



European Year of Youth Flagship Initiatives

Disclaimer: Please note that this document is constantly evolving. The list of events is not exhaustive, new items might be added and current ones might change.

Europe, and the world, need the vision, engagement and participation of all young people to build a better future, which is greener, more inclusive and digital. On 15 September 2021, President von der Leyen announced in her State of the Union Address that the European Commission will propose to make 2022 the European Year of Youth, a year dedicated to empowering those “*who have dedicated so much to others*”. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a severe and uneven impact on education, employment and mental health of the young people. The pandemic and related measures have resulted in interruptions in their education and transition to employment, and many youngsters have experienced feelings of isolation, anxiety and depression. Disadvantaged groups have been disproportionately impacted, amplifying already existing inequalities.

The European Year of Youth will be an occasion to not only raise awareness on the opportunities ahead for young people, but also to encourage and support the efforts of the Union, the Member States, regional and local authorities to honour youth in a pandemic perspective. In its broader sense, the Year will go hand in hand with the successful implementation of NextGenerationEU, and the European Commission aims to enhance the role of youth in turning the recovery into a driving force for future-oriented well-being and welfare.

The Year’s flagship initiatives shall provide plentiful opportunities for the European youth, and beyond, to engage in learning and civic engagement activities and therefore, young people will gain knowledge, skills, competences, values and attitudes they need in order to move forward with confidence. They should also become more familiar with the political landscape at EU, national, regional and global levels.

The Year will pay particular attention to young people with fewer opportunities, such as young people with disabilities, young people with migrant or Roma or LGBITQ background, striving to a gender balance and representation of diverse backgrounds.



A. FLAGSHIP EUROPEAN LEARNING MOBILITY

The pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on mobilities, particularly in the context of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes. 50% less learners started a mobility abroad in 2020 than in 2019 ([Report on EU Youth Strategy \(2019-2021\)](#), p.10). Nevertheless, young people should rest assured that these new EU programmes specifically dedicated to youth (2021-2027) have returned more enhanced than ever. The new programmes continue to offer new beginnings that are marked with inclusion, boundless cultural enrichment and unique learning experiences, contributing to the objectives of the European Year of Youth 2022.

The year 2022 will mark the 35 years of the Erasmus+ programme and the Year will be a great opportunity to celebrate the more than 10 million young people who took part in that adventure since 1987, and to promote the new generation of this programme in all its dimensions, covering education, training, youth and sport. The European Solidarity Corps will also enter its 5th year in 2022.

Main Initiative (A1): Global Erasmus+ alumni mentoring scheme

With the re-launch of international mobility in 2022, the Global Erasmus+ Mentoring Scheme will put young people in the spotlight, connecting Erasmus+ alumni with Erasmus+ potential participants. Erasmus+ supports global and regional (Western Balkans, Africa) students and alumni networks which promote activities at grass-root level - mainly with a focus on youth - through calls for project ideas published several times a year. The Erasmus+ students and alumni - based in EU and non-EU countries – will raise young people’s awareness of the programme and mentor prospective participants by providing inspiring testimonies and practical hints based on their own mobility experiences, giving information about destinations, courses and institutions. More info: Fourth Call for ESAA Project Ideas 2021: Submission phase is closed! | ESAA (esaa-eu.org); WBAA (western-balkans-alumni.eu), ASAF (asaf.africa)

Additional Initiatives:

A2. Relaunch of learning mobility: the Erasmus+ programme celebrates its 35th anniversary – more inclusive, greener and digitally ready

