

INTRODUCTION TO THE 7TH CYCLE OF THE EU YOUTH DIALOGUE 2019-2020

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH

Purpose and contents of the document

This document aims to provide an overview of the 7th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue in terms of theme, foreseen outcomes, methodology and methods used, reporting tools and so on. It is an introduction document accompanying additional information and materials that will support the EU Youth Dialogue activities at local, national and European level. These materials are designed for the use of the National Working Groups (NWGs) of the EU Youth Dialogue and European non-governmental youth organisations involved in the EU Youth Dialogue¹.

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¹ The European non-governmental youth organisations involved in the EU Youth Dialogue (see below explanation at point 4) will work on basis of this package adapting various elements to explore the European dimension of the theme.

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1. New context

In November 2018, a [new EU Youth Strategy](#) (hereafter - the Strategy) was adopted by the Youth Ministers in the Council of the European Union for the period 2019-2027. The Strategy focuses on three main dimensions under the titles connect, engage and empower and encourages a cross-sectorial cooperation in respect to issues concerning young people. The Strategy includes specific annexes on the EU Youth Dialogue (successor of the Structured Dialogue with young people) and [the EU Youth Goals](#) among others.

2. What is the EU Youth Dialogue?

The EU Youth Dialogue is a flagship youth participation mechanism at EU level aiming to bring youth voice to the EU policy-making. 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 cooperation 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 the dialogue activities. Particular attention is given to the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in decision-making processes and in the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy.

3. Objectives of the EU Youth Dialogue

The specific objectives of the EU Youth Dialogue are to:

- (a) encourage the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe in line with [Article 165 Treaty on the Functioning of European Union \(TFEU\)](#);
- (b) promote equal participation between young women and men;
- (c) include diverse voices and to 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 the society and the European Union².

4. How does the EU Youth Dialogue function and who are the actors?

At European level

Following rotation system and the political cycle of the Trio Presidency, every 18 months a new cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue is organised at European level. According to the Strategy, each cycle should preferably have one thematic priority per cycle that is closely linked to the priorities of the Strategy and the European Youth Goals where appropriate, building on the results of previous cycles.

The **European Steering Committee (ESC)**³ is an informal body that brings together representatives of the:

- decision makers in each of the three Presidencies (Ministries responsible for youth sector, Permanent representations, etc.);
- young people from the three countries (National Youth Councils or equivalent bodies according to national youth representation);
- National Agencies in the three countries;
- European Youth Forum;
- European Commission;
- Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth (hereafter the Youth Partnership).

The role of the ESC is to ensure a common framework for the EU Youth Dialogue cycle (theme, outcomes, methodology, etc), steer the implementation of the cycle, gather the results of the consultation in order to provide the analysis and seek ways to follow-up on the outcomes on a European level.

In order to provide a common approach to the consultations and activities, the ESC, according to timeline of the cycle, provides National Working Groups (NWGs) and the European Working Group (EWG) a full package on the current cycle. The ESC also

² See the EU Youth Strategy (2019-2027) available [here](#).

³ The Youth Working Party is currently preparing a document on the governance of the EU Youth Dialogue. The description of the role and composition of the European Steering Committee in this Introduction to the 7th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue (2019-2020) describes the current state of affairs without prejudice to the outcomes and decisions stemming from the current work in the Youth Working Party.

collects the results from the NWGs and EWG through the designed reporting tool. The results are then analysed and combined in a common European report, corresponding to the subthemes of the Cycle. They are assisted in their work by a team of researchers from the Pool of Researchers of the EU-COE Youth Partnership.

In the youth field, at European Union level, the Open Method of Coordination is the basis for cooperation among the Member States. It rests on voluntary cooperation and soft policy. The intergovernmental cooperation happens in the main decision making body that is the Council of Youth Ministers (Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council configuration) - which also decides on the policy and political follow-up on the results of the EU Youth Dialogue on EU level.

The **European Working Group** (EWG) is formed by representatives of European non-governmental youth organisations/networks, selected through an open call by the European Youth Forum. The EWG takes part in the EU Youth Dialogue to provide a European dimension and perspective to the dialogue process. They organise dialogue activities with young people and youth organisations and, in line with the provided timeline, they send a report with the results of the consultation and activities to the ESC.

At national level

National Working Groups (NWGs) are set up at national level to organise and coordinate the EU Youth Dialogue with young people. While there are various practices in terms of composition of the NWGs, normally a NWG would bring together decision makers in the field of youth and other policy fields, representatives of youth civil society, experts and practitioners (youth workers, researchers, etc.). The Strategy states that a leading role in the NWG should be given to the National Youth Councils.

