to-face and online meetings.

However, the EUYD does not systematically make full use of Erasmus+ actions, which could be an opportunity to support the consultation process through training and capacity building of young people. For example, the NWGs could co-operate with organisations implementing Erasmus+ projects aiming at developing young people's competences for political or public participation and involve the same young people and organisations in EUYD consultations. This would increase the quality of youth participation and young people's understanding of the decision-making processes.

While some connections are made between Erasmus+ projects and the EUYD, this is not yet happening systematically.

Similarly, the EUYD could also have closer connections to other initiatives for youth engagement of the European Commission and the European Parliament. Possible synergies between these youth engagement initiatives could be further established if planned in a more coherent way.

Review question 3: To what extent is the EUYD aligned and co-ordinated with other youth engagement interventions at the level of member states?

There is great variation on how member states organise youth engagement. Youth engagement processes at national level may be:

- planned separately and not influenced at all by the EUYD;
- inspired by the EUYD, with similar but separate organised activities;
- conducted, for some issues, together with EUYD activities. This is a good practice enhancing the relevance of all engagement processes. This takes place in countries where local or regional activities are planned and implemented, and additional dialogue themes are added to make activities more relevant for young people and more effective from the perspective of youth influence on decision making. An example for this instance is France.

2.3. The effectiveness of the EU Youth Dialogue

Review question 4: How effective is the EUYD in influencing youth policies in the EU at local, regional, national and EU level? What are the differences between different policy levels?

In terms of its effectiveness, the EUYD includes perspectives of thousands of young people who took part in the national consultations organised by NWGs and the EU Youth Conferences organised by the Presidencies of the Council of the EU, and which are brought together into the resulting Council resolutions and/or conclusions, therefore influencing future EU policies. These Council resolutions are considered by all EU institutions in formulating policies relevant for young people. The main examples of such influence are the Youth Guarantee (directly influenced by the first Structured Dialogue cycle) and the EU Youth Strategy, more concretely the Youth Goals (a direct and intentional result of the 6th Structured Dialogue cycle) and the European Commission's youth check. The European Commission has put forward initiatives such as the European Year of Youth and established networks of youth ambassadors in order to address young people's growing interest to contribute to EU policy making. Therefore, the effectiveness of the EUYD is high. We define the effectiveness of the process, in this case, as the capacity of consultations, engaging tens of thousands of young people in constant policy dialogue, to generate results that can be integrated into policy decisions.

However, it is important to note that the EUYD's influence on EU policy is not always visible for all stakeholders, because the resulting policy documents or strategies do not always mention that such decisions are based on the outcomes of consultations with young people.

On the other hand, the EUYD has a potentially profound effect on national, regional or local youth policies, because the youth councils and youth organisations successfully use the results of the dialogue in their advocacy efforts.

As mentioned, all interviewed stakeholders acknowledge the length and complexity of the EU policy-making processes, and they do not have unreasonable expectations about an immediate translation of the EUYD results in directives, regulations, action documents, initiatives and programme action documents, etc. There is consensus that a long-term influence of the EUYD on EU youth policy exists, although it is not documented as such. However, consultant stakeholders disagree on the capacity of the EUYD to further influence the policy decision making, meaning that some stakeholders argue that

the EUYD could be more impactful, if the European Commission would design it in direct connection with directives and regulations discussed, while other stakeholders argue that the impact of the EUYD over policy is already high and it is very difficult to design a more influential process. Arguments are synthesised in the table below.

Table 3. Arguments on the effectiveness of the EU Youth Dialogue to generate results that can be integrated into EU policy decisions

Arguments on the need for increased effectiveness of the EUYD	Arguments on the highest effectiveness of the EUYD
<p>Generally, the representatives of youth councils and other youth organisations would like to see tangible results of the EUYD presented in a clearer way to young people. They would like to see a greater capacity, of all stakeholders, to identify policies that are shaped in accordance with youth needs and interests as they result from the EUYD. They do not expect immediate policy results and accept that policy can be adopted/approved many years after the EUYD consultations concerning the same issue. Sometimes, they find that their (and others) incapacity to point to specific EU policies influenced by the EUYD is an indicator of the suboptimal effectiveness of the EUYD. This may be explained by the fact that the EUYD agenda is aligned with the presidency priorities but not with the EU institutions agendas, as mentioned above. In relation to some EUYD cycles, several participants of the EU Youth Conferences, representatives of youth councils and organisations or youth delegates, expressed the frustration that the resolutions have not been drafted to include the results of the EUYD consultations at national level or the entire variety of results. This situation is also sometimes explained by the differences regarding the agenda of the Presidency of the Council of the EU and the variety of concerns and opinions of young people.</p>	<p>Other stakeholders believe that the EUYD is highly effective because youth voices are integrated every year in Council resolutions that are afterwards considered by all EU institutions when formulating other policy documents, contributing to the very complex EU policy process. According to these opinions, the EUYD could be considered more effective in this way, because it has the capacity to influence a larger number of policies, compared to the hypothetical situation when the EUYD would only contribute to the formulation of a single regulation.</p>

At EU and national level, YFJ, youth councils and other youth organisations successfully use the results of the EUYD in their advocacy. The large consultation process gives legitimacy to the results and makes organisations' arguments more convincing to decision makers. From this perspective, the EUYD has potentially a profound effect on policies, especially at national level, where youth policies are often designed.

In countries where the main youth policy competences belong to regional authorities, youth councils and other youth organisations use EUYD results to advocate at these levels. The majority opinion of interviewed stakeholders is that the effectiveness of the EUYD at local level is limited, because there is too large of a gap between the general themes approached by the EUYD and the concrete competences of local authorities.

Review question 5: Are policies in the EU (at local, regional, national and EU level) with effects on youth, but not usually labelled as youth policies (for example the agriculture policy with effects on young farmers and young people in rural areas), influenced by the EUYD?

The thematic focus (linked with the Youth Goals since 2019) and the results of the EUYD consultations reflect the diversity of youth needs and interests and emphasise the cross-sectoral dimension of youth policy. Moreover, this is well illustrated by the fact that one of the most important results of the EUYD is the Youth Guarantee, that is usually connected with the EU employment policy.

However, the cross-sectoral dimension of EUYD themes is not always visible during the consultation process. For example, although it has an important role in the Youth Guarantee implementation, the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) does not participate in a consistent way in the EUYD: the EUYD governance structure did not allow for DG EMPL to be invited to the ESG for the 7th cycle, when youth employment was one of the priorities. Representatives of the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) did not take part in the events and debates, including the European Youth Conferences, in the 7th cycle of the EUYD, although rural youth was one of the priorities. Similarly, the Directorate-General for Climate Action (DG CLIMA) and the Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV) did not participate in the 9th cycle of the EUYD when “A sustainable and green Europe” was the focus of the consultations.

Considering the structure of the European Commission, the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) is the representative of the European Commission in the EUYD process and, therefore, it has an important role of integrating positions of other relevant/sectoral DGs in the youth dialogue. Interviewed stakeholders agree that there is an undeniable progress towards mainstreaming youth, with the establishment of the youth co-ordinator. Yet, there is still room for progress that would allow for a better integration of youth voices in all decisions taken by other DGs but with an impact on youth. A need for more involvement of other DGs and institutions for the promotion of youth mainstreaming have been underlined by all interviewed stakeholders. Since the interviews for this study were conducted, there has been a clear move towards integrating youth mainstreaming within the work of the European institutions, and the youth impact assessments and youth checks in the policy processes.

At national level, there is more variation regarding participation of relevant ministries in the process, but their participation is directly determined by the level of youth mainstreaming achieved by each government and administrative system. How the youth policy/governance authority is organised at national level can also influence the effectiveness of the EUYD beyond the classical youth policy dimensions (youth work and non-formal learning, youth volunteering, youth participation, etc.). For example, in countries where “youth” is part of the same ministry as “education” (as in the case of the Czech Republic, France and Slovenia), stakeholders have been able to identify how the EUYD influenced decisions in the field of formal education. The same is the case in countries where “youth” is part of the same ministry as “employment” or “inclusion” (as in the case of Croatia and Germany).

In general, the consulted stakeholders would like to see much more influence of the EUYD on policy fields that are important to young people’s lives (employment, inclusion, housing, environment, climate, etc.).

Review question 6: How effective is the EUYD in ensuring that young people from the entire EU have the opportunity to participate in the policy-making process? Are there any regional differences in how the EUYD provides young people with the opportunity to participate in the EU policy-making process?

The geographical coverage of the EUYD has not been an issue discussed by the ESG during the analysed cycles. It is not included in the guidance documents provided by the ESG to the NWGs. While the inclusion of young people from remote and hard-to-reach areas and the inclusion of rural youth in EUYD activities are part of the discussions related to inclusion in general, geographic representation does not seem to be a specific priority, and there is no data on the level of participation of young people at regional level. At the national level, most NWGs aim to organise activities across the territory of the country. According to interviews, these efforts to ensure good geographical coverage of the EUYD are not well supported by the grant received by each NWG from the European Commission (Erasmus+). Therefore, in some countries, youth councils and other youth organisations are using additional resources to ensure that young people from the entire country have the opportunity to participate in the policy-making process through the EUYD. This is usually not sustainable: it cannot be repeated in many cycles and it is hard to transfer the practice to countries where it is not done. Moreover, interviews show that the level of participation of young people is rather concentrated in areas that are highly urbanised (large cities and rural areas around large cities). The interviewed stakeholders share the opinion that young people from areas less served by existing youth organisations and from remote areas are participating less in the EUYD because it is costly to bring them to consultation events.

The lack of systematic data, however, makes it impossible to tell if young people from less developed regions are participating in the EUYD and to what extent.

Review question 8: What are the main lessons learned from the EUYD process and the EUYD results during the period 2010-22?

The continuous changes in the governance of the EUYD (most of the members of the ESG change every 18 months and the ESG leadership changes every six months) affect the process. Several of the former members of the ESG interviewed for this review underlined that, at the beginning of each cycle, it was difficult for them to understand what concrete activities they needed to do, and what the needed effort, resources and time required were. This eventually affects what is possible to achieve.

Together with the European Youth Forum, since the 6th cycle, the researchers supported the continuity of the EUYD and helped to establish a clear methodology for the consultations. In this context, the most important lessons learned are that:

- the EUYD has functioned best during cycles when the Trio of Presidencies had a clear and consistent vision about what it wanted to achieve. The best example is the 6th cycle, that decided early that it should contribute to the EU Youth Strategy and the ESG steered the dialogue towards the development of the European Youth Goals;
- the ESG leads to best results if: (a) all stakeholders that are a part of the ESG (Trio of Presidencies' ministries, national youth councils, European Commission and the YFJ) come together early in the process and participate constantly during the entire cycle; and (b) the

preparation of a cycle starts early with clear rules, procedures and a clear calendar of the entire cycle (as in the case of the 8th, 9th and 10th cycles);

- the EUYD is more effective if the connection between the work of the NWGs and the EU Youth Conferences is clearly planned in complementarity and the consultation and implementation phases, as well as when the EU Youth Conferences are integrated in the EUYD cycle from the beginning. This was planned for the 8th cycle but not successfully implemented because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Trio of Presidencies during the 9th cycle also planned a connection between the conferences and the consultations, and (with some limitations) this plan was implemented;
- the EUYD leads to more meaningful youth engagement and participation if more qualitative methods of consultation are used and more events are organised, bringing together young people and policy and decision makers, even if the total number of young people consulted is not as large as in the case of conducting a large survey;
- for the same reason, to contribute to more meaningful youth engagement and participation, it is a good practice that the cycles became divided between a consultation phase, focused on specific youth needs, and an implementation phase, focused on how youth policy can contribute to the realisation of the selected Youth Goal(s);
- the countries in the Trio of Presidencies need resources to fulfil their role, therefore an important lesson learned is that they need to ensure these resources as early as possible and before the start of each cycle. They need to plan projects and apply for funding for organising the EU Youth Conference, but also for the participation of the entire country delegation (including representatives of the national youth councils) to several ESG meetings;
- researchers bring clarity to the EUYD process and they are the stakeholders that translate the results of consultations in the 27 countries into clear findings and prepare the EU Youth Conferences reports;
- the tools developed by the researchers need to be adapted to ensure that they are youth friendly, and questions or methods may need to be reformulated. Time is needed in the activity plan of the NWGs to translate and adapt the existing tools, and to make them appropriate for consultation. Using different formulations of questions used for consultation in events with different target groups may be needed.

At national level, the NWGs usually have more stability compared to the ESG. However, most of the NWGs are led by the national youth councils and in some countries the turnover of responsible persons working on the EUYD can affect the work of the NWG. Moreover, the NWGs need to carry out the EUYD in their country following, in parallel: (a) the plans they presented when requesting the Erasmus+ grant; and (b) the guidelines received from the ESG. A clearer connection between the two processes is needed.

In this context, constant capacity building for the NWG and meetings between the NWG and the ESG (at least every six months) are needed. These meetings can be organised online but it is important to ensure a continuous dialogue.

Another lesson learned is the need to clarify and/or redefine the role of the INGyOs and their funding, considering that they can participate in the EUYD, contribute to youth consultations and organise dialogue events but do not receive funding for their work.

Review question 9: Is the set of institutions, structures and policy makers involved – the European Commission, the youth national authorities, the ESG, the NWGs, etc. – supporting the effectiveness and impact of the EUYD? How? How is this changing across EU member states?