Erasmus+ is and remains *the* EU’s programme to support education, training, youth and sport. **The European Year of Youth will coincide with a relaunch of mobility disrupted by the pandemic.** The new Erasmus+ programme is reinforced, has many new opportunities for young people and is more inclusive and greener. For the first time ever, the programme enables school pupils to also carry out an individual mobility period abroad. To use the full potential of the digital decade, new mobility formats will be offered with blended mobility and blended intensive programmes. The European Student Card Initiative helps a stronger European student identity and will facilitate all stages of the mobility (Erasmus+ App). It will be further developed during the Year of Youth. Erasmus+ funds are now more accessible to smaller, grassroots organisations, like youth groups and sports clubs. A “Green Erasmus+” also encourages participants to use

lower-carbon means of transport as an alternative to flying and offers more opportunities for participants and organisations to develop knowledge and skills in matters of sustainability and to develop environmental-friendly approaches, while promoting the incorporation of green practices into all projects. More info: [Home | Erasmus+ \(europa.eu\)](#)

A3. Boosting students' transnational experience with the European Strategy for Universities

The European Year of Youth aims at bringing visibility to a series of initiatives that will not only boost higher education in Europe, but also put the students and universities in the spotlight. The European strategy for universities is one of such initiatives. It aims at equipping students with the competences they need to succeed in their professional and personal lives, with many more opportunities to study abroad and be actors of change by cooperating with students, professionals, researchers from different countries and disciplines to find solutions to the biggest challenges our society is facing. It provides support for students to start their course in one university and continuing it in other universities in Europe, following transnational joint programmes and getting a joint European degree automatically recognised within the EU. More info: [communication-european-strategy-for-universities-graphic-version.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

A4. Launch of European Solidarity Corps Humanitarian Aid operations

With the first call for 2022, building on the EU Aid Volunteers initiative, the European Solidarity Corps will offer **volunteering activities in support of humanitarian aid operations**. Participants aged 18-35 will be able to participate, individually or in teams, in projects that, where relevant, facilitate the transition from the humanitarian response to long-term sustainable and inclusive development; contribute to strengthening the capacity and resilience of vulnerable or disaster-affected communities; reinforce disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction; link relief, rehabilitation and development. Volunteers and organisations will be able to rely on complementary support, e.g. involving more experienced coaches and experts. The aim is that, through these actions, young people would acquire essential competences that could contribute to their personal and socio-educational development, increase their self-empowerment and self-esteem, but also enhance their employability. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

A5. Council Recommendation on youth volunteering in the EU

The Commission has adopted a proposal for a Council Recommendation on the mobility of young volunteers across the European Union. The proposed Recommendation intends to **facilitate youth transnational volunteering**, give guidance to enhance the inclusiveness, quality, sustainability and recognition dimensions of transnational volunteering schemes, address new trends (such as inter-generational solidarity and digital volunteering), encourage mutual learning and networking among organisations and support complementarity between volunteering schemes in Member States and the European Solidarity Corps. More info: [SWD\(2022\) 4 EN autre document travail service part1 v4.pdf \(cdep.ro\)](#)

A6. European City of Science

The European City of Science (ECS) will ensure a structured and expanded dialogue among all societal actors (researchers, citizens, policy makers, business and third sector organisations, including all social groups). It aims to foster mutual learning, scientific integration, interest for science among younger generations and the development of a borderless European research community across the continent. It will have the following main components: (1) year-long science activities also targeting the Youth; (2) the European Union Young Scientists Contest (EUCYS) targeting 14-20 year olds with a passion for STEM, (3) a European contest for young and early career researchers, (4) the Euroscience Open Science Forum (ESOF) including the young researchers award. In addition, a new initiative (under the provisional name of European Talent Fair) will target students and early career researchers and will likely be included as announced in the European Strategy for Universities. The first component of the European City of Science programme is the year of events that will offer an extensive European platform to local, national and international pioneers in science and culture and that is developed in close collaboration with a multidisciplinary European network of artists, researchers, designers, scientists, students and active citizens. Every single day will address a different theme which leads to a very extensive and broad programme in order to enable everyone to participate. More info: [EuroScience Open Forum | July 13-16 2022 \(esof.eu\)](https://esof.eu) <https://leiden2022.nl/en>



B. FLAGSHIP EMPLOYMENT AND INCLUSION

The economic crisis provoked by the pandemic and the lockdowns has hit the young people in particular. As a result, young peoples' unemployment rates in the EU increased from 11.9% in 2019 to 13.3% in 2020 (Report on EU Youth Strategy (2019-2021), p.2). The European Year of Youth is therefore strongly connected to expanding employment opportunities for youth and promoting youth entrepreneurship in the post-pandemic recovery, including via Vocational Education and Training (VET). As such, the Year will include a series of initiatives, events and activities for young people, with the aim of boosting the efforts of the EU, Member States, regional and local authorities in supporting and engaging with young people as part of the economic and social recovery.