While the EU Youth Dialogue follows a common theme, the NWGs can add other topics of local or national relevance to the theme of dialogue proposed at European level, when running consultations and activities. They can make use of the suggested methodology, but also use other methods of working that are more suitable for their national context.

In line with the provided timeline, the NWGs send to the ESC a report with the results of the consultation and activities on the European theme which is feeding in an overarching European report.

Additional reports comprising the results of the consultation on local, regional or national themes can be made available by the NWG.

NWGs ensure the learning dimension of the EU Youth Dialogue so that young people taking part in the consultations and activities are learning about participation, citizenship at EU and national level, following the objectives of the Strategy.

NWGs follow-up on results (both the overall European results and the outcomes of their own activities on a local and national level) at local and national level as appropriate, ensuring their integration in youth policies, strategies, programmes and activities at local and national level.

5. The 7th Cycle of EU Youth Dialogue 2019-2020: Theme and outcomes

The 7th cycle is held under the Trio Presidency Romania - Finland - Croatia which started on 1 January 2019, lasting for 18 months until June 2020.

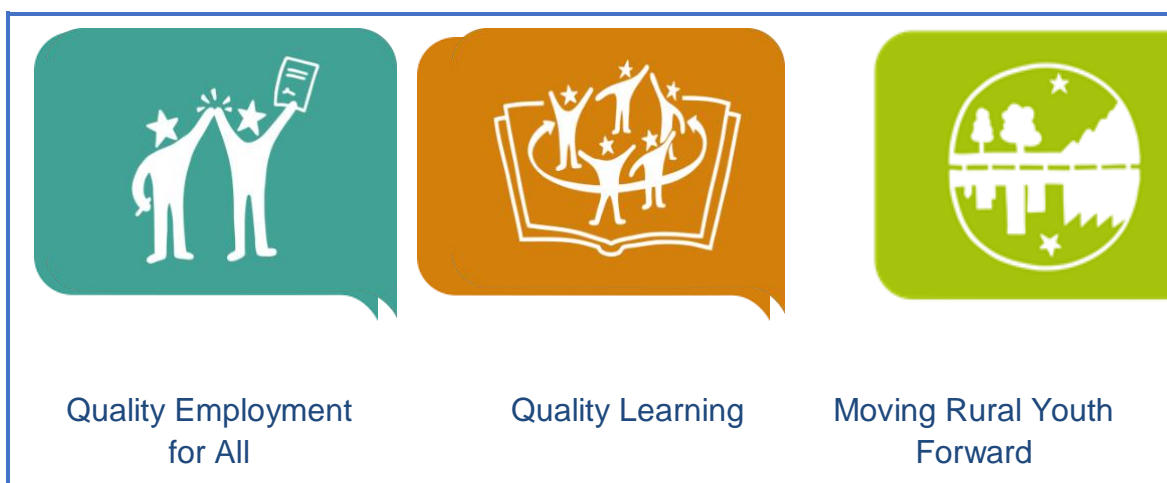
The common theme chosen by the Trio Presidency is:

Creating opportunities for youth

With a focus on:

- ∴ **Quality Employment for All**
- ∴ **Quality Youth Work for All**
- ∴ **Opportunities for Rural Youth**

The thematic priority is therefore directly connected to three EU Youth Goals:



This cycle builds on the achievements of the previous cycle, notably the adoption of the Strategy and the related EU Youth Goals - which provide the vision and targets until 2027, and aims to provide further insight on how to realise them through policy measures, programmes and actions at European, national and local level.

The following outcomes are envisaged :

At European level

1. EU Youth Dialogue report - encompassing the results and their analysis.
2. Presentation of the results in the EU Youth Conference in Croatia to discuss ways for a follow-up and implementation.
3. Presentation and discussion of the results in Youth Working Party (Council preparatory body) and where possible Council of Ministers with a view to identify follow-up at European level.
4. Results of EU Youth Dialogue on the subtheme of Opportunities for Rural Youth will feed in the Council Conclusions on this subtheme prepared by the Croatian Presidency.

In addition:

1. The European Youth Conference in Romania makes an input to the foreseen Council Conclusions on Future of Work and Young People - under the Presidency of Romania.
2. The European Youth Conference in Finland makes an input to the foreseen Council Conclusions on the Education and Training of Youth Workers (working title)- under the Presidency of Finland.

At national level:

1. National reports on the results of the EU Youth Dialogue.
2. Follow-up measures directly by the NWG on implementation of the national and European results at national and local level.