In general, as mentioned under the EUYD relevance, the institutions participating at EU and national level are ensuring a good level of relevance of the EUYD and its effectiveness for the youth policies of the EU and the member states. This is supported by questions 1 and 4 above, where it is confirmed that the institutional structure of the EUYD governance is appropriate.

The fact that the EUYD process is led by the country holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU is a key factor in ensuring a bridge between the results of the consultations and the decisions and documents of the Council. Therefore, the central role of the Presidency of the Council of the EU in the governance structure of the EUYD contributes directly to its influence over EU policies in the youth field.

The involvement of DG EAC in the process, both as part of the co-ordination structure of the ESG and as the funder of the EUYD through Erasmus+, also contributes to the link between the EUYD results and the decision-making process.

Continuous and active participation of the European Youth Forum in the ESG also contributes to raising the relevance of the process and results. Moreover, it is a good practice usually embraced by the countries in the Trio of Presidencies to include both representatives of the national youth policy authorities and representatives of the national youth councils in the ESG.

However, the structure of the ESG has limited capacity to ensure that the institutional memory is well preserved. The representatives of the Trio of Presidencies change every 18 months. The continuity in the ESG is ensured by the European Youth Forum and the European Commission (DG EAC). In order to further strengthen the knowledge transfer from one cycle to the next, this review proposes to invite representatives of at least one country from the upcoming cycle to the ESG meetings of the current cycle (ideally, during the last six months of the cycle).

The set of institutions participating in the NWG varies greatly across member states, in terms of the number of the NWG members (from three to over 20) and their competences. In line with the spirit of the EUYD, most of the NWGs are led by youth councils. In very few cases the opposite situation is encountered, with the NWGs being led by the national youth policy authorities and very limited involvement of the youth civil society and this is not a good practice, because it undermines the main principles of the EUYD.

The participating institutions are not able to support the effectiveness of the EUYD from four perspectives.

- The policy makers in fields that are important for young people (employment, inclusion, housing, environment and climate, etc.) should be involved in the EUYD, in order to capitalise on the results of the large youth consultation.

- The institutional arrangements do not link the EUYD with local authorities and local policies, although young people's participation in decision making often starts here. Moreover, many decisions at local level greatly influence young peoples' lives. In this context, the NWGs could include associations (existing in some member states) of local authorities or other umbrella structures to bridge the EUYD with the local level.
- The role and selection process of INGyOs participating in each cycle should be further clarified. They are important actors in bringing into the EUYD voices on relevant cross-border issues, such as youth migration, environmental issues and climate change, solidarity, etc. They can issue expert statements, organise consultations and participate in the EU Youth Conferences. However, the INGyOs do not receive funding, thus they have limited capacity to fulfil their role. In the 8th cycle, the INGyOs were asked by the ESG to organise roundtables with policy makers at the EU level (online) and to present the notes of the meetings. In the handover note, the Trio of Presidencies of the 8th cycle recommended a more active search for funding of the INGyO participation in the EUYD.
- In countries where the most important youth policy competences are held by the regional authorities (or other sub-national structures, like the lands in Germany), these levels are rarely involved in the EUYD, although their presence would be very relevant and could increase the effectiveness of the EUYD (the capacity of the dialogue results to influence policies). Only in Belgium, because of the structure of the federal and the community governments, the entire process is organised separately for each community (the Flemish-, the French- and the German-speaking communities).

2.4. The impact of the EU Youth Dialogue

Review question 10: Did the EUYD contribute to a better recognition of the value of youth participation in the EU, at local, regional, national and EU level?

All interviewed stakeholders agree that, in general, the value of youth participation in the EU, at all levels, was better recognised in 2023 compared to the year when the EUYD started: 2010. This is well reflected by the EU documents emphasising the importance of youth engagement and participation.

There is a recognition that the EUYD contributes to a general trend of increasing opportunities for youth participation by increasing the quality of youth engagement and the number of participation opportunities offered by (or with the participation of) public institutions, at EU and national level. Moreover, it contributes directly to a better understanding and integration of young people's needs in the design of EU youth policies. It has a similar impact of bringing youth voices in the policy debate at national, regional and local level, especially when the respective authorities are involved in the dialogue.

The number of young people participating in each cycle was not consistently recorded before the 6th cycle. The total number of participants across EUYD cycles 6-9³⁷ is over 131 000. More recent cycles: the 6th and 7th cycle each had up to 50 000 young people participating in qualitative (focus groups) and quantitative (survey) types of consultations. The 8th cycle, that has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, consulted about 11 000 young people. In the 9th cycle, over 20 000 young people

37. As reported by the NWGs.

participated in consultations organised both face-to-face and online. These figures concerning youth participation in the EUYD make it the largest, most systematic and long-term youth engagement process in the world.

According to the Flash Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth,³⁸ young people consider voting in local, national or European elections (39%) and engaging in social media (30%) the two most effective actions for making young people's voices heard by decision makers. Participating in consultations, initiatives and dialogues with policy and decision makers is perceived as being a lot less effective. More concretely, the following percentages of young people consider the following to be effective actions for making young people's voices heard:

- taking part in a public consultation or proposed political initiative (23%);
- taking part in the EUYD (15%);
- contacting a politician about an issue (11%).

On the other hand, the results of the survey supporting the 8th cycle of the EUYD,³⁹ dedicated to youth participation, show that:

- only 25.5% of young people feel that they can influence, to some or a large extent, what topics enter public or political debates;
- only 18.5% of young people feel that they can influence, to some or a large extent, political decisions;
- only 31% of young people feel that they can, to some or a large extent, provide feedback to those taking a decision;
- 37.8% of young people feel that they have their voice heard on the future of Europe, to some or a large extent.

It is important to acknowledge a progress reflected directly in the data collection for the Flash Eurobarometer on youth (European Parliament 2018). Data for the Eurobarometer on youth have been collected in 2013, 2018 and 2022. The questions related to young people's capacity to make their voices heard, through several participation methods, was only added in 2022. This shows an increasing concern of EU institutions to provide effective ways for youth participation and an interest in collecting data about them.

There is a positive feedback loop with the EUYD contributing to the increased recognition of the value of youth participation. However, it is present mainly at EU level and, secondary, at national level, due to the inclusion of the national youth policy authorities in the NWG. On the other hand, the data collected through interviews show that the same impact is not usually visible at regional and local level, with some exceptions, where the NWGs make efforts to include regional and local authorities in their activities.

38. European Commission (2022).

39. Survey results provided for this review include the results of the EUYD collected through quantitative methods for the 6th, 7th and 8th cycles.

Review question 11: Did the EUYD contribute to a better understanding of young people's needs in the design of EU, national, regional and local policies?

Making young people's needs more visible and clearer (understandable) for policy and decision makers is one of the main explicit goals of the EUYD. The information collected through interviews and desk research shows that the EUYD is successful in bringing youth needs on the agenda of EU and national youth policy makers. Based on the analysis of the effectiveness of the EUYD, the process contributes to a better understanding of young people's needs. However, there are considerable differences among policy levels, policy fields and countries, as follows.

- The EUYD contributes directly to a better understanding and integration of young people's needs in the design of EU youth policies.
- The EUYD contributes to a better understanding and integration of young people's needs in the design of national youth policies, when the topics of the EUYD overlap with the national youth policy agendas and, to a large extent, due to the efforts of the youth councils and other youth organisations using the results of the EUYD in their advocacy activities.
- The EUYD contributes to a better understanding and integration of young people's needs in the design of regional and local policies only in the cases when the regional and local authorities are included in the activities organised by the NWG and due to the efforts of the youth organisations using the results of the EUYD in their advocacy activities at regional and local level.
- The EUYD contributes to some extent to a better understanding and integration of young people's needs in the design of EU and national policies in other policy fields and this is dependent of the level of youth mainstreaming at EU and national level. The advocacy efforts of youth councils and youth organisations complement the youth mainstreaming efforts of the European Commission and national governments.

The EUYD objectives are directly related to EU youth policies. All the other levels of impact presented above represent important achievements of the dialogue beyond its primarily intended scope.

Review question 12: Did the EUYD contribute to the development of a greater sense of active (European) citizenship among European youth?

The diversity of EUYD activities, both in the consultation and implementation phases, is extensive. Participating in EUYD activities can take different forms including: answering a survey questionnaire; participating in a focus group; connecting to an online event with a few dozen participants; taking part in an hour long meeting with a young politician; participating in a workshop with the technical staff of the youth ministry; being a volunteer or young ambassador benefitting from a training and taking the initiative to organise a local event; being a youth delegate participating in the EU Youth Conference. The opinion of most interviewed stakeholders is that the process is not clear enough to generate significant effects at individual level for young people participating in EUYD activities (for example young people that take part one time in a short event, online or physical). But in many cases, young people are not participating only once in the EUYD. The same interviewed stakeholders underline that young people are participating in multiple consultation activities and some participate in several EUYD cycles.

In this context, participating in the EUYD has a great impact on young people that take part in several activities: youth leaders, young volunteers or young ambassadors, young delegates participating in the EU Youth Conferences. Their capacity to participate in decision-making processes and policy making is raised by their experience of being included in the EUYD.

As in the case of the EUYD contribution to a better recognition of the value of youth participation within public institutions, there is a positive feedback loop including the EUYD in the development of the sense of active (European) citizenship among European youth leaders. There are many examples of young politicians who started cultivating their interest in policy making and political debate as young delegates participating in the EU Youth Conferences. There are also many examples of leaders of the youth councils who started their activities as volunteers participating to organise events and debate topics related to youth needs and interests during EUYD activities.

On the other hand, the rapport of a young French delegate during the 9th cycle, as well as the interviews with representatives of several youth councils, show that even youth delegates and youth ambassadors that are selected from among the most civically and politically active young people need additional training and preparation for their participation in the EUYD and the EU Youth Conferences. This preparation is provided by some, but not all NWGs, and is not embedded in the design of the EUYD. The NWGs do not receive clear guidelines from the ESG for the selection and preparation of young delegates, which affects their capacity to generate a clear, high-quality and sustainable impact for these remarkable young people.

Unfortunately, there is no exact record of the number of young people with multiple participations. Moreover, the contact details of the participants in all activities, in the consultation and implementation phases of the EUYD, are not collected and/or centralised. Collecting at least a sample of contact data would allow for a more in-depth analysis of the EUYD impact on the development of a greater sense of active (European) citizenship among young people in Europe. This analysis was based on the experience and examples provided by the interviewed representatives of the NWGs.

Review question 13: What are the main factors influencing the impact of the EUYD? Is the EUYD process designed in a way that supports or hinders its impact? Why?

The EUYD is meant to contribute to decisions regarding youth policy and policies affecting young people. These are political decisions. Therefore, one of the most important factors influencing the impact of the EUYD is the political will. The availability of decision makers and politicians to enter a debate with young people, to listen to them and to take decisions accordingly is the key to the success of the EUYD. Moreover, political priorities influence when and what youth needs, and youth voices are taken into consideration in policy making.

Other factors which influence the impact of the EUYD are the following.

- The timeframe of the EUYD cycles, including both the 18-month length of each cycle and the timing. The length of the cycle makes it difficult to evaluate the impact of the process, because usually the development of a new policy takes a long time. The timing of the cycle can have both negative and positive influences. For example, the 6th cycle was superposed on the development of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, therefore, its effectiveness and impact have been supported by its connection to this process.

- The capacity of the NWGs to do effective outreach and organise quality and inclusive consultation and implementation activities, and their capacity to bring policy and decision makers in meetings with young people. This capacity varies across countries, and this is visible in the differences between the number of participants and events organised in each member state. This number varies from country to country, but it is not correlated at all with the size of the country population of young people and it may vary in each country from one EUYD cycle to another.
- The capacity of national youth councils and other youth organisations to successfully advocate for the implementation of recommendations resulting from the EUYD. This capacity, when present, complements the political will mentioned above as the main influencing factor.
- The availability of funding for the NWGs and the capacity of the ESG to take advantage of the Erasmus+ grants provided to the NWGs, without generating an additional administrative and reporting burden.
- The capacity of the ESG of each cycle to effectively guide the NWGs.

The differences in the capacity of NWGs and youth councils at national level, as well as the differences in political and administrative culture and political priorities, influence the impact of the EUYD at national level, bringing a large range of variation among the member states. The quality of support provided by the ESG for the NWGs improved over the years. However, to ensure a good level of impact for the EUYD all over Europe, the ESG should focus more on capacity building activities for the NWGs.

2.5. The EU Youth Dialogue process

Review question 14: How inclusive is the EUYD? Which youth voices are best included in the dialogue and which youth voices are less included and why? Are there replicable good practices in ensuring an open and inclusive consultation process? How could the EUYD process be designed to be more inclusive?

The general opinion of consulted stakeholders is that the EUYD process is increasingly more inclusive and successful in bringing voices of young people from minority groups, young people with disabilities, etc. to the policy process. Inclusiveness is an increasing concern for the ESG and NWGs, and more and more efforts are being made to improve the existing situation.