Main Initiative (B1): ALMA

ALMA is an active inclusion initiative aimed to provide participants a tailor-made approach. It consists of coaching and counselling including a supervised stay in a hosting public or private structure for a period of 2 to 6 months in another EU Member State. ALMA will target the most disadvantaged young people aged 18-30 not in employment, education or training (NEETs), who are most vulnerable with regard to their chances of accessing work or training for individual or structural reasons (e.g. disability, long-term unemployment, insufficient school performance/vocational skills, migration/marginalised background).

The objective of ALMA is two-fold: improve the skills, knowledge and experience of these young people so that they can find their way to the job market and in society once they are back in their home country, and give them the opportunity to create new connections across Europe.

Participants will benefit from a comprehensive project cycle: starting with intensive training and coaching in their home country. During their stay abroad, costs for travel, accommodation, subsistence, insurance, social security will be covered by the initiative. In addition, they will continue benefitting from coaching and counselling. Upon their return, continued support will help them adapt and use the newly acquired skills. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

Additional Initiatives:

B2. Review of the Council Recommendation on the Quality Framework for Traineeships

In the context of new challenges to youth employment due to, among other factors, the COVID-19 pandemic, young people need better quality traineeships. The Commission will “*review in 2022 the Council Recommendation on the **Quality Framework for Traineeships**, notably as regards working conditions*” (stated in the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan) as a response to the calls of the European Parliament and various stakeholders. The review will look at **whether traineeships outside education curricula offer young people a successful pathway to the labour market**, and whether the Quality Framework for Traineeship in its

current form effectively guarantees traineeship quality. It will also look at how to better cater for the changing skills requirements brought about by the digital and green transitions. [More info: Quality Framework for Traineeships – review \(evaluation\) \(europa.eu\)](#)

B3. InvestEU

Starting in the first half of 2022, the European Investment Fund will deploy a financial product providing a guarantee to financial intermediaries supporting microfinance recipients and social enterprises as well as students and learners and also enterprises providing training to their employees, supported by the InvestEU guarantee. While no specific target has been defined yet, **young people are expected to represent a significant part of the recipient population**. Other financial products under the specific Social Investment and Skills window of InvestEU will aim at financing student housing or provide support to vulnerable groups including young people, from disadvantaged backgrounds, including those with disabilities. [More info: InvestEU | InvestEU \(europa.eu\)](#)

B4. Reinforced Youth Guarantee

In line with the European Pillar of Social Rights, the overall objective of the reinforced Youth Guarantee is to support young people in gaining work experience and developing the right skills for a changing world of work, in particular those relevant to the green and digital transitions. **2022 will be a crucial year** for the implementation of the reinforced Youth Guarantee. Member States will start implementing measures under their recovery and resilience plans targeting young people and youth employment related measures included in their ESF+ programmes. Member States where the NEET problem is more serious will need to devote at least 12.5% of their ESF+ funding to young NEETs. All the other Member States will need to dedicate an appropriate amount to implement the reinforced Youth Guarantee in line with the gravity of their youth employment challenges. The reinforced Youth Guarantee has no end date and will remain the EU's reference policy framework to fight youth unemployment and inactivity. After 2022, with help from the billions of EUR of EU funds available under the EU's 2021-2027 long-term budget and NextGenerationEU, the reinforced Youth Guarantee will continue to strive to achieve more and better: prevention of unemployment and inactivity, school-to-work transitions through tailored and individualised support measures, outreach to and activation of the more vulnerable, upskilling and re-skilling, post-placement support and integrated services. [More info: The reinforced Youth Guarantee - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

