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## Evaluation of the Youth policy cooperation in the EU - public consultation

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

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### INTRODUCTION

#### Overview

This consultation is about how European Union (EU) countries work together on policy for young people. We want to find out how useful and effective you think EU youth policy is.

#### Tell us what you think

We want to know if you know about:

- the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018)
- the EU Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers in the EU.

We'd also like to hear what you think about these initiatives, and how you think we can improve cooperation on youth policy.

The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete.

**Deadline: 16 October 2016**

#### What happens next?

The results of this consultation will be used to plan future EU youth policy measures.

We will publish a report on the results of this consultation, summarise the views people have expressed and suggest follow-up action.

### Background

#### What is the EU Youth Strategy?

The focus areas and methods for EU countries to cooperate on youth policy are set out in the EU Youth Strategy ([http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth\\_strategy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth_strategy/index_en.htm)), which covers the period 2010-2018.

The Strategy aims to:

- provide more and equal opportunities for young people in education and the job market,
- encourage young people to play an active role in society.

It supports actions in 8 priority areas of activity:

- education and training
- employment and entrepreneurship
- participation
- voluntary activities
- social inclusion
- health and well-being
- creativity and culture
- youth and the world.

The strategy is being implemented in a number of ways: knowledge- and evidence-building, mutual learning (learning from peers in other EU countries), progress reporting, publishing findings, monitoring the process, consultations and structured dialogue with young people and youth

organisations, mobilisation of EU funding.

The EU Youth Strategy encourages Member States to adopt a dual approach based on:

- 1) addressing core youth topics: participation, voluntary activities, youth work;
- 2) integrating youth issues into other policy areas.

#### **What is the Council Recommendation on the mobility of Young Volunteers across the EU?**

The Council Recommendation on the Mobility of Young Volunteers across the EU (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32008H1213%2801%29>) was adopted in 2008. It aims to create more cross-border volunteering opportunities and encourages Member States to ensure that every young person who wishes to volunteer has the opportunity to do so.

The Recommendation encourages EU countries to:

- raise more awareness about the benefits of volunteering abroad;
- develop opportunities for volunteering abroad;
- promote quality through the development of self-assessment tools;
- recognise learning outcomes of voluntary activities through schemes such as Europass and Youthpass;
- promote cross-border mobility of youth workers and young people in youth organisations;
- pay particular attention to young people with fewer opportunities.

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**Find out more about the EU Youth Strategy and the Council Recommendation on the European Commission's website** ([http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm)).

**You can also find more about the mid-term evaluation of these initiatives by reading the findings of a report** ([http://ec.europa.eu/youth/news/2016/0531-eu-youth-strategy-evaluation\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/news/2016/0531-eu-youth-strategy-evaluation_en.htm)) prepared by independent experts for the Commission.

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## **A. ABOUT YOU OR YOUR ORGANISATION**

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Surname

First name

\* Country (where you live, or where your organisation is based)

- EU level
- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary

- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom
- Non EU country

Email address

c.costongs@eurohealthnet.eu

\* Are you answering as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

- Individual
- Organisation

\* Is your organisation registered in the Transparency Register ([http://europa.eu/transparency-register/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/transparency-register/index_en.htm))?

- Yes
- No

Please enter your Transparency Register registration number (*numbers only*)

48562122691-12

\* Name of your organisation

EuroHealthNet

Type of the organisation

- National public authority
- Regional or local public authority
- International institution
- Youth organisation
- Research organisation/university
- Other

\*

Your reply:

- Can be published with your personal information** (I consent to publication of all the information in my contribution and I declare that none of it is under copyright restrictions that prevent publication)
- Can be published anonymously** (I consent to publication of all information in my contribution except my name/the name of my organisation and I declare that none of it is under copyright restrictions that prevent publication)
- Cannot be published - keep it confidential** (The contribution will not be published, but will be used internally within the Commission)

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## B. THE EU YOUTH STRATEGY

1. Were you aware (before reading the introduction to this consultation) that the European Union is active in youth policy, through the EU Youth Strategy?