The NWG outreach data have been collected nationally since the 6th cycle of the EUYD. The data collection framework for each cycle is set by the ESG, with the support of the researchers involved. The existing data are broadly consistent, with some variations between countries and between cycles, linked to respective priorities and themes of each cycle. The existing data allowed for a dedicated analysis of participant inclusion levels within the EUYD. The report on inclusion concludes that:

At European level, the participation rate of ethnic minorities, religious minorities, young people who are disabled and LGBTI young people exceeds the level expected of participants than if they were selected randomly from the population. There is a significant over-representation of these groups within EUYD with each group having between two and three times the expected number of participants. The

participation rates of rural youth closely match the expected rate of participation, and there is no significant over-representation or under-representation of this group.⁴⁰

Therefore, at EU level, the EUYD proves to be very successful in ensuring the diversity of participants. At national level the picture is more diverse, as “for each minority group, some countries are more effective in engaging with them, than others.”⁴¹

Although the diversity of participants is an important indicator for the level of inclusion, the information collected shows that inclusion continues to be an important target for the EUYD. There is also a general agreement that more should and can be done to improve inclusiveness. Representatives of the NWGs acknowledge that the socio-economic background of participants is not monitored and, therefore, it is escaping any current analysis on EUYD inclusiveness.

As shown by the evaluation of participant inclusion levels, young people who are NEET are slightly under-represented within the EUYD and they are the minority group which NWGs are least effective at engaging with. The NEET situation is the only monitored category concerning the socio-economic background of the participants in EUYD activities and “only 7 countries can be clearly shown to have met or exceeded their national benchmarks for engagement with young people who are NEET”.⁴²

In some countries, most young people participating in EUYD activities are the ones that are already part of organisations (the organised young people). But according to the 2022 Flash Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy, 58% of young people participated in one or several youth organisations in 2021 (over the last 12 months prior to data collection).⁴³ Therefore, about 40% of young people are not reached by the EUYD, as they are not reached by other activities of youth organisations. It is a valid research hypothesis for the future if the young people that are most exposed to exclusion and marginalisation are among these 40%.

The research identified several good practices used by national youth councils and other organisations in order to ensure that the EUYD includes “the voice of all young people, including those with fewer opportunities and of those not organised in youth associations”.⁴⁴ The good practices identified in NWG activities are:

- including organisations representing youth minority groups (young people with disabilities, ethnic and religious minorities, etc.) in NWGs and organising EUYD activities for these young people or ensuring, with the help of the representative organisations, the participation of young people from minority groups in other EUYD activities, dedicated to all young people;
- establishing, formally or informally, targets of inclusion of young people from minority groups in EUYD activities;
- working with schools and local authorities, especially in remote areas and areas where youth organisations are not active or less active, in order to include unorganised young people in EUYD activities;

40. Youth Partnership (2023), p. 27.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. European Commission (2022).

44. Resolution of the Council and of the representatives of the Member States meeting within the Council establishing guidelines on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue — European Youth Strategy 2019-2027 (2019/C 189/01).

- organising EUYD activities in places where young people that are most exposed to exclusion and marginalisation are, and using detached youth work techniques to work with them;
- working with trained, specialised youth workers in planning and implementing outreach and detached youth work activities that are integrated with EUYD activities;
- co-operating with social workers in order to reach out to and organise activities for young people that are beneficiaries of social services, economically and socially marginalised or excluded.

In order to increase the level of inclusiveness of EUYD activities and the entire process, the recommendations of the evaluation of participant inclusion levels should be taken onboard by the ESG and NWGs. In a nutshell these recommendations, mainly for the ESG, are to:

- “define and quantify EUYD outreach goals in a more strategic manner”, including, as options, to target a greater inclusion of minority groups or specific social groups of young people, using quantifiable outreach targets (and even quotas) “in order to counterbalance existing patterns of political inequality within Europe and prioritise marginalised voices”;⁴⁵
- “develop support and guidance for NWGs to engage with specific minority groups”;⁴⁶
- “build on the ‘access’ that minority groups have to EUYD to promote ‘inclusion’ within EUYD”, by improving data collection and implementing dedicated tools to report on the voices of young people from minority groups participating in EUYD activities. In the long term, young people from minority groups should be promoted in leadership roles in the EUYD process at national and European level (in the EU Youth Conferences and the ESG).⁴⁷

Review question 15: How visible and clear is the EUYD? Could the process be designed to be more visible and clearer?

and

Review question 21: How is the EUYD promoted to all stakeholders: NWGs, governments/youth departments, young people, etc., to ensure a good implementation of the process and its expected results?

The Flash Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy from 2022 shows that 13% of young people in Europe are aware of the possibility to participate in the EUYD⁴⁸ and basic information is available on the Youth Portal.

However, interviewed stakeholders agree that the EUYD is not visible enough and it is not easy to understand for most of the young people involved. The communication about the EUYD was not coordinated at EU level, therefore it is rather sporadic. EUYD communication requires better coordination, coherency and an overall strategic approach at EU level, and the communication about the process at national level is very diverse.

45. Youth Partnership (2023), pp. 28-29.

46. Ibid., pp. 29-30.

47. Ibid., pp. 30-31.

48. European Commission (2022).

In some countries, the EUYD has a different name, is considered more youth friendly, and has a long-established visual identity that makes it more visible and easier to recognise. A European integrated and co-ordinated communication strategy is needed, but it should respect and accommodate the existing and established national ways of communicating about the EUYD. To the largest extent possible, the European communication strategy should preserve the national approaches that proved to be effective.

Another important issue related to the visibility and clarity of the EUYD is the way events and other activities are introduced. Ensuring the visibility, accessibility and clarity of the EUYD requires the use of a clear message, formulated in a simple and youth-friendly way, about the aim of the events, their expected results and follow-up, as well as asking consultation questions in a way that is both easy to understand and respectful of young people. Most NWGs implement activities to ensure these standards are met and they undertake these activities as part of their responsibility, in relation to both the ESG and the Erasmus+ programme. However, in the absence of the ESG's communication strategy, the activities of NWGs are heterogeneous and the level of EUYD visibility is very different in different member states.

As already underlined, the fact that the leadership of the process is constantly changing generates the feeling that the process is not clear, not only for the young people participating in consultations and events, but also for the members of the ESG and NWGs. Over time, the level of engagement, communication and co-operation between members of the ESG varied. Some cycles (for example the 8th cycle) represent good practices with good/high levels of engagement, communication and co-operation. But there are cycles when the countries in the Trio of Presidencies have been involved to a very limited extent beyond the six months when they held the Presidency of the Council of the EU. In this context, the lessons learned formulated above (review question 8), supporting the effectiveness of the EUYD, are also relevant for the transparency and visibility of the EUYD. Incorporating these lessons learned in the EUYD design and the activities of the ESG will also increase its visibility.

Review question 16: Does the EUYD process consider and answer the needs of young people to be informed on the overall results of the consultations and the decisions made based on them? Could the process be designed to better encourage continuous youth participation, after the end of the consultations?

The lack of a follow-up phase, when young people are informed on the overall results of the consultations and decisions, was one of the most important weaknesses of the EUYD, and it is also one of the hardest to resolve, due to time constraints.

Starting with the 8th cycle, the EUYD process has been divided into a consultation phase and an implementation phase. The idea behind the two phases is that "a Consultation phase focused on gathering actions for implementation, followed by an Implementation phase that seeks to put those actions in motion, transforming Youth Goals into Youth Actions is essential for an impactful process."⁴⁹

In the 8th cycle, the implementation phase was not implemented as planned due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the fact that the grants for the NWGs reached them with a large delay. The time and

49. The handover document from the ESG of the 8th cycle of the EUYD (Trio of Presidencies Germany, Portugal, Slovenia) to the incoming ESG of the EUYD (Trio of Presidencies France, Czech Republic, Sweden).

resources to plan and organise implementation activities were scarce most of the time, and resources in the 8th cycle have been used to organise the consultation activities in new and innovative ways, using mainly qualitative methods and online interactions. The implementation phase was planned and is implemented in the 9th cycle but the opinions on the implementation activities are diverse.

For some of the interviewed NWG members, these activities are a significant beneficial change that improves the quality of youth engagement within the EUYD. For other NWG representatives, because the implementation activities are coming too quickly after the consultation, they cannot make the needed difference in providing young people with consistent feedback on how the results of the EUYD are used in policy and decision making. The implementation activities therefore remain only a structured way of informing young people about the results of the EUYD.

The implementation activities encourage continuous youth participation, even after the end of the consultations.

To effectively respond to the needs of young people to be informed on the overall impact of the consultations and to encourage decision makers to provide young people with feedback on how they used the results of the EUYD, the 18-month cycles would benefit from a different planning. Several of the interviewed representatives of NWGs and previous members of the ESG suggested that connections are needed between the cycles, both in planning activities/events and conducting information and promotion activities. The most important changes include the following.

- The implementation phase in one cycle can include activities providing young people with feedback from policy and decision makers on the use of consultation results from the current and previous cycle, covering therefore both short-term and medium-term effects of the consultations. This approach should be based on a more consistent dialogue between the Trios of Presidencies for two subsequent cycles.
- The communication activities about the EUYD should be planned to include, as much as possible, the information about how the results of the consultations have been integrated in decision making, beyond the resolutions of the Council of the EU. Each time a document prepared by the European Commission is based on a resolution of the Council of the EU that has been drafted as a result of the EUYD consultation, this should be communicated separately to young people, using their preferred channels.

Review question 17: How was the EUYD changed once the new EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 was adopted? What is the difference between the structured dialogue and the EUYD as described by Appendix 1 to the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027?

The most important difference between the structured dialogue and the EUYD, as described by Appendix 1 to the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, is the clarity on the themes of the dialogue, because, starting with the 7th cycle, the EUYD was based on the Youth Goals. On the other hand, the process evolved gradually and became:

- more structured, especially due to the involvement of the researchers since the 6th cycle, when the EUYD contributed to shaping the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027;
- better managed after the clear definition of the ESG role in 2019, as a result of a document proposed by the Austrian Presidency;
- more inclusive, due to a constant and ever-increasing concern for this issue;

- more appropriate for meaningful youth engagement, especially due to the inclusion of the implementation phase in the 8th cycle and the following ones.

Review question 18: How did the Covid-19 pandemic and the extensive use of digital tools for consultation influence the EUYD process and results?

The Covid-19 pandemic largely impacted the implementation of the 8th cycle. It delayed all activities, including national and European level activities. In 2020, the pandemic lowered the capacity of the ESG to co-ordinate, the capacity of the German Presidency to organise the EU Youth Conference as it was initially planned, and the capacity of all NWGs to organise the consultation activities as envisaged. The funding for the 8th cycle was also delayed. However, despite the initial shock of the first wave of the pandemic and the first lockdown declared in most of the member states, the 8th cycle became a good practice for how the EUYD should be managed:

- the ESG started planning early and continued to meet online, regularly, adapting its calendar to the evolving situation;
- the Trio of Presidencies involved both public authorities and youth councils;
- the ESG worked with researchers to provide the NWGs with methodologies for qualitative consultation activities organised both online and offline (when and where possible);
- the EU Youth Conferences have been organised online and they have been integrated in the EUYD process. Although the first conference was organised much later than initially planned and this affected its relevance within the larger EUYD process, the ESG continued to strive for a meaningful integration of the EU Youth Conferences with the consultations;
- the ESG prepared a consistent handover document for the Trio of Presidencies taking over for the 9th cycle.

At national level, some of the NWGs struggled with organising EUYD activities while also facing other challenges generated by the Covid-19 pandemic. On the other hand, for some of the NWGs the use of digital tools for qualitative consultations, not only for the quantitative survey, meant they increased their capacity to reach out to new groups of young people. Therefore, the number of young people participating in consultation activities organised by NWGs during the 8th cycle varies from 20 in Luxemburg (and less than 100 in five other member states) to 1 188 in Latvia and 2 089 in Romania.

In this context, the use of digital and online tools for the EUYD is considered a valuable progress. These tools should continue to be part of the EUYD and should be used in a mix of methods to improve its outreach and inclusiveness. The methods used in countries that engaged several hundred or thousands of young people should be promoted as best practice for a large outreach of the EUYD.

However, most consulted stakeholders agree that digital tools alone cannot cover all the needs for meaningful youth engagement in a process as large as the EUYD. For some youth groups, the digital tools are not appropriate. Moreover, in order to encourage a sustained dialogue on equal footing between young people and the policy and decision makers, face-to-face meetings are considered more appropriate than digital events. These face-to-face meetings are more suitable for the needed trust building between young people and policy and decision makers. Moreover, they offer much more opportunities for informal dialogue (in addition to the issues planned in the events agenda) and, therefore, they can increase the effectiveness of the consultations, generating windows of

opportunity for advocacy or offering the contacts needed for advocacy activities of larger or smaller youth organisations.

Review question 19: How sustainable is the EUYD process and how is sustainability embedded or considered when organising and implementing the EUYD?

The EUYD continuity is ensured by the existing strategic vision integrated in the EU Youth Strategy and the European Youth Goals. But there are some limitations to the sustainability of the EUYD process. Although the EUYD continues to be organised in 18-month cycles, as prescribed by EU policy documents, and although there is consistent support in the member states for the continuation of the EUYD, its organisation does not encourage the use and capitalisation of results from one cycle into future cycles.

The leadership of the ESG changes every six months and most of the ESG members change every 18 months. Therefore, it is difficult for the ESG to learn from previous lessons and to identify good practices. Furthermore, it is difficult for the ESG to provide guidance for the NWGs in a way that will support sustainability. This is reflected in the fact that many documents as well as the know-how developed during one cycle cannot be easily transferred to the next cycles. Consequently, the effort to organise the activities of the NWGs is unnecessarily increased during each cycle by the lack of continuity in the work of the ESG. There is progress from this perspective during the last cycles, due to the improved structure and involvement of researchers since 2017, but the Covid-19 pandemic represented an additional disruption that limited the continuity.