B5. Information and visiting programme for young future social partner leaders

In the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, the Commission committed to present an initiative to support social dialogue at EU and national level in 2022, which would include an **information and visiting programme for young future social partner leaders**. Preparatory work, including discussions with social partners whose buy-in is essential, is ongoing and will continue in 2022. [More info: The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan \(europa.eu\)](#)

B6. The European Child Guarantee

The European Child Guarantee aims at addressing poverty and social exclusion of children (defined as persons under 18 years old) through ensuring their free or effective access to a set of key services – childcare, education and school-based activities, school meals, healthcare, nutrition and housing. **A key milestone in implementing the Child Guarantee will be the delivery of the national action plans by Member States due in March 2022.** Since the target groups of the Child Guarantee and the European Year of Youth are partially overlapping, some of the measures envisaged in the national action plans will be directly relevant also to youth. More info: [European Child Guarantee - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/e300042/1/16102021/EN/16102021_01_EN01_Infographic_ECYO_CG.pdf)

B7. Technical Support Instrument flagship project on the Implementation of the European Child Guarantee

The Commission will start a main initiative on the Implementation of the European Child Guarantee. The initiative will provide – following requests submitted by several Member States - tailor made expertise for undertaking reforms aiming at increasing the inclusiveness of education system and improving access to healthcare and to social services for vulnerable children in the form of reform projects in EU Member States. Furthermore, the Commission will continue supporting Member States' efforts to carry out reforms aiming at improving health, well-being, educational and employment opportunities for the youth, promoting equal chances and fighting discrimination through the Technical Support Instrument. More info: [b4 - child guarantee.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/e300042/1/16102021/EN/16102021_01_EN01_Infographic_ECYO_CG.pdf)

B8. The 30th anniversary of the Single Market

The European Single Market will turn 30 on 1 January 2023, but a dedicated communication campaign will **begin marking the anniversary already during the last quarter of 2022.** As the Single Market is one of the EU's greatest achievements, a basic knowledge of EU rights and benefits linked to the Single Market is key for young Europeans to realise their potential and achieve their dreams (e.g. living, studying and working anywhere in the EU). There are therefore many potential overlaps and synergies with the European Year of Youth. More info: [Single market \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/e300042/1/16102021/EN/16102021_01_EN01_Infographic_ECYO_CG.pdf)

B9. Recovery and Resilience Facility with youth focus

With a budget of up to EUR 723.8 billion (in current prices) in grants and loan, the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) will support large-scale public investments and reforms undertaken by Member States to recover from the COVID-19 crisis and promote the Union's economic, social and territorial cohesion. A central objective of the Facility is to mitigate the social and economic impact of the crisis, including for children and the youth. As the main financial instrument of NextGenerationEU, **the Recovery and Resilience Facility will support reforms and**

investments aimed at enhancing access for children and the youth to education, employment, health, nutrition, jobs and housing. A closer look at the submitted plans shows that the majority of the measures dedicated to children and the youth will focus on general, vocational, and higher education while other measures will cover youth employment support but also early childhood education. More info: [Recovery and Resilience Facility | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#) and [Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard](#).

B10. SURE

Young people as newly hired workers are usually more likely to be dismissed in times of crisis. SURE has contributed to help keep them in their jobs during the COVID crisis. In addition, by sustaining household income, SURE has indirectly helped young people who are dependent, i.e. studying. Participation of women and youth in short-time work increased during the COVID-19 crisis. This primarily reflects the change in focus of the support away from manufacturing and construction towards services and retail, i.e. sectors with a relatively higher share of women and youth in employment. Over **EUR 5 billion remains available under SURE until the end of 2022**, which could be used to continue to address severe economic disturbances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. More info: [SURE | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