- Yes
- No

2. Have you taken part in any activities under the EU Youth Strategy since 2010 (e.g. conference, structured dialogue process, a 'mutual learning activity' - learning from peers in other EU countries), or under the EU youth programmes (Youth in Action until 2013, Erasmus+ youth since 2014)?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

3. How much has the EU Youth Strategy helped...

	Very much	Somewhat	Not at all	I don't know
...national/regional policies	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...youth organisations and young people	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Outcomes expected under the EU Youth strategy include: (1) for policymakers: improved knowledge of the situation of young people, learning from peers in other EU countries; better, participatory and evidence-based policymaking, recognition of value of non-formal learning, volunteering and youth work; (2) for youth organisations and young people: better quality of opportunities (including cross-border ones), young people better represented and supported, increased recognition of the value of non-formal learning, volunteering and youth work.*

4. Are the objectives of the EU Youth Strategy (as listed in the introduction) in line with national policies?

- Yes, completely
- Yes, somewhat
- No
- I don't know

5. In your opinion, what is the added value of the EU Youth Strategy compared with measures at a local, regional or national level?

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
It helps develop a youth strategy or a consistent approach to young people and youth policy at national level	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps to put young people higher on the EU political agenda	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps to improve coherence between national/regional and EU-wide youth-related measures	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps allocate more national public funding to specific activities or initiatives in the youth sector	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps to encourage young people to take part in the decision-making process at all levels	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps to make young people's voice heard in the European policy-shaping process	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Strategy has no added value over national/regional/local measures	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. In your opinion, do the priority areas of the EU Youth Strategy address young people's needs?

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Education and Training	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employment and entrepreneurship	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health and Wellbeing	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Inclusion in society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Getting involved into democratic and civic life	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteering	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to cultural activities	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Awareness of global challenges and contact with regions outside Europe	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 7. In the future, what are the main areas that the EU should contribute to in the field of youth policy?

	High priority	Medium priority	Low priority	Don't know/no opinion
Supporting and developing youth work & non-formal learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting the involvement of youth organisations and young people in policy-making and other democratic processes	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promoting volunteering among young people	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lowering youth unemployment and inactivity	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promoting the health and well-being of young people	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving the social situation of young people at risk of poverty or exclusion	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting the inclusion of young people with a migrant background	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encouraging the integration of recently arrived young migrants including refugees	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encouraging young people's creativity and improving access to culture	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving young people's digital literacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting young people's access to information and knowledge of their rights	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encouraging youth engagement in the European project	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preventing marginalisation or violent radicalisation among young people	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engaging with youth stakeholders outside Europe	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other areas (please specify)

## 8. In the future, where do you see the focus of the European youth policy cooperation should be?

- Promoting policies and actions specifically targeted at young people (e.g. non-formal learning, participation, voluntary activities, youth work, mobility)
- Mainstream youth issues better into other policy areas: education and training, getting a job or setting up a business, youth-specific health issues, social exclusion of young people
- Develop efforts in both directions: core activities of youth policies and mainstreaming
- I don't think there is a need for future EU action on youth policy

## 9. What steps should be taken to improve the effectiveness of the EU policy action in the youth sector?

- Develop deeper synergies between EU and national measures
- Increase knowledge-building in the youth sector

- Improve monitoring activities in the youth field
- Promote stronger coordination of the EU youth policy agenda
- Encourage broader participation in EU policy activities by local and regional youth policymakers
- Improve mechanisms for consultation and dialogue with young people

10. Are there any other issues you would like to share with us in relation to the EU youth policy cooperation?

EuroHealthNet supports the EU Youth Strategy and its aim to tackle a wide range of issues, especially the objectives which address health and wellbeing.

Investing in children and youth is paramount if the EU seeks to significantly reduce health and social inequalities and address the cycle of disadvantage.

Health and well-being should be key priorities for further actions and policies related to the EU Youth Strategy. All EU countries have systematic correlation between the level of health and social states, affecting children, young people and adults - i.e. adversity during the early years negatively impacts on health across the life-course (Gradient, 2012). Moreover, the social capital and inclusive communities are important factors impacting on health and wellbeing of families and young people and should be strengthened in the EU Youth Strategy and related policy actions (<http://health-gradient.eu/home/gradient/>).

More evidence was published, like the book "The Right to Start a Healthy Life" (<http://health-gradient.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/right-start-healthy-life-levelling-up-health-gradient-children.pdf>).

To strengthen the action on health and well-being across the social gradient, the EU Youth Strategy and related youth policies should take a comprehensive approach which includes:

1. Mental Health

Mental health problems and disorders are frequently encountered at the median age of 15 years old. They are resulting into low school performance and absence, with later impacts on work prospects, particularly for young people and women coming from lower social economic groups (EuroHealthNet's Policy Precipis on Mental Health, Equity and Work [http://eurohealthnet.eu/sites/eurohealthnet.eu/files/publications/Final\\_PolicyPrecipisSocial-2014-07b.pdf](http://eurohealthnet.eu/sites/eurohealthnet.eu/files/publications/Final_PolicyPrecipisSocial-2014-07b.pdf)).