On the other hand, 18 months is not enough to ensure that the results of the consultations are used to their full potential during the same period. The fact that the next cycle is organised by a different Trio of Presidencies, with their specific agendas, limits the long-term effects of the EUYD, or at least, it makes the results less visible.

Review question 20: What is the role of the national youth councils in the EUYD process and to what extent is this process youth-led?

Based on the answers to the survey and the data centralised by the YFJ, there are very few countries where the NWGs do not include the national youth councils. The process is youth-led in some countries, where the presence and active participation of authorities to the NWG is minimal, but in most cases and at European level, in the ESG, the process is co-managed by young people from youth organisations (youth councils, YFJ, other youth non-governmental organisations) and public authorities. This supports both meaningful youth engagement and the translation of consultation results in policy decisions, by the authorities involved.

There are, however, some exceptions. Most importantly, Croatia does not have a functional NWG and does not include the youth council in EUYD activities. For the 9th cycle, Romania did not organise a fully functional NWG. In a small number of countries, the national youth policy authority takes a leading role in the NWG, thus marginalising the participation of the youth councils.

The youth councils' role and level of engagement are directly linked to their access to funding. In some member states, the youth policy authorities transferred the grant for the NWG to the youth councils, therefore youth councils received the central role in managing the EUYD. In this case, the level of young peoples' involvement in organising the EUYD is determined by the way each youth council

organises its work. The process is mostly youth-led, although the daily and logistic management of some activities can be ensured by older people, employed by the youth councils.

There are cases of member states where the transfer of funds and responsibilities from the youth policy authorities to the youth councils generated a youth-led process, but also generated an abdication of the public authorities' responsibilities to participate in the dialogue, resulting in a (very) low level of participation of policy and decision makers to dialogue activities, which is not ideal.

If the Erasmus+ grant for the NWGs for the EUYD is managed by the public authority, in most cases the youth council is involved in activities but it needs to ensure its human resources.

There are different forms of selecting the youth delegates and the entire group of participants to the EU Youth Conference, with variations across countries. In most cases, the selection of the participants to the EU Youth Conference is co-managed by the youth councils and/or other youth non-governmental organisations and the national youth policy authority.

The organisation of the EU Youth Conference is generally assumed by the national youth policy authority in the country holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU, and the process of organising the conference, as well as the facilitation of the process was not, as a rule, youth-led.

At European level, the role of the YFJ in the ESG is important as it ensures the continuity of the ESG and the secretariat, including communication with the NWGs. The YFJ was involved in the discussion of the ESG regarding the selection of consultation topics. However, based on all conducted interviews, we find that the selection of dialogue topics is not youth-led and is a co-decision of the Trio of Presidencies and young people to a very limited extent. This is generating some challenges in the process implementation, relevance and results, as presented in the analysis above.

Review question 7: How well was the EUYD monitored, in order to allow for the identification of good practices and lessons learned during the period 2010-22? How can the monitoring system be improved?

The governance structure of the EUYD makes the monitoring of the process both difficult and very important. Information collected shows that the monitoring of the EUYD improved over time, both at EU and national level, but most interviewed stakeholders emphasised the need to track more information and data.

At EU level, the ESG lacks a long-term institutional memory on how the entire EUYD process should be organised. There is no clear way to pass the information, from one cycle to the other, on the main activities of the ESG and their timing, including what data are useful and should be collected and how and where they should be stored.

The YFJ is the permanent secretariat of the ESG and it works hard to transfer knowledge, learning and data between cycles. But the leadership of the ESG is highly transitory, changing partially every six months and wholly every 18 months, and this affects the attention paid to monitoring as a tool supporting long-term learning, identification of good practices and lessons learned to support future decision making.

Moreover, the monitoring of Erasmus+ projects funded to support the work of the NWGs is not used by the ESG when taking decisions on how to manage a cycle. Likewise, for the NWGs the monitoring

of the EUYD is divided between reporting efforts related to the Erasmus+ grant and the reporting to the ESG.

Regarding this last type of reporting, the flow of information from the NWG to the ESG became a lot richer once the researchers were included in the process. The researchers developed tools to capture the results of the EUYD both at country level, namely the results of NWG activities, and at EU level, especially during the EU Youth Conference.⁵⁰ They offered support to the ESG and NWGs, including reporting templates, therefore their work contributed substantially to improving the monitoring of the EUYD.

Beside the answer to consultation questions/themes, formulated based on the implemented activities, the reporting templates that NWGs provide to the ESG in the framework of the 6th-9th EUYD cycles include:

- the number of young people who meaningfully participated in EUYD activities, in the consultation phase, in each country, broken down by gender, age group, disability, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, rurality and NEET situation;
- the number of young people who gave feedback on EUYD themes through any one of the following: surveys, social media opinion polls, social media comments and other similar consultation activities.

According to the interviewed stakeholders, as well as the professional opinion of the evaluators, additional data should be collected on:

- the number of young people participating in events in the implementation phase, in each cycle, and their profile, broken down as in the case of the reports on the consultation phase;
- some basic elements related to the economic background of participants and intersectional data, whenever possible, in order to better understand the existing limitation to participation for young people in groups exposed to intersectional exclusion;
- the geographical coverage of the consultations and implementation phase events in each country in order to analyse in a clear way the geographical coverage of the EUYD and correlation between the participants, results and the areas where they live;
- the number of decision makers participating in consultations and events in the implementation phase in each cycle, in each country, and their specific field of activity, in order to analyse the cross-sectoral dimension of their participation;
- the methods used to select the youth delegates that bring the results of the consultations and youth voices from their member states to the EU Youth Conferences.

We recognise that meaningful participation in EUYD activities should be prioritised over participant and process monitoring, to support EUYD effectiveness and impact. However, collecting data for the proposed indicators, even if with some limitations, can support learning from good practices and the improvement of the process management, with benefits for meaningful youth participation.

50. More on the role of the researchers in Youth Partnership (2020).

In addition to the proposed indicators, a more structured and regular process of reflection on the previous cycle should be planned. According to the handover document from the 8th cycle of the EUYD:

NWGs and INGYOs should be given a moment/space of reflection of the previous cycles and to evaluate the long-term impact, also connecting outcomes of previous cycles with the current one to emphasise meaningful participation processes ... European meetings of NWGs should be reinstated in-between cycles and they could be used as a space for monitoring and follow-up of previous cycles.⁵¹

These recommendations are supported by the findings of the review, and most interviewed stakeholders tend to agree with them.

Last, but not least, to support the effectiveness of the EUYD monitoring and the capacity of all stakeholders to better evaluate the EUYD in the future, all documents generated and managed by the ESG (including the reports of the NWGs and databases resulting from quantitative methods used for consultations and anonymised participant lists to qualitative consultation events) should be stored in a unique place, on cloud, where all ESG members of all future cycles should have access.

51. The handover document from the ESG of the 8th cycle of the EUYD (Trio of Presidencies Germany, Portugal, Slovenia) to the incoming ESG of the EUYD (Trio of Presidencies France, Czech Republic, Sweden).

3. Conclusions and recommendations

3.1. Conclusions

The EUYD is the largest consultation process in the EU for all ages and the largest youth participation process organised constantly and systematically in the world. It is appropriate for youth engagement at large scale and proved to be effective in shaping some of the most important EU youth policies, including the Youth Guarantee and the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027. It also contributes to a better integration of youth engagement and participation in institutional work and youth policies at the level of the EU member states, although there is a large variation of how the EUYD generates impact at national and regional level. There is a positive feedback loop including EUYD in the development of the sense of active (European) citizenship among European youth leaders.

There are, therefore, a large number and range of achievements of the EUYD and there is a general consensus that the process must continue in the future. There is also a consensus that the EUYD can be strengthened. The following conclusions are presented in order to support future decisions that can further improve the process.

One of the main limitations regarding the effectiveness and impact of the EUYD is the fact that youth is a cross-cutting policy issue. However, there is not enough direct proof that the EUYD has influenced decisions in other policy fields, besides youth policy and youth employment policy.

In this context, there are three characteristics of the process that have an influence on the relevance, outcomes and quality of the EUYD.

- The EUYD process is linked with the political agenda of the Presidencies of the Council of the EU and because of that, the selection of the dialogue themes is not solely a youth-led process. The review shows that the selected dialogue themes are relevant for young people, but they do not have the same level of relevance for all young people in all countries. A youth-led process of selecting the priority themes for each cycle could increase the thematic relevance of the consultations, but it could also result in some variation of the themes in different countries.
- The governance structure of the EUYD is not stable. The leadership of the EUYD changes every six months and most of the members of the ESG change every 18 months. Although the European Commission and the YFJ are permanent members of the ESG, this proved not to be enough to ensure the transfer of the entire know-how from one cycle to another, a consistent approach in the management and monitoring of all cycles, and the capacity of the ESG to identify good practices and to learn from previous experiences, as the presidencies have the mandate and responsibility for setting the agenda for the EUYD and running the cycle. Moreover, the lack of stability in the governance of the EUYD prevented the development of a coherent and comprehensive communication strategy that is needed to (a) provide young people with clear information about the EUYD; (b) carry out outreach activities to organise the dialogue in the most inclusive way possible; and (c) provide young people with a follow-up about how their views influence policy and decision making.
- The time frame of each EUYD cycle is 18 months long, and this generates time pressure for all involved stakeholders. The timeframe for each cycle does not provide the needed time to organise quality and inclusive consultations with a large number of young people, for

informing and guiding young people about their engagement, the goal of their participation, the reasonable expectations they can have, etc. Moreover, 18 months is a too short time to provide young people with the feedback they need about the results of the consultations. These are significant issues affecting how meaningful youth participation is in the EUYD.

In general, the review finds that the stakeholders at the EU and national level are ensuring a good level of relevance of the EUYD and that the process is effective for EU and national youth policies. However, a few elements of the process can be improved.

- The youth engagement process would be even more meaningful if young people taking part in the dialogue were informed about the ways in which results from the consultation process were translated into policies at the national or European level. This feedback is currently very limited, but it is considered important by young people and youth organisations.
- Involvement of policy makers from other fields (besides the youth policy governance structures) in the EUYD would ensure better youth mainstreaming across sectors. While this cross-sectoral co-operation can be observed in some cycles and countries, it is yet to be universally implemented and the EUYD can contribute to this process.
- The role of INGyOs should be clarified and funding should be allocated to support their capacity to contribute to the dialogue.
- The visibility of the EUYD could be improved in order to reach more young people.
- The connection between the cycles could be reinforced, in terms of planning and promotion of activities and EUYD feedback and follow-up, to allow young people to better understand how the dialogue is integrated in decision making.
- The monitoring and data collection about the EUYD can be further improved. The handover document from one ESG to the next is useful, but it cannot cover all data and the information needed for a smooth transition from one cycle to the other. In addition to the monitoring process and the indicators proposed in this report, a more structured and regular process of reflection on the previous cycle should be planned.

However, although limitations are still present, in each cycle after the adoption of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, the EUYD became more focused and structured, better managed, more inclusive and more appropriate for meaningful youth engagement. In this way, it got the potential to be more effective and impactful. It can also be easily communicated to young people, but a clear strategy for this is needed.

Beyond its main objectives linked with the EU Youth strategy and the engagement of young people in the EU policy dialogue, the EUYD can have an impact at national, regional and local level. This is happening in countries where not only the national authorities but also the regional and local authorities are involved and the NWGs make efforts to connect the EU youth policy with national, regional and local initiatives benefitting young people.

3.2. Recommendations

In order to improve the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the EUYD and the quality of the process, a number of recommendations can be made.

A. Concerning the activities of the European Steering Group and the overall EUYD process that is impacting the EUYD in all member states and at all its stages

- 1) The activities of the ESG should be further clarified, by providing each new ESG with a roadmap and detailed calendar of activities and decisions to be taken. This roadmap should not be mandatory and should not limit the capacity of the ESG to decide on the themes and priorities of each cycle, to organise its work so that operational activities and decisions are following the political ones. But a set of recommendations on how the ESG can operate would be useful. The roadmap should include specific recommendations, such as:
 - a. the Trio of Presidencies should formulate a clear and consistent vision about what it wants to achieve during the cycle, as early as possible. This vision should steer all other decisions;
 - b. all stakeholders that are a part of the ESG (Trio of Presidencies' ministries, national youth councils, European Commission and the YFJ) should come together early in the process;
 - c. each ESG should decide early on the rules, procedures and calendar of the entire cycle, adapting the framework calendar provided by the roadmap to the cycle's vision. It is important to factor in the time needed for the development of methodologies, their adaptation to youth-friendly formats and their translation, as well as the time needed for the collection and revision of the NWG reports and the synthesis work of the researchers;
 - d. the involvement of researchers should be continuous and with an understanding that their role is to provide neutral support, not political. Ideally, the same team of researchers should be involved throughout one cycle.

The roadmap should be designed by each ESG for the next group and included in the handover document.

- 2) The ESG should provide the NWGs with a clear set of recommendations about how to organise the dialogue in a more meaningful and inclusive way and with a clearer guidance in the implementation stage. These recommendations should be accompanied by capacity building activities for the NWGs.

This set of recommendations should include guidance on how to organise consultations to ensure that young people can freely express their ideas and opinions, in safe spaces, the way the EUYD can better allow the exchange of views, on an equal footing, among young people and between young people and decision and policy makers, and how social, economic and environmental sustainability can be increased. The recommendations should be accompanied by capacity building activities dedicated to NWGs and good practices should be disseminated.