B11. Rural Revitalization Platform

This is a one-stop shop for rural communities, young people living in rural areas, rural project holders and local authorities alike to collaborate. It will predominantly support rural areas affected by population loss, ageing and a lack of economic opportunities, by sharing information and best practices on tools and strategies and could be **particularly relevant for young people living in rural areas or that may decide to move there.** More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

B12. Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030

This Strategy aims to improve the lives of persons with disabilities in the coming decade, in the EU and beyond. It addresses issues that are indispensable for young people with disabilities, such as accessibility, the promotion of independent living, quality social and employment services, accessible and inclusive housing, participation in inclusive education and lifelong learning, and adequate social protection. **In 2022, the Commission will launch a package to improve labour market outcomes of persons with disabilities, paying particular attention to young people with disabilities.** It will provide guidance and support mutual learning on strengthening capacities of employment and integration services, promoting hiring perspectives through affirmative action and combating stereotypes, ensuring reasonable accommodation, securing health and safety at work and vocational rehabilitation schemes in case of chronic diseases or accidents, exploring quality jobs in sheltered employment and pathways to the open labour market. More info: [Publications catalogue - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

B13. Youth Entrepreneurship Policy Academy

On 1st July 2020, the Commission announced its intention to support networks of young entrepreneurs (YES Communication). It also recently recommended Member States to promote entrepreneurship in a post-COVID context (EASE Recommendation). Against this background, the Commission intends to act and will set-up a **Youth Entrepreneurship Policy Academy (YEPA) as part of the Social Economy Action Plan** to be adopted on December 8. The YEPA will consist of a programme of international capacity building events for representatives of **young entrepreneurs** accompanied by policy makers and experts. The initiative will put a special focus on social entrepreneurship – as young people are increasingly looking for work that reflects their values – and on young women entrepreneurs, as the latter remain underrepresented in entrepreneurship. As much as possible, the specific challenges for youth in each country will be identified, as these vary greatly between countries. At the same time, an EU Policy Academy will allow to share best practices across borders and, where relevant, to foster cross-national initiatives. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

B14. The European Researchers' Night

Under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) in Horizon Europe, the European Researchers' Night brings research and researchers closer to the public at large, in particular the youth, to increase awareness of research and innovation activities and to show the impact of research on daily life. It also showcases the role of researchers in society and helps raise young people's interest in research and scientific careers. The European Researchers' Night promotes EU values including gender balance, diversity and inclusiveness in science. It is a well-established outreach activity across EU Member States and Horizon Europe associated countries, which supports per year around 50 projects all over Europe and beyond. In 2022, the European Researchers' Night will take place on Friday 30 September and will cover a wide range of activities, both educational and entertaining at the same time, such as hands-on experiments, science shows, simulations, debates, games, competitions, demonstrations, enquiries, quizzes, etc.

In 2022, the European Researchers' Night will also include a new initiative: "Researchers at Schools". The "Researchers at Schools" activities will bring researchers to schools all around the year and allow for direct interaction between pupils, teachers and researchers on challenges faced by our societies.

The European Researchers' Night will convey the messages underlying the European Year of Youth and engage with young people. More info: [MSCA & Citizens | Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions \(europa.eu\)](#)

B15. A judicial training conference for young professionals under the Justice Programme

The European Commission and the French Presidency of the European Union organise jointly a conference on "**Initial training of justice professionals serving the rule of law**" on 22-23 February 2022. It will be held in Bordeaux and co-hosted by the French national school for the judiciary (ENM). The objective is to boost the European dimension of the initial training for the

judiciary and lawyers, which is one of the priorities of the European Commission Strategy for European judicial training 2021-2024. Training providers of initial judicial training for judges, prosecutors and lawyers and young professionals who are in initial judicial professional training will be invited. Discussions will cover initial professional training, as it is the access way to the judicial and legal professions, so that it secures more effective judicial protection, the cornerstone of the rule of law. Best practices will also be exchanged in order to improve the inclusion in initial training curricula of the EU acquis on the rule of law and fundamental rights, to improve training in the various European mechanisms for the protection of fundamental rights and build a European legal and judicial culture based on the rule of law from the early stage of professionals' training. More info: <https://www.european-initial-training-2022.eu/>