It is important to identify and address mental health issues as early as possible. The EU-Compass for Action on Mental Health and Well-being provides tools for the identification and dissemination of good practices that are transferrable and can be adapted to meet the needs of young people.

2. HIV/AIDS

The Commission communication on combating HIV/AIDS in the EU and neighbouring countries include that health promotion and disease prevention initiatives on HIV are carried out targeting youth across Europe, in particular those in belonging to disadvantaged backgrounds and vulnerable or at risk groups. Quality Improvement Tools (i.e. Joint Action on Improving Quality in HIV Prevention, Quality Action) could be used in implementation as well as the case studies on HIV prevention targeting groups of young people ([www.qualityaction.eu](http://www.qualityaction.eu)).

3. Nutrition and Physical Activity

Already existing synergies with the EU platform for action on diet, physical activity and health and the EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity should be strengthened and coordinated support should be provided for implementation of national and regional policies. Moreover, the EU Youth Strategy and related policy actions should take into account the responses provided to the Consultation on the Audiovisual Media Services Directive. It is important that stricter measures and regulations are applied to the advertising of unhealthy foods and beverages. The WHO Europe Nutrient Profile Model is a critical tool for the implementation of restrictions on the marketing of foods to children.

4. Alcohol related harm

According to EU Health Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis, issues such as underage drinking and binge drinking continue to show alarmingly high rates within the EU (European Commission, 2016). These include binge drinking, underage drinking, alcohol-related violence (at home or within a group of peers), driving under the influence of alcohol, absenteeism and presenteeism (from school or work) due to alcohol consumption, among others. The EU Youth Strategy and related policy actions should include promotion of healthy lifestyles and address alcohol related harm issues (both for health professionals as capacity-building receivers, and for young people). The actions should consider the existing social gradient, with young people from lower-socio economic groups being more likely to experience alcohol-related harm and health problems. The EU Joint Action on Alcohol-Related Harm (JA-RARHA) has developed on goals, content and impact of school-based interventions on alcohol ([www.rarha.eu](http://www.rarha.eu)) (<http://www.rarha.eu/Resources/Deliverables/Lists/Work%20Package%205/Attachments/8/Schoolbased%20alcohol%20preventionprograms%20STA.pdf>).

EuroHealthNet considers that addressing poverty and promoting social inclusion should be a priority for the EU Youth strategy and related policy actions.

When supporting the access to employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship to young people, particular attention should be given to young people from vulnerable and often socially excluded groups (lower socio-economic backgrounds, migrants, etc).

## C. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION ON THE MOBILITY OF YOUNG VOLUNTEERS ACROSS THE EU

11. Were you aware (before reading the introduction to this consultation) that a Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers across the EU was adopted in 2008, to create more cross-border volunteering opportunities?

- Yes

No

12. Did you ever take part in a voluntary activity abroad in the EU as an organisation or an individual?

- Yes, under the European Voluntary Service ([http://ec.europa.eu/youth/programme/mobility/european-voluntary-service\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/programme/mobility/european-voluntary-service_en.htm))
- Yes, but not under the European Voluntary Service
- No

13. Are the objectives of the Council Recommendation on creating more cross-border volunteering opportunities still relevant to the needs of...

	Yes	Somewhat	No	I don't know
...youth policymakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...youth organisations and young people	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. What is the added value of the Council Recommendation compared with actions at a local, regional or national level?

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Contributes to raise awareness of opportunities to volunteer abroad	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helps increase the quality of volunteering projects	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supports development of opportunities for cross-border volunteering within and beyond the European Voluntary Service scheme	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helps simplify procedures for cross-border volunteering	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promotes recognition and validation of the skills gained through volunteering experiences	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encourages people to pay particular attention to young people with fewer opportunities	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. Are there any other issues you would like to share with us in relation to the Council Recommendation ?

EuroHealthNet would like to take this opportunity to suggest the opening of more opportunities regarding health and well-being under the European Voluntary Service scheme, as a way to allow students and young/future professionals to develop and make practical use of their skills in a transnational context, facilitating also processes of knowledge-sharing and good practices exchanges between the countries comprised by the EVS exchange and financed under the Erasmus+ programme.

## Contact

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