The European Commission, YFJ or the presidencies could organise capacity building activities, on site, online or hybrid for the NWGs. Participation in these activities should be mandatory for NWG co-ordinators, but this would require planning the Erasmus+ grants to integrate these activities. Furthermore, funding for the NWGs could be conditioned by participation in at least some of the capacity building activities.

- 3) The ESG should provide the NWGs with a clearer guidance in the implementation stage, after the consultations, to ensure the organisation of meaningful meetings between young people and decision makers, and the feedback from decision makers to young people and vice versa.

The ESG should be responsible for designing the guidance, including identifying good practices among member states and promoting them. The NWGs should be responsible for implementing the received guidance.

- 4) The ESG should provide the NWGs with a clear set of recommendations about the selection, preparation and training of the delegations to the EU Youth Conferences, including, but not limited to, young delegates.

The ESG should be responsible for designing the guidance, including identifying good practices among member states and promoting them. The NWGs should be responsible for implementing the guidance.

- 5) The monitoring of the EUYD should be improved, with additional data collected, according to the proposals included in this report. Moreover, a more structured and regular process of reflection on the previous cycle should be planned and this can be done during a meeting at the end of each cycle bringing together the ESG, NWGs and involved INGYOs. Monitoring should be improved also by establishing a clear, constant and unique way and place to store the existing information and data about the EUYD.

The European Commission or the YFJ (as permanent members of the ESG) should be responsible for designing the storage for data on the EUYD. The ESG should be responsible for centralising the data from the NWGs. The NWGs should be responsible for data collection about each activity for all indicators included in the monitoring system.

B. Concerning the resources for the EUYD

- 6) The NWG plans included in the projects receiving Erasmus+ grants for the EUYD should be adapted, in all countries, to the plans for the cycle or sufficient flexibility should be included in the projects to avoid that NWGs are obliged by their funding contracts to implement different activities from the ones recommended by the ESG. Moreover, the Erasmus+ grants can be better used to ensure the accountability of the NWGs and a more homogenous implementation of the EUYD, including the adoption of recommended good practices. The accountability linked to the Erasmus+ grants can also be used to ensure that the EUYD process is youth-led or co-managed by young people in all member states.

The European Commission should revise the guidelines for the Erasmus+ grants to ensure alignment with the plans and guidelines of the ESG, starting with the assumption that the calendar and activities from the next EUYD cycle will be similar to the ones of the previous cycle. Amendments should be signed for all projects after the moment the ESG establishes the cycle calendar.

- 7) In general, additional resources should be allocated to:
- a. the countries in the Trio of Presidencies to fulfil their role, including organising the EU Youth Conference, but also for the participation of the entire country delegation (including representatives of the national youth councils) to several ESG meetings. Funding is available for this, but the youth policy authorities and youth councils should start fundraising early;
 - b. the YFJ to support youth councils and youth organisations member of the NWG to develop their outreach and advocacy capacity;
 - c. the INGYOs to fulfil their role of bringing into the EUYD important youth voices on relevant cross-border issues;
 - d. the NWGs to translate and adapt existing tools, to make them appropriate for consultation. Using different formulations of questions used for consultation in events with different target groups may be needed. Moreover, NWGs need additional funding to be more effective in their outreach and to be able to organise events in areas that are underserved by youth organisations;
 - e. the NWGs in countries where the most important youth policy competences are held by the regional authorities (or other sub-national structures, like the lands in Germany), should receive additional funding to include regional authorities or other sub-national structures with youth policy competences in all EUYD activities.

The European Commission should revise the guidelines for the Erasmus+ grants to ensure these activities can be covered by the provided grants.

- 8) The NWGs should make plans and efforts to use the entire budget allocated to them through the Erasmus+ grants and to meaningfully engage as many young people as possible.

Complementing the actions of the NWGs, the European Commission could introduce a mechanism of redistributing funds from NWGs that are not fully using them toward other NWGs.

C. Concerning the overall organisation of the EUYD and the connection between its elements and cycles

- 9) The connection between activities at national level (both the consultation and implementation phases) and the EU Youth Conferences should be planned from the beginning of each cycle and should be communicated to all stakeholders, including NWGs, young delegates and ambassadors. The EU Youth Conferences should be better integrated in the larger and more inclusive EUYD process, so that all results of the consultations at national level and the results of other events are considered during the conferences. This would entail planning the EU Youth Conferences agenda based on the results of the consultations at national level.

NWGs should follow the guidance and exchange information on good practices in order to ensure a better continuity of the EUYD from one cycle to the next.

Each national government holding the presidency and organising the EU Youth Conference is responsible for implementing this recommendation.

- 10) The 18-month cycles should be planned in a different way. More connections are needed between the cycles, both in planning activities/events and conducting information and promotion activities:
- a. representatives of at least one country in the next Trio of Presidencies should participate in the ESG meetings in the last six months of each cycle to ensure better handover and continuity;
 - b. the implementation phase in one cycle can include activities providing young people with feedback from decision makers on the use of consultation results from the actual and previous cycle, covering therefore both short-term and medium-term effects of the consultations;
 - c. the communication activities about the EUYD should be planned to include, as much as possible, the information about how the results of the consultations have been integrated in decision making, beyond the resolutions of the Council of the EU. Each time a document prepared by the European Commission is based on a resolution of the Council of the EU that has been drafted as a result of the EUYD consultation, this should be communicated separately, to young people, using their preferred channels.

The implementation of this recommendation should be the responsibility of the ESG and NWGs and it is connected with recommendations 1, 4, 16 and 17.

D. Concerning the themes for the EUYD and the opportunity to increase its relevance and effectiveness beyond what is now expected

- 11) In addition to the European Youth Goals, the EUYD could be better linked with key upcoming European Commission initiatives, allowing the organisation of large consultations of young people on regulations, directives and action documents. In its Communication on the European Year of Youth, the European Commission has expressed interest in aligning the dialogue's focus more closely with the European Commission's work programme.

DG EAC could involve the EU youth co-ordinator and make a list (agenda) of topics that are suitable for consultation under the EUYD. This could better link the consultation results to concrete policy decisions, with a direct impact on young peoples' lives. Moreover, to organise meaningful consultation on policy and regulatory documents, the questions on such documents should be formulated in a youth-friendly, clear and simple way, taking into account the impact on youth and the interest of young people in the elements regulated by the European Commission's documents.

E. Concerning the participants and the inclusiveness of the EUYD

- 12) In order to further increase the potential of the EUYD to include hard-to-reach youth and NEETs, the ESG and NWGs should take on board the recommendations of the Youth Partnership's [review of the EUYD inclusion levels](#) conducted in 2023. In a nutshell, these recommendations, mainly for the ESG, are to: "define and quantify EUYD outreach goals in a more strategic manner", "develop support and guidance for NWGs to engage with specific minority groups", "build on the good 'access' that minority groups and young women have to EUYD to promote 'inclusion'". These recommendations refer both to (a) how the EUYD can be organised to offer the opportunities to participate to young people exposed to exclusion risks;

and (b) how EUYD outcomes can be reported, communicated and promoted to take into account the views of minorities and marginalised young people, even if the majority of young people express different opinions.⁵²

The main responsible actor for the implementation of these recommendations is the ESG, but all NWGs should follow the guidelines for the achievement of expected results.

- 13) Capacity building activities should be organised by the NWGs as an introduction to the EUYD events and information/education materials (infographics, short videos) should be distributed to prepare youth participants in the EUYD.

NWGs should be responsible for planning and implementing the activities entailed by this recommendation.

F. Concerning the visibility of the EUYD

- 14) A European integrated and co-ordinated communication plan about the EUYD is needed, but it should respect and accommodate the existing and established national ways of communicating about the EUYD. To the largest extent possible, the European communication strategy should preserve the national approaches that proved to be effective. The ESG should be responsible for the integrated communication plan/strategy. DG EAC, YFJ and the NWGs should be responsible for implementing the strategy.

Policies, decisions and documents including the recommendations from the EUYD should be made available in a more accessible and youth-friendly way and/or in a variety of formats. The NWGs' reports should be made available to the public.

NWGs should be responsible for planning and implementing the activities entailed by this recommendation.

- 15) A systematic review of all policy recommendations formulated within the EUYD should be carried out, at least starting with the 6th EUYD cycle, to provide young people with information on the effectiveness and impact of the EUYD. This overview can be presented during the EU Youth Conferences for the recommendations formulated during previous cycles. For the future, policy recommendations should also be labelled by policy level (local, regional, national, European) as well as by actor (member states, Council of Ministers, etc.) in the NWGs and ESG reports to support monitoring the implementation of the policies.

DG EAC should be responsible for implementing this recommendation.

52. Youth Partnership (2023).

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Appendices

Theory of change of the EU Youth Dialogue

Although the EUYD process was described with more clarity and details in successive EU policy documents between 2001 and 2019, and although the value of youth participation is constantly reaffirmed, the aim of the EUYD is less obvious, but it can be “reconstructed” based on the content of the main documents. According to the 2001 White Paper, youth participation is a “clear demand” of young people, therefore, the right of young people to participate is clearly stated, but a need to establish participation mechanisms and to support youth capacity for participation are also recognised. Moreover, participation is understood as a learning process: through the exercise of participation, young people acquire the competences and confidence to exercise active citizenship, in other words to be(come) active citizens in their youth and adulthood.⁵³

According to the Council Resolution of 27 October 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field, “the structured dialogue with young people and youth organisations ... serves as a forum for continuous joint reflection on the priorities, implementation and follow-up of European cooperation in the youth field”.⁵⁴ This joint reflection should ensure that:

- specific needs of young people are taken into account by policy makers at local, regional, national and European level;⁵⁵
- young people develop a greater sense of active citizenship.⁵⁶

According to Williamson (2015), the EUYD has two main functions:

- it conveys a powerful symbolism about the place of young people in platforms for decision making in the youth field;
- it provides a real opportunity for young people to shape the agenda for youth policy at the European level.⁵⁷

53. Appendix 1 to Commission of the European Communities (2001).

54. Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) (2009/C 311/01).

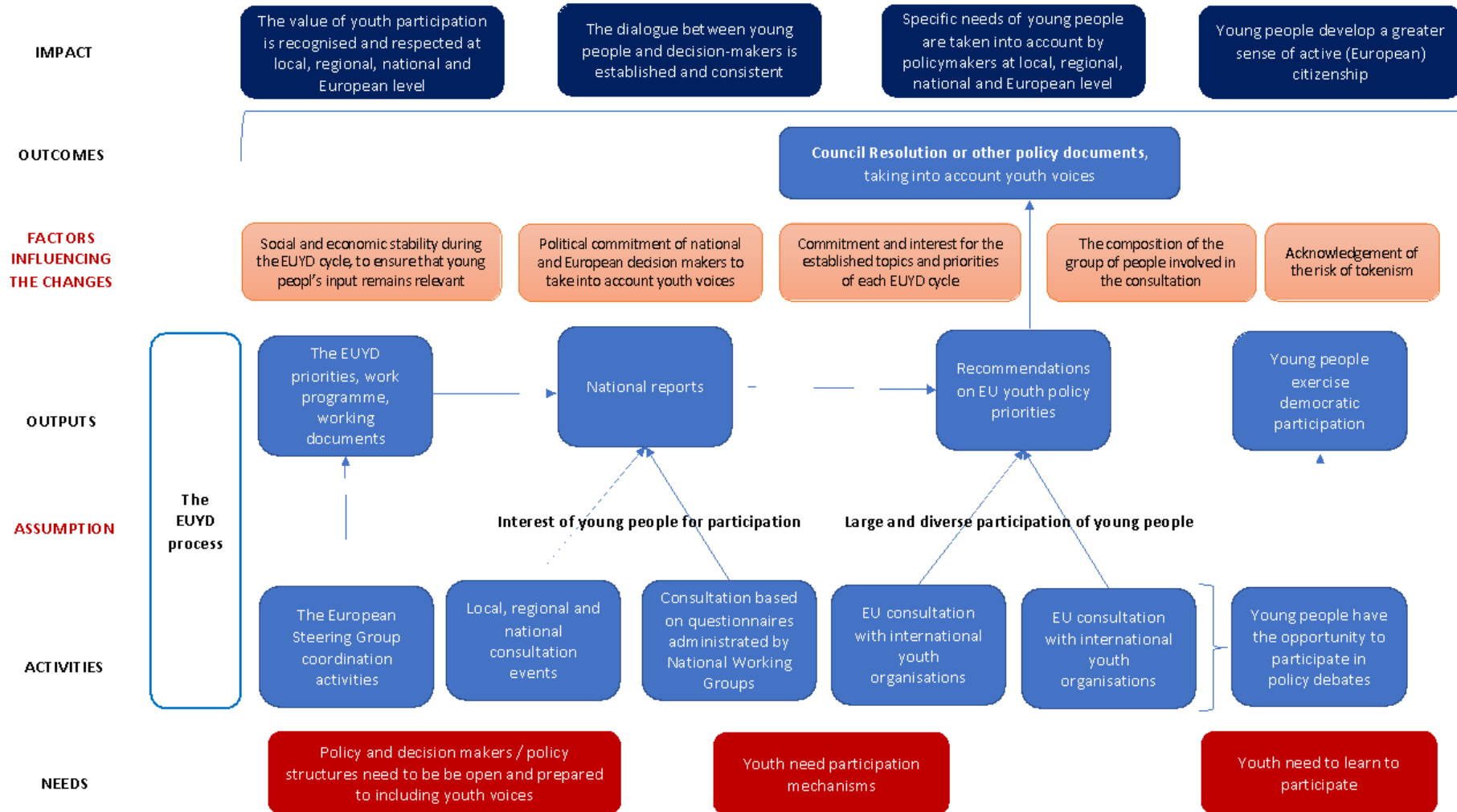
55. Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on addressing the concerns of young people in Europe — implementing the European Pact for Youth and promoting active citizenship (2005/C 292/03).