6. Timeline

Dates	EVENT	ROLE
December 2018 - April 2019	Preparatory work for the EU Youth Dialogue	Done by the ESC in order to establish methodology, etc.
February 2019	NWG meeting (Austria)	As a follow-up to the Presidency of Austria, the NWG meeting also provided the space to gather an initial feedback to the plans for the 7 th cycle.
26 - 28 March 2019	European Union Youth Conference in Romania	<p>Provided an input on the guiding questions (subthemes) on the three topics leading the EU Youth Dialogue</p> <p>Provided an input on the ways to improve EU Youth Dialogue</p> <p>Provided an input to foreseen Council Conclusions on Future of Work and Young People under Presidency of Romania</p>
22-26 April 2019	NWGs and EWG receive the full package to launch the EU Youth Dialogue cycle	This package
May – October 2019	EU Youth Dialogue is taking place all over Europe	
May 2019 8 May 2019 15 May 2019 29 May 2019	Webinars take place for the EWG and NWGs	Support for working with the proposed methodology of the cycle

1-3 July 2019	European Union Youth Conference in Finland	Provides support to the process of EU Youth Dialogue 7 th cycle Provides an input to foreseen Council Conclusions on Education and Training of Youth Workers under Presidency of Finland
25 October 2019	The National Working Groups send back the reports to the European Steering Committee	See reporting tools in the package
January 2020	The draft report on EU Youth Dialogue is available and sent for feedback to NWG.	
January - July 2020	Implementation phase of the EU Youth Dialogue at both European, national and local level.	It will involve a variety of follow-up activities at all levels and by all actors. Several meetings at European level will also serve the process of discussion and coordination (see below). This includes: presentation and discussion of the results in the Youth Working Party and Council of Youth Ministers, where possible.
End February 2020	A final version of the report on EU Youth Dialogue is published.	
February 2020 (tbc)	National Working Groups meeting - Romania (tbc)	The scope of the meeting will be further determined in cooperation with the actors involved in the EU Youth Dialogue.

9 – 11 March 2020	European Youth Conference in Croatia and follow-up measures are discussed.	Discusses the overall results of the EU Youth Dialogue 7 th cycle and their implementation. Provides an input on Council Conclusion on Opportunities for Rural Youth under Presidency of Croatia
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7. Methodology

Tools for four methodologies have been created to support Working Groups. These tools are provided as support for Working Groups to encourage and promote consistency of approach in order to increase the quality and comparability of the results. However, NWGs and EWG can also choose to use other methods in their work.

Questionnaire

Closed survey questions with focus on all three subthemes. Working groups also have possibility to add questions of national relevance to the provided standard questions. The questions cannot be modified apart from the linguistic adjustments needed for the translation.

Youth Dialogue Events

There are a variety of approaches on how to organise a face to face events and focus groups with young people. The events can also include decision makers to enable direct dialogue with young people. The guidance includes instructions for:

- Focus groups – conducted with young people on the basis of provided set of questions on all three subthemes.
To support the drafting of the foreseen Council Conclusions on Opportunities for Rural Youth under Croatian Presidency, NWGs are required to include all questions provided for this subtheme in focus groups.
- Large dialogue events – bringing together 50-200 participants to discuss and debate the subthemes of the cycle, make proposals, etc. They can include

discussions between young people and decision-makers, experts and other stakeholders.

- Workshops - meetings with small groups of participants, actively engaging on a particular topic and subject. Various methodologies can be used from open space to world café.

Participatory Action Research

is a qualitative research methodology, based on non-formal learning and can be used in both consultation with young people and implementation. Typically, participants work in small groups for an extended period of time, identify something they would like to change and attempt doing so, generating knowledge by actively implementing and reflecting on the process and progress. You can link funding to implement specific ideas and help participants to follow up on the outcomes.

Participatory visual methods

- **Photo Voice** on the subtheme of the EU Youth Dialogue. Young people explore through photography the subtheme of the Cycle and share through social media platforms, using unified # for the entire cycle. This will generate visual identity, qualitative data and support belonging and ownership.
- **Video Story / Participatory video** invites groups or individuals to make videos of their own and explore issues related to the topics of the EU Youth Dialogue cycle. Instructions are available for the overall European dialogue and can be further shaped at national and local level.

8. Reporting the outcomes of working groups' youth dialogue activities to the ESC

As a minimum working groups should report the findings of their youth dialogue activities to the ESC by **completing the working group reporting tool**.

An additional report tool on the three most common answers/suggestions that were given on the subtheme of “Opportunities for rural youth” by the focus groups is also included in the package.

If you use the standard survey questions you can also submit database of your results to be included as part of a pan European survey analysis. (See the guidance on survey questions for further details of formats).