56. Ibid.

57. Williamson (2015), p. 88.

In this context, the reconstructed theory of change for the EUYD is presented in the figure below.

Figure 2. EUYD theory of change



Methodological note

The review is organised using criteria for policy and programme evaluation: relevance, coherence, effectiveness and impact.⁵⁸ Review questions on the process are added in order to provide evidence for decision making on how better relevance, coherence, effectiveness and impact can be reached.

Review questions

The review questions are the high-level questions that an evaluation is designed to answer. The review team answers these questions, based on the evaluation methodology, data collected from stakeholders and data analysis. Review questions are not the specific questions that are asked in an interview or questionnaire. Formulating evaluation questions makes it easier to decide what data to collect, and how to analyse and report these data. For data collection, specific tools – interview guidelines and questionnaires – have been designed, based on the evaluation questions, but with an appropriate formulation for each stakeholder. The review questions have also determined the sections and subsections of the evaluation report.

Questions related to relevance

The review of the relevance of the EUYD refers to:

- the extent to which the process is designed to answer the needs of the involved stakeholders (young people, youth organisations, policy and decision makers); and
- the extent to which the design of the process is appropriate to reach its goals.

In order to provide useful evidence for decision making, the evaluation answers the following evaluation questions.

1. Is the EUYD process appropriate to answer young people's needs to participate in policy making in the EU, at local, regional, national and EU level? In particular:
 - How appropriate is the EUYD process to ensure that EU, national, regional and local institutions meaningfully engage young people in the design, implementation and evaluation of EU policies?
 - Are the activities and outputs of the EUYD process consistent with the overall objective of meaningfully engaging young people in policies in the EU, at local, regional, national and EU level?⁵⁹
 - What other activities and outputs are needed in order to ensure a more comprehensive meaningful youth engagement with policies in the EU, at local, regional, national and EU level?

58. Evaluation criteria are defined in line with the OECD DAC criteria, used by the EU institutions for policy and programme evaluation (available at www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dacriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm, accessed 14 November 2024).

59. For the EUYD evaluation, “meaningful youth engagement” and “meaningful youth participation” takes the sense developed by the 8th EUYD cycle. In this sense, meaningful youth engagement and participation includes (1) preparing the engagement/participation through citizens' education; (2) allowing young people to express their ideas and opinions freely, therefore including qualitative formats of engagement/participation (not only using questionnaires, surveys and closed-ended questions); (3) offering safe spaces for young people to participate and express their ideas and opinions; (4) organising the dialogue in a format to allow the exchange of views with young people on an equal footing; (5) encouraging feedback from decision makers to young people and from young people to decision makers; (6) considering inclusion, as well as the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the engagement/participation; and (7) integrating the outcomes of the youth engagement/participation in decision making as much as possible.

Questions related to coherence

The review of the coherence refers to the compatibility of the EUYD with other youth policies, generally, and youth engagement interventions, specifically. In order to provide useful evidence for decision making, the review answers the following evaluation questions.

2. To what extent is the EUYD aligned and co-ordinated with other youth engagement interventions at EU level?
3. To what extent is the EUYD aligned and co-ordinated with other youth engagement interventions at the level of member states?

Questions related to effectiveness

The review of the effectiveness refers to the extent to which the EUYD achieves its objectives and results as presented in the planning documents and reflected in the theory of change. In order to provide useful evidence for decision making, the evaluation answers the following review questions.

4. How effective was the EUYD (cycles 1-8) in influencing the youth policies in the EU at local, regional, national and EU level? In other words: was the EUYD (cycles 1-8) able to influence the youth policy and if yes, how and to which extent? What are the differences between different policy levels?
5. Are policies in the EU (at local, regional, national and EU level) with effects on youth but not usually labelled as youth policies (for example the agriculture policy with effects on young farmers and young people in rural areas) influenced by the EUYD?
6. How effective is the EUYD in ensuring that young people from the entire EU have the opportunity to participate in the policy-making process? In other words: is the EUYD (cycles 1-8) able to provide young people from the entire EU with the opportunity to participate in the policy-making process? Are there any regional differences in how the EUYD provides young people with the opportunity to participate in the EU policy-making process?
7. How well was the EUYD monitored, in order to allow for the identification of good practices and lessons learned during the period 2010-22? How can the monitoring system be improved?
8. What are the main lessons learned on the EUYD process and results of the EUYD during the period 2010-22?
9. Is the set of institutions, structures and policy makers involved – the European Commission, the youth national authorities, the ESG, the NWGs, etc. – supporting the effectiveness and impact of the EUYD? How? How is this changing across EU member states?

Questions related to the impact

The review of the impact refers to the extent to which the EUYD generates high-level, medium- and long-term effects/changes. In order to provide useful evidence for decision making, the evaluation answers the following review questions.

10. Did the EUYD contribute to a better recognition of the value of youth participation in the EU, at local, regional, national and EU level? Are more and better designed youth participation mechanisms implemented as a result of the EUYD experience?
11. Did the EUYD contribute to a better understanding of young people's needs in the design of EU, national, regional and local policies?
12. Did the EUYD contribute to the development of a greater sense of active (European) citizenship among European youth? How did the EUYD contribute to the personal and civic development of young people?
13. What are the main factors influencing the impact of the EUYD? Is the EUYD process designed in a way that supports or hinders its impact? Why? What are the main factors external to the process influencing the impact of the EUYD?

Questions related to the quality of the process

14. How inclusive is the EUYD? Which youth voices are best included in the dialogue and which youth voices are less included and why? Are there replicable good practices in ensuring an open and inclusive consultation process (taking into account youth voices in their diversity and ensuring that unorganised, hard-to-reach and marginalised young people are heard, and their voices are reflected in EUYD recommendations)? How could the EUYD process be designed to be more inclusive?
15. How transparent is the EUYD? Could the process be designed to be more transparent?
16. Does the EUYD process consider and answer the needs of young people to be informed on the overall results of the consultations and decisions made based on them? Could the process be designed to better encourage continuous youth participation, after the end of the consultations?
17. How was the EUYD changed once the new EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 was adopted? What is the difference between the structured dialogue and the EUYD as described in Appendix 1 to the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027?
18. How did the Covid-19 pandemic and the extensive use of digital tools for consultation influence the EUYD process and results?
19. How sustainable is the EUYD process and how is sustainability embedded or considered when organising and implementing the EUYD?
20. What is the role of the national youth councils in the EUYD process and to what extent is this process youth-led?
21. How is the EUYD promoted to all stakeholders: NWGs, governments/youth departments, young people, etc., in order to ensure a good implementation of the process and its expected results?

The realist evaluation methodology

The review uses the realist evaluation methodology as a method to organise information collected through desk-based research and interviews, in order to present in a systematic way the dynamic relation between the EUYD process, the institutional and political context of its implementation and the particular way for each stakeholder participating in the process. The realist evaluation is a theory-based evaluation method, therefore its main aim is to validate/verify the theory of change of the evaluation object, in this case the EUYD process.

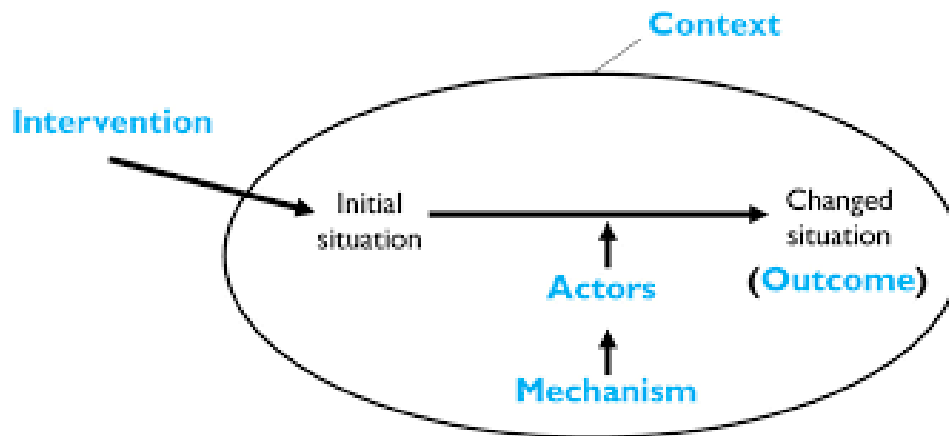
The EU "[Better regulation: guidelines and toolbox](#)" recommends the use of quantitative methods for evaluation, especially for impact evaluation or review of policies and programmes. However, the existing data on the EUYD do not allow for the application of quantitative evaluation or review methods, including counterfactual impact evaluation/review. In this context, the review uses qualitative methods for the review of the relevance, effectiveness and impact, and is based on the relevant literature on these methods.

The realist evaluation is distinct from other forms of theory-based evaluation in its particular assumptions of the nature of reality, how causation works, and what these assumptions imply for evaluation design, data collection and utilisation. According to Westhorp (2014), realist approaches "assume that nothing works everywhere or for everyone, and that context really does make a difference to programme outcomes". For the realist evaluation, special attention is given to assumptions, bottlenecks, risks and other context elements identified at the beginning.

A theory of change is an explanation of how, why and in what contexts an intervention leads to particular outcomes. This explanation is made up of "linked sets of hypotheses about the *mechanisms* that cause an intervention to work or not work in particular *contexts*, to lead to specific *outcomes*" (Punton et al. 2016: 1). These hypotheses are known as "context–mechanism–outcome" or CMO

configurations, which are the core units of analysis of realist evaluation. CMO configurations' contexts are made of resources, opportunities and constraints available to the beneficiaries; mechanisms are choices, reasoning or decisions that individuals make on the basis of the resources available in their context; and outcomes are the product of individuals' behaviour and choices.

Figure 3. Realist evaluation “context–mechanism–outcome” configuration



Source: R. (2008). “Causality for beginners”. In: NCRM Research Methods Festival.

For the realist evaluation of the EUYD, the context is defined by the governance of the EU and the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU, determining the changings in the governance of the EUYD every six months and the 18-month cycles. There are also different contexts at national level in the member states that are considered. The mechanisms are the processes that describe how the stakeholders work and deal with the EUYD process and the contexts. How government representatives promote their policy agenda within the EUYD process and how the youth councils and youth non-governmental organisations use the EUYD for advocacy are mechanisms contributing to the EUYD outcomes.

Data collected for the research

The data collection methodology for this research was based on a mixed methodology including:

- a survey of organisations part of the NWGs in all member states. The questionnaire for the survey was sent to the co-ordinators of all NWGs with support from the YFJ. There are 31 answers registered to the survey, with two-thirds of the answers provided by youth councils or non-governmental organisations and one-third provided by public authorities. The small number of answers to the survey represents a limitation of the review process and for this reason the collected answers have been only used to confirm information collected from other sources (interviews and documents);
- interviews with selected members of the ESG in charge of the three EUYD selected cycles for case studies. In total, 18 persons have been interviewed, including eight representatives of youth councils and other organisations, and 10 representatives of public institutions. When members of the ESG have been able to provide information on the activity of the NWG, in addition to the activity of the ESG, the information was collected, but this is not adding to the number of members of the NWG interviewed, presented below;

- interviews (group interviews or individual interviews) with members of the NWGs in the selected countries for case studies. In total, 19 persons have been interviewed, including seven representatives of youth councils and other organisations and 12 representatives of public institutions. When members of the NWG have been able to provide information on the activity of the ESG, in addition to the activity of the NWG, the information was collected, but this is not adding to the number of members of the ESG interviewed, presented above;
- three interviews with representatives of youth researchers involved in the EUYD;
- the study of documents produced at EU level and in the selected countries within the three selected cycles for case studies and the additional study of available documents produced within other EUYD cycles. This allowed a general answer to the review questions on relevance, effectiveness and impact for all EUYD cycles, before focusing in-depth on the selected ones.

The most important information sources for the review have been the interviews, complemented by the written documents. In total, 42 different persons have been interviewed. The volume and wealth of information collected through interviews is very rich: we conducted over 50 hours of interviews with a total of 42 persons, covering a large diversity of stakeholders and experiences related to the EUYD. As the research methodology and data sources are qualitative, the analysis is not focused on identifying representative data, but on the convergence of opinions and detailed descriptions of the process under review: the EUYD. Data collection through interviews happened at the point of information saturation, when through the course of interviews, the same themes and insights kept appearing, repeatedly. This allows the researchers to be confident that enough information was collected for valid findings and conclusions.⁶⁰

60. Saturation is accepted as a methodological principle in qualitative research. It is commonly taken to indicate that, on the basis of the data that have been collected or analysed hitherto, further data collection and/or analysis are unnecessary and conclusions can be drawn.

Instruments used for data collection

Interview participant information sheet

For the evaluation of the European Union Youth Dialogue

Name and contact details of the evaluation team

Main contact:	
Irina Lonean Youth researcher	Irina.lonean@gmail.com

Invitation to participate

The European Union Youth Dialogue (EUYD) is carried out by the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership, in close co-operation with Jan Vanhee.

The evaluation focuses on the relevance, the effectiveness and impact, the quality and the coherence with other youth engagement initiatives of the EUYD process. For the evaluation we collect data through interviews, surveys and desk research.

We would like to invite you to participate in an individual interview to support this research. This interview should not be longer than two hours. We would be grateful if you agreed to share your opinions, experiences and perspectives on various aspects of the EUYD. Your opinions and experience would provide a valuable addition to our research, deepening our understanding of the needs and effects of the EUYD. It will enrich the recommendations we present based on the findings.

This information sheet provides guidance on our processes and protocols.

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this evaluation, your rights as a participant, or you would like to lodge a complaint, you are welcome to contact us at the e-mail addresses presented above.

Voluntary participation

Participation in this interview is completely voluntary. If you do decide to take part, upon receiving this information sheet we will register your implicit consent for participation. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time before the submission of the draft final report, that is, the end of April 2023, without giving a reason.

Explanation of procedures

Confidentiality

The interview is confidential and access to information you provide is limited to the evaluation team and you will be cited in a manner that does not allow for identification.

You may decide on the level of anonymity of your responses and how your information will be attributed in report outputs. This means you may choose not to disclose your identity. You can change your mind and choose to be anonymised at any point before the end of April 2023. If you choose to be anonymous, your name and other details that might identify you will not be used in the project resources, or any other public materials produced.

Audio recording

The interviewer will take notes throughout the interview. The interview will be audio recorded upon your consent. This allows us to produce an accurate and complete transcript of the interview and facilitates analysis.

Data management and security

The evaluation team maintains strict data management and security protocols, to ensure that information provided by participants is transferred and stored securely and in compliance with GDPR.

All data will be collected through secure platforms, and held in secure, password-protected folders. Your contact information will be kept for a maximum of three years after the end of the evaluation for reporting and archiving purposes. As a participant you have the right to check the accuracy of data held about you and correct any errors at any time. You may also opt out from being contacted for the purpose of future co-operation and from your data being stored for the purpose of future studies/evaluations.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information and for considering participating in this evaluation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact a member of our team.

Interview guidelines for the members of the European Steering Groups (representatives of the European Commission, member states and international non-governmental youth organisations)

Proposed approach: interviews with selected members of the ESGs in charge of the three EUYD selected cycles for case studies (3-5 interviews for each ESG). The evaluators aim to reach the persons involved in each cycle for interviews and will make efforts to ensure a balanced number of answers from public authorities and non-governmental organisations.

Introduction

This interview is organised for the collection of information needed for the evaluation of the European Union Youth Dialogue (EUYD). The evaluation aims to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact and quality of the EUYD process. It is not an evaluation of the interviewee's activity. The interviewees are kindly requested to answer based on their experience as part of the ESG, expressing their opinions. If needed, the answers can present both the institutional and the personal points of view. All answers will be kept confidential and analysed in context, but without linking the information collected with each individual respondent.

Topics and questions for the interviews

Based on your professional experience and participation in the ESG, please express your opinion or provide information according to your knowledge on:

A. Needs for youth engagement

1. What are the most important needs of young people related to their engagement in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies at EU level? In other words, what do young

people need to meaningfully engage in the youth policy processes (at EU level, but the discussion can also cover national and local level policies)?

2. What are the most important needs of national youth policy makers (the institutions and the persons involved in youth policy making) related to ensuring a meaningful youth engagement in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies at EU level? In other words, what do policy makers and institutions need to meaningfully engage young people in the youth policy processes (at EU level, but the discussion can also cover national and local level policies)?
3. What are the most important needs of youth organisations related to supporting youth engagement in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies at EU level? In other words, what do youth organisation need to empower young people to meaningfully engage in the youth policy processes (at EU level, but the discussion can also cover national and local level policies)?
4. How is the EUYD responding to these needs? What needs are covered by the EUYD process? What needs are not covered by the EUYD process?

B. EUYD effects on policy

5. Did the EUYD determine changes in the youth policies at EU or national level? If yes, please provide at least one example and explain how the results of the EUYD influenced the policy/policies, how youth inputs were “transformed” in policy decisions and which were the main stakeholders involved.
6. Did the EUYD determine changes in the EU policies with effects on youth but not usually labelled as youth policies (employment, education, social inclusion, health, etc.)? If yes, please provide at least one example and explain how the results of the EUYD influenced the policy/policies, how youth inputs were “transformed” in policy decisions and which were the main stakeholders involved.

C. EUYD impact and value

7. Do you think the EUYD determined changes of institutional practices and tools for youth engagement and youth participation? If yes, what, where and how were they changed?

D. Monitoring and learning from positive and negative experiences

8. What data and information are recorded and important for monitoring the EUYD from your perspective? Is any important information missed from the monitoring of the EUYD?
9. Do you identify any good practices in the co-operation between the stakeholders involved in the EUYD: the European Commission, the youth national authorities, the ESG, the NWGs, INGYOs, etc.?
10. Do you identify any weaknesses in the co-operation between the stakeholders involved in the EUYD?
11. What other lessons did you learn from your participation in the ESG in relation with the EUYD process and results?

E. Process

12. Please assess the quality of the EUYD process. What makes the process to be a quality one and what is missing?

If not already covered by the answer to the previous question:

13. Was the ESG you participated in concerned with ensuring that the EUYD is inclusive, or was that more of a concern of the NWG? How was this issue approached? Is there any group of young people you feel is not included in the EUYD? If yes, who and why are they not included?
14. Was the ESG you participated in concerned (discussions were held and/or decisions were taken) with ensuring high levels of participation in all member states and regions, or was that more of a concern of the NWG? How was this issue approached?
15. How did the ESG you participated in ensure that the EUYD process is youth-led? What could have been done better?
16. How did the ESG you participated in ensure the transparency of the process and that all concerned stakeholders (NWGs, governments/youth departments, young people, etc.) are well informed about the EUYD and their role in the process? What could have been done better?
17. Was the ESG you participated in concerned with proposing and organising follow-up activities to consultation events and the EU Youth Conference? If yes, what follow-up activities have been organised?
18. Is there an instrument, activity or practice informing young people about overall results of the consultations and the decisions made based on them at EU or national level?
19. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using digital tools for consultation?
20. Beside tools and consultation methods, did the Covid-19 pandemic influence other features of the EUYD? (for the ESGs for the 7th and 8th cycle)

F. Youth engagement instruments or activities complementary to the EUYD

21. To your knowledge, what other policy instruments or activities, beside the EUYD, are in place at EU level to support youth engagement in the youth policy processes? What other policy instruments or activities supporting youth engagement, beside the EUYD, have been considered as complementary activities in the work of the ESG you participated in?

Interview guidelines for the members of the national working groups (representatives of governments and international non-governmental youth organisations)

Proposed approach: interviews (group interviews or individual interviews) with members of the NWGs in the selected countries for case studies (3-4 interviews for each NWG). The evaluators will make efforts to ensure a balanced number of answers from public authorities and non-governmental organisations.

Introduction

This interview is organised for the collection of information needed for the evaluation of the European Union Youth Dialogue (EUYD). The evaluation aims to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact and quality of the EUYD process. It is not an evaluation of the interviewee's activity. The interviewees are kindly requested to answer based on their experience as part of the NWG, expressing their opinions. If needed, the answers can present both the institutional and the personal points of view. All answers will be kept confidential and analysed in context, but without linking the information collected with each individual respondent.

Topics and questions for the interviews

Based on your professional experience and participation in the ESG, please express your opinion or provide information according to your knowledge on:

A. Needs for youth engagement

1. What are the most important needs of young people related to their engagement in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies at national, regional, local level? In other words, what do young people need to meaningfully engage in the youth policy processes (at national, regional, local level)?
2. What are the most important needs of national youth policy makers (the institutions and the persons involved in youth policy making) related to ensuring a meaningful youth engagement in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies at national, regional, local level? In other words, what do policy makers and institutions need to meaningfully engage young people in the youth policy processes (at national, regional, local level)?
3. What are the most important needs of youth organisations related to supporting youth engagement in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies at national, regional, local level? In other words, what do youth organisations need to empower young people to meaningfully engage in the youth policy processes (at national, regional, local level)?
4. How is the EUYD responding to these needs? What needs are covered by the EUYD process? What needs are not covered by the EUYD process?

B. EUYD effects on policy

5. Did the EUYD determine changes in the youth policies at national, regional or local level? If yes, please provide at least one example and explain how the results of the EUYD influenced the policy/policies, how youth inputs were “transformed” in policy decisions and which were the main stakeholders involved.
6. Did the EUYD determine changes in the national, regional or local policies with effects on youth but not usually labelled as youth policies (employment, education, social inclusion, health, etc.)? If yes, please provide at least one example and explain how the results of the EUYD influenced the policy/policies, how youth inputs were “transformed” in policy decisions and which were the main stakeholders involved.

C. EUYD impact and value

7. Do you think the EUYD determined changes of institutional practices and tools for youth engagement and youth participation? If yes, what, where and how were they changed?
8. Is there any evidence, to your knowledge, that participating in EUYD activities, for example consultation events, has significant effects for young participants? Please present this evidence.

D. Monitoring and learning from positive and negative experiences

9. What data and information are recorded and important for monitoring the EUYD from your perspective? Is any important information missed from the monitoring of the EUYD?
10. Do you identify any good practices in the co-operation between the stakeholders involved in the EUYD in the country: the youth national authorities, the NWG, the youth organisation, etc.?
11. Do you identify any weaknesses in the co-operation between the stakeholders involved in the EUYD in the country?

12. How was the communication between your NWG and the ESG organised? Are there any good practices or lessons learned you think are important to remember?
13. What other lessons did you learn from your participation to the NWG in relation with the EUYD process and results?

E. EUYD process

14. Please assess the quality of the EUYD process. What makes the process to be a quality one and what is missing?

If not already covered by the answer to the previous question:

15. Was your NWG concerned with ensuring that the EUYD is inclusive? How was this issue approached? Is there any group of young people you feel is not included in the EUYD in your country? If yes, who and why are they not included?
16. Was your NWG concerned (discussions were held and/or decisions were taken) with ensuring high levels of participation in all the regions of your country? How was this issue approached?
17. How did your NWG ensure that the EUYD process is youth-led in your country? What could have been done better?
18. How did your NWG ensure the transparency of the process in your country? How are youth organisations and young people informed about the EUYD and what opportunities do they have to influence the organisation of the entire process? What could have been done better?
19. Was your NWG concerned with proposing and organising follow-up activities to consultation events and the EU Youth Conference? If yes, what follow-up activities have been organised? If not, is there another instrument, activity or practice in your country informing young people about overall results of the consultations and the decisions made based on them?
20. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using digital tools for consultation?
21. Beside tools and consultation methods, did the Covid-19 pandemic influence other features of the EUYD?

F. Youth engagement instruments or activities complementary to the EUYD

22. To your knowledge, what other policy instruments or activities, beside the EUYD, are in place at national, regional or local level to support youth engagement in the youth policy processes? What other policy instruments or activities supporting youth engagement, beside the EUYD, have been considered as complementary activities in the work of the NWG you participated in?

Interview guidelines for the representatives of youth organisations and youth researchers involved in the EUYD at European level (not members of the ESG)

Proposed approach: 5-10 interviews with representatives of youth organisations and youth researchers involved in the EUYD at European level.

Introduction

This interview is organised for the collection of information needed for the evaluation of the European Union Youth Dialogue (EUYD). The evaluation aims to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact and quality of the EUYD process. It is not an evaluation of the interviewee's activity. The interviewees are kindly requested to answer based on their experience, expressing their opinions. If

needed, the answers can present both the institutional and the personal points of view. All answers will be kept confidential and analysed in context, but without linking the information collected with each individual respondent.

Topics and questions for the interviews

Based on your professional experience and participation in the ESG, please express your opinion or provide information according to your knowledge on:

A. Needs for youth engagement

1. What are the most important needs of young people related to their engagement in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies at EU, national, regional and local level? In other words, what do young people need to meaningfully engage in the youth policy processes (please refer to the policy level you are more familiar with)?
2. What are the most important needs of national youth policy makers (the institutions and the persons involved in youth policy making) related to ensuring a meaningful youth engagement in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies at EU, national, regional and local level? In other words, what do policy makers and institutions need to meaningfully engage young people in the youth policy processes (please refer to the policy level you are more familiar with)?
3. What are the most important needs of youth organisations related to supporting youth engagement in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policies at EU, national, regional and local level? In other words, what do youth organisations need to empower young people to meaningfully engage in the youth policy processes (please refer to the policy level you are more familiar with)?
4. How is the EUYD responding to these needs? What needs are covered by the EUYD process? What needs are not covered by the EUYD process?

B. EUYD effects on policy

5. How does the decision-making process work in your organisation (youth organisation, research institutions, etc.) after the report/outcomes of the EUYD (including the EU Youth Conference) are released? How are the results of the EUYD used, in practice, in your case?
6. Did the EUYD determine changes in the youth policies at EU, national, regional or local level? If yes, please provide at least one example and explain how the results of the EUYD influenced the policy/policies, how youth inputs were “transformed” in policy decisions and which were the main stakeholders involved.
7. Did the EUYD determine changes in the EU, national, regional or local policies with effects on youth but not usually labelled as youth policies (employment, education, social inclusion, health, etc.)? If yes, please provide at least one example and explain how the results of the EUYD influenced the policy/policies, how youth inputs were “transformed” in policy decisions and which were the main stakeholders involved.