You can also submit examples of up to 5-10 photographs and 1-2 videos from your visual methods. You must gain consent from anyone featured in the photos and videos to do this. (see guidance on visual methods)

All reporting should be sent to the Secretariat of the European Steering Committee to Liva.Vikmane@youthforum.org by 25th October 2019.

Note - If you do not submit your reports and data by the deadline they will not be included within the overall findings of the EU Youth Dialogue.

9. Visual identity of the EU Youth Dialogue and visibility of EU Youth Dialogue on EU Youth Portal

The European Commission is currently designing a package for the visual identity of the EU Youth Strategy. The package and instructions for their use will be communicated to all actors once available. Working Groups are kindly requested to use the EU level visual identity in conjunction with the national visual identity that might have been produced by individual choice. The aim is to establish a recognisable and unified visual identity at European level.

The EU Youth Portal will feature information about the EU Youth Dialogue cycle at European and national level. If you are running an online questionnaire, you can have the link featured on the portal. To do so, please send the link to: EAC-YOUTH@ec.europa.eu.

In addition, measures are being taken to feature photos and videos coming from the participatory visual methods of working on the EU Youth Portal. As soon as this feature becomes available, further information will be communicated to all actors involved.

10. General guidance for working groups on data protection and participant consent

At all times your working group remains responsible for activities you arrange and any accompanying data collection you undertake in the framework of the EU Youth Dialogue.

Your working group, and the organisations within it, are fully responsible for ensuring local, national and European laws are followed in these activities and data collection. This includes:

- Ensuring you have fulfilled your duties with regard to data protection under GDPR. In all circumstances your working group or an organisation within it remains the data controller of any personal or sensitive personal data you collect.
- Ensuring you have put in place appropriate procedures for securing participants consent (and where necessary parent / guardian consent) to participate in activities and for participants data to be gathered by you.
- Ensuring that participants understand how the information they give is shared on an anonymised basis with the European Youth Forum for the purposes of informing the findings of EU Youth Dialogue Process.

Under no circumstances should your dialogue activities and data collection be advertised as being collected for or conducted by the TRIO of Presidencies, the EU Commission, the European Youth Forum, the Youth Partnership or any of the other organisation connected with organising the 7th cycle of Youth Dialogue.

Under no circumstances should you share participant data which is not anonymised with any of the organisations involved in organising the 7th cycle of Youth Dialogue. The only exception to this is if you are submitting photographs and videos as part of the Visual methods. In this case you should use follow the instructions given in the visual methods guidance, and ensure you obtain suitable consent form the young person and or their parent/guardian to share these photos directly with the European Youth Forum.

11. Support measures for National and European Working Groups

Webinars

In order to support the NWGs and EWG in their work, webinars will be organised in May 2019 on the following schedule:

8 May, 10:00-11:30 CET (Brussels time)- webinar for NATIONAL working groups

15 May, 15:00 -16:30 CET (Brussels time) time - webinar for NATIONAL working groups

29 May, 10:00-11:30 CET (Brussels time) - webinar for EUROPEAN working group.

Links to the webinars will be shared soon.

The webinars will bring together researchers involved in the cycle, European Youth Forum, and Presidencies' representatives. The aim is to support the working groups in working with this package.

Online sharing and learning

There is an online space organised for the National Working Groups on BASECAMP platform. It is open for all members of the NWGs and aim to foster cooperation and exchange of practice. In order to access it, please send a request to Policy Officer of the European Youth Forum, Līva Vikmane to liva.vikmane@youthforum.org.

12. List of other documents for working groups

Guiding questions - This document provides guidance on the overall thematic framework for the Dialogue. The guiding questions form tools with which to design your dialogue and for reporting your findings through the reporting tool.

Working group reporting tool - This document is for reporting the outcomes and findings of your dialogue to the European Steering Committee.

Reporting tool on the results of the focus groups on the sub-theme Opportunities for Rural Youth - This document is for reporting specifically on the outcomes of the focus groups for the subtheme “Opportunities for Rural Youth”. These responses are collected separately, as the findings will be used by the Croatian Presidency to develop Council Conclusions on this subtheme.

Standard survey questions guidance - This document contains a set of standard survey questions which can be translated and used by your working group to conduct a survey with young people on the dialogue subtheme.

Example spreadsheet survey database - This document is a template spreadsheet showing the format data within which data should be submitted from the survey

Dialogue events guidance- This document contains guidance and tools to run dialogue events, including instructions for focus groups and focus group questions.

Visual methods guidance - This document contains guidance and tools for using visual methods as part of your dialogue.

Action research guidance- This document contains guidance and tools for using action research as part of your dialogue.

Example participant monitoring form - This document is an example form which can be used with participants in face to face activities to monitor their backgrounds. Use of this is optional.