C. EUYD impact and value

8. Do you think the EUYD determined changes of institutional practices and tools for youth engagement and youth participation? If yes, what, where and how were they changed?
9. Is there any evidence, to your knowledge, that participating in EUYD activities, for example consultation events, has significative effects for young participants? Please present this evidence.

D. Monitoring and learning from positive and negative experiences

10. Only for researchers:

- a. How is the EUYD monitored? What data and information are recorded and important from your perspective? Is any important information missed from the monitoring of the EUYD?
- b. How do you see the role of researchers? What is the added value of researchers in the EUYD process?

11. Do you identify any good practices in the involvement of international organisations/youth researchers (question to be adapted to the interviewee's institutional affiliation) in the EUYD?

12. Do you identify any weaknesses in the involvement of international organisations/youth researchers (question to be adapted to the interviewee's institutional affiliation) in the EUYD?

13. What lessons did you learn in relation with the EUYD process and results?

E. EUYD process

14. Please assess the quality of the EUYD process. What makes the process to be a quality one and what is missing?

If not already covered by the answer to the previous question:

15. Was your involvement with the EUYD focusing on or related with ensuring that the EUYD is inclusive? How was this issue approached?

16. Was your involvement with the EUYD focusing on or related with ensuring that the EUYD is youth-led? How was this issue approached?

17. Is there any group of young people you feel is not included in the EUYD? If yes, who and why do you think they are not included?

18. Is there an instrument, activity or practice which you organised or participated in aiming to informing young people about overall results of the consultations and the decisions made based on them?

19. What is, in the practice you know, the difference between the structured dialogue (2010-18) and the EUYD (2019 onward)?

20. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using digital tools for consultation?

21. Are tools used for consultation affecting the outcomes of the consultation?

22. Beside tools and consultation methods, did the Covid-19 pandemic influence other features of the EUYD?

F. Youth engagement instruments or activities complementary to the EUYD

23. To your knowledge, what other policy instruments or activities, beside the EUYD, are in place at EU, national, regional or local level to support youth engagement in the youth policy processes?

24. What other activities are needed, complementing the EUYD, to support young people to meaningfully engage in the youth policy processes, to increase the capacity of policy makers and youth organisations to support youth engagement?

Questionnaire for the members of the national working groups (all bodies and structures involved in the NWG)

Proposed approach: a survey of organisations (all bodies and structures) part of the NWGs in all member states. The questionnaire for the survey will be sent to all members of the NWG that can be reached (with available contact data). The evaluators will make efforts to ensure a balanced number of answers from public authorities and non-governmental organisations.

Introduction

Dear madam/Dear sir,

This questionnaire is part of the data collection for the evaluation of the European Union Youth Dialogue (EUYD). The evaluation aims to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact and quality of the EUYD process.

We would like to invite you, as a member of an NWG, to participate in the evaluation by answering the questions included in this questionnaire. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you do decide to take part, you can remain anonymous.

Please answer the questions based on your experience as part of the NWG for the EUYD.

Questions

Questions marked with * are mandatory

1. In your country, who are the most active entities involved in organising the EUYD (multiple choices):*
 - a) The youth ministry or authority
 - b) The youth council
 - c) Other large non-governmental youth organisations active nationally
 - d) Non-governmental youth organisations active regionally and/or locally
 - e) Non-governmental youth organisations representing specific groups of young people, including the most vulnerable ones
 - f) Regional and/or local public authorities
 - g) Youth centres or youth clubs
 - h) Other stakeholders. Please specify ...

2. Based on your experience, please rate how much the following characteristics are ensured by the way the EUYD process is managed. Please give your rating from 1 – totally disagree to 5 – totally agree. *

	Based on your experience, please rate how much the following characteristics are ensured by the way the EUYD process is managed	1 I totally disagree	2 I disagree	3 I neither agree nor disagree	4 I agree	5 I totally agree	99 No answer
A	The EUYD process is designed and implemented to allow all young people to participate						
B	The EUYD process is well promoted: young people are aware of the process characteristics and its calendar						
C	The EUYD process is well promoted: youth organisations are aware of the process characteristics and its calendar						
D	The EUYD process is transparent at EU level: young people and youth organisations are well informed about the decisions of the ESG						
E	The EUYD process is transparent at national level: young people and youth organisations are well informed about the decisions of the NWG						
F	The EUYD process is youth-led at EU level						
G	The EUYD process is youth-led at national level						
H	The EUYD process is comprehensive: young people are informed, after the consultations, about the results of the entire process						

2.1. Please justify your answer for each of the EUYD process characteristics.

A	The EUYD process is inclusive, designed and implemented to allow all young people to participate
B	The EUYD process is well promoted: young people are aware of the process characteristics and its calendar
C	The EUYD process is well promoted: youth organisations are aware of the process characteristics and its calendar
D	The EUYD process is transparent at EU level: young people and youth organisations are well informed about the decisions of the ESG
E	The EUYD process is transparent at national level: young people and youth organisations are well informed about the decisions of the NWG
F	The EUYD process is youth-led at EU level
G	The EUYD process is youth-led at national level
H	The EUYD process is comprehensive: young people are informed, after the consultations, about the results of the entire process

3. Based on your experience, please rate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the extensive use of digital tools employed because of the pandemic on the EUYD. Please give your rating from 1 – not at all or to a very limited extent to 5 – completely or to a very large extent.*

	Based on your experience, please rate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the EUYD	1 Not at all or to a very limited extent	2 To a limited extent	3 To a medium extent	4 To a large extent	5 Completely or to a very large extent	99 No answer
A	It is likely that the extensive use of digital tools for the organisation of the EUYD will continue in the future						
B	It is likely that the use of digital tools for the organisation of the EUYD will be combined with face-to-face consultations in the future						
C	The extensive use of digital tools can rise the number of young people participating in the EUYD						
D	The extensive use of digital tools can rise the diversity of young people participating in the EUYD						
C	The extensive use of digital tools may lower the capacity of the EUYD to reach out to vulnerable young people						

- 3.1. Please justify your answer for each of the elements of impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the EUYD.

A	It is likely that the extensive use of digital tools for the organisation of the EUYD will continue in the future
B	It is likely that the use of digital tools for the organisation of the EUYD will be combined with face-to-face consultations in the future

C	The extensive use of digital tools can rise the number of young people participating in the EUYD
D	The extensive use of digital tools can rise the diversity of young people participating in the EUYD
C	The extensive use of digital tools may lower the capacity of the EUYD to reach out to vulnerable young people

4. Based on your experience, please rate the results of the EUYD, from your perspective. Please give your rating from 1 – not at all or to a very limited extent to 5 – completely or to a very large extent.*

	Based on your experience, please rate the results of the EUYD	1 Not at all or to a very limited extent	2 To a limited extent	3 To a medium extent	4 To a large extent	5 Completely or to a very large extent	99 No answer
A	The value of youth participation is better recognised and respected at European level due to the EUYD						
B	The value of youth participation is better recognised and respected at national level due to the EUYD						
C	The value of youth participation is better recognised and respected at local and regional level due to the EUYD						
D	The EUYD helps policy and decision makers better understand the needs of young people						
E	The EUYD supports youth policies that answer better to youth needs at European level						

	Based on your experience, please rate the results of the EUYD	1 Not at all or to a very limited extent	2 To a limited extent	3 To a medium extent	4 To a large extent	5 Completely or to a very large extent	99 No answer
F	The EUYD supports youth policies that answer better to youth needs at national level						
G	The EUYD supports youth policies that answer better to youth needs at local and regional level						
H	Due to the EUYD young participants develop competences for democratic participation						
I	Due to the EUYD young participants develop a greater sense of European citizenship						

4.1. Please justify your answer for each of the impacts of the EUYD.

A	The value of youth participation is better recognised and respected at European level due to the EUYD
B	The value of youth participation is better recognised and respected at national level due to the EUYD
C	The value of youth participation is better recognised and respected at local and regional level due to the EUYD
D	The EUYD helps policy and decision makers better understand the needs of young people
E	The EUYD supports youth policies at European level that answer better to youth needs

F	The EUYD supports youth policies at national level that answer better to youth needs
G	The EUYD supports youth policies at local and regional level that answer better to youth needs
H	Due to the EUYD young people develop competences for democratic participation
I	Due to the EUYD young people develop a greater sense of European citizenship

5. If possible, please give an example of a policy in your country that was influenced by the results of the EUYD and explain how the EUYD results have been used in the policy-making process and who was involved.*

Demographics

6. What type of organisation do you represent?*
- a) A youth ministry or authority
 - b) A youth agency
 - c) The Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps agency in your country
 - d) A youth council
 - e) A large non-governmental youth organisation active nationally
 - f) A non-governmental youth organisation active regionally and/or locally
 - g) A non-governmental youth organisation representing specific groups of young people, including the most vulnerable ones
 - h) A regional or local public authority
 - i) A youth centre or youth club

j) Other. Please specify ...

7. Please specify your age*

8. Please specify your country (not mandatory)

9. Please specify your experience with the EUYD (in years)*

10. Please specify your gender*

F

M

Other

I prefer not to answer

List of persons consulted

	Respondent	Institution	Role
1	Florencia Van Houdt	DG EAC	Members of the ESG until 2021
2	Fabienne Metayer		
3	Laure Verstraete	National Youth Council, Belgium (Flemish community)	Youth representative – member of the NWG
4	Kristóf Papp	European Youth Forum	Members of the ESG
5	Rita Jonušaitė		
6	Līva Vikmane		
7	Una Clarke		
8	Koen Lambert	JINT, Belgium (Flemish community)	Director – member of the NWG
9	Sofie Van Zeebroeck		
10	Amoury Groenen	Youth Department, Belgium (Flemish community)	Member of the NWG
11	Lara Bongartz	Youth Council, Belgium (German community)	Members of the NWG
12	Mona Locht		
13	Dan Moxon	Pool of European Youth Researchers	Researcher, involved in cycles 6-9
14	Maria-Carmen Pantea	Pool of European Youth Researchers advisory group	Researcher, involved in cycle 8
15	Sandra Roe	Independent consultant	Researcher, involved in cycle 7
16	Ana Media	Spanish Institute for Youth (INJUVE)	Former members of the NWG
17	Guiomar Monforte Sáenz		
18	Xabier Triana	National Youth Council (CJE), Spain	Member of the NWG, co-ordinator
19	Mihai Vilcea	FITT, Romania	Member of the NWG
20	Lucian Mircescu	Romanian Ministry of Youth	Member of the ESG
21	Andrei Popescu	National Agency, Romania	Member of the ESG
22	Zuzana Wildová	Czech Youth Council	Members of the NWG
23	Michaela Doležalová		
24	Jorge Orlando Queirós	Instituto Português do Desporto e Juventude, I.P. (IPDJ)	Members of the ESG
25	Vitor Ricardo Venâncio Cardoso		
26	Debora Gonçalves	Youth Council, Portugal	Member of the NWG
27	Désirée Ristoro	Committee for National and International Relations of Youth and Popular Education Associations, France	Member of the NWG
28	Marius Schlageter	German Federal Youth Council	Member of the ESG and NWG
29	Henni Axelin	Director for Youth Work and Youth Policy, Finland	Member of the ESG and NWG
30	Vladimir Šomen	Croatian government	Members of the ESG
31	Valentina Cesar		
32	Johan Gebo	Swedish Youth Council	Member of the ESG and NWG
33	Tina Kosi	Ministry of Education, Slovenia	Director general, member of the ESG
34	Andreas Schneider	The Department for Family and Youth at the Federal Chancellery	Members of the ESG
35	Birgit Klausser		
36	Jarkko Lehikoinen	Finnish National Youth Council Allianssi	Member of the ESG and NWG
37	Tiina Ekman	National Agency, Sweden	Members of the NWG
38	Karin Persdotter		

39	Severine Origny-Fleishman	French Government	Members of the ESG and NWG
40	Christophe Devette		
41	Enikő Varga-Végyvári	Ministry of Culture and Innovation, General Youth Department, the Hungarian Government the Hungarian Youth Council	Members of the ESG and NWG
42	Bálint Szabó		

In addition to the interviews conducted, important feedback and information have been provided to the researchers by representatives of the European Commission, DG EAC, especially Dr Marta Touykova and Biliana Sirakova.

List of documents consulted

Structured Dialogue – cycle 3

EU Youth Conference, Greece, 2014, background note

Structured Dialogue – cycle 4

EU Youth Conference, Luxembourg, 2015, outcome document

Structured Dialogue – cycle 5

The “box of ideas” – inspirational guide for NWGs and INGYO when conducting Structured Dialogue consultations

Structured Dialogue – cycle 6

All NWG reports

The VI Cycle of Structure Dialogue Consultation Reporting Tool, created by the ESG

EU Youth Dialogue – cycle 7

All NWG reports and INGYO working group reports

“Findings from EU Youth Dialogue Activities in the Member States and across Europe” summary report

The reporting tools created by the ESG

EU Youth Conferences reports

Presidency suggestions on the implementation and governance of the EU

Youth Dialogue

EU Youth Dialogue – cycle 8

All NWG reports and INGYO working group reports

Summary report on the consultations’ outcomes

The reporting tools created by the ESG

EU Youth Conferences reports

The 8th cycle handover document

EU Youth Dialogue – cycle 9

All NWG reports and INGYO working group reports

The 8th cycle handover document

“Rapport autonome et spontané à la Commission Européenne concernant le 9ème cycle du dialogue de l’Union Européenne en faveur de la jeunesse”

Council’s conclusions and resolutions including outcomes of the EUYD