B16. European Apprentices Network

The European Apprentices Network (EAN) is a **network of young apprentices, youth organisations and other bodies related to apprenticeships at the European level**. EAN was established in April 2017 to ensure that young apprentices both in secondary and third-level education are shaping the discussion and policymaking related to VET, in particular for apprenticeships. In 2020 EAN has set up a new structure to expand its membership previously based on individuals only, with a view to become a representative voice towards institutions and stakeholders at all levels on issues concerning apprenticeships. The official launch of the new EAN, originally planned for April 2020, was postponed till March 2022 due to the pandemic. It will be held in Barcelona, co-organised with the Fundación Bertelsmann, the Generalitat de Catalunya and the members of the new EA. More info: [European Apprentices Network – By apprentices, for apprentices](#)



C. FLAGSHIP POLICY DIALOGUES AND PARTICIPATION

Strengthening young people's democratic participation and providing youth spaces in all areas of society is key to maintaining an active civil society in Europe. It is also crucial for the present and the future of the EU and its democratic societies. The EU promotes youth participation in policy-making globally building on the experience of the EU Youth Dialogue, a mechanism that ensures that the opinion, views and needs of young people are taken into account when defining the EU's youth policies. The EU Youth Dialogue works as a tool to bring young people's voices closer to decision makers, by consulting them and passing on their recommendations. These efforts of the EU will be further boosted in 2022.

Main Initiative (C1): 'Family of policy dialogues': Members of College in conversation with youth

Each member of College will invite young people in Berlaymont to a policy dialogue in the course of the Year. Each policy dialogue will last two hours and consist in holding a meaningful conversation and exchange of views with young people on topics of their interest and concern, in the remit of his or her portfolio. The young participants will be able to express views, raise questions, share ideas and suggestions in a face-to-face meeting, which will be coupled with a web interaction. Providing a space for a direct and meaningful interaction with members of College across the policy spectrum will contribute to mainstreaming youth concerns in the whole political agenda. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

Additional Initiatives:

C2. Youth participation Action – YOU(th) take action

As a novelty for the new generation of Erasmus+ programme, a specific action dedicated to Youth participation, called Youth Participation Action is introduced. **Over the course of 2022, a minimum of 500 projects are expected to be funded, providing young people from all backgrounds with a chance to engage and participate in civic society.** These activities will be youth-driven projects for young people to take an active role in civic and democratic processes and to become active citizens. An opportunity for several thousand young people to design and implement their own projects with activities potentially reaching hundreds of thousands of young people across Europe and benefiting large communities by driving positive societal change. More info: [Youth participation activities | Erasmus+ \(europa.eu\)](#)

C3. Youth4Outermost Regions (Empowering youth in the EU Outermost Regions)

The Youth4Outermost Regions promotes actions that empower and encourage teens to become more active in their community and bring concrete improvements to it. Actions should be adapted to the specific situation of each region and contribute to improving citizens' quality of

life and/or local and regional development. While there is no particular area or subject on which the proposed actions should focus – applicants can submit projects in any area relevant to improve the local situation - projects linked to EU priorities such as the twin green and digital transition and recovery are particularly welcome. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

C4. Youth4Cooperation

The umbrella initiative ‘Youth4Cooperation’ will aim at emphasising the importance of youth to reach Macro Regional Strategies and Interreg programmes’ objectives. Throughout 2022, there will be a road show amongst the projects submitted and several publications will be launched on youth and interreg / macro regional strategies. The initiative will include **political dialogues in the four Macro Regional Strategies** and a final **Youth4Cooperation Summit in Autumn 2022** (in conjunction with the Interreg Annual Event). More info: <https://www.interregyouth.com/> , <https://www.facebook.com/InterregYouth/> and <https://twitter.com/InterregYouth>. Information on Macro Regional Strategies : EUSALP : youth.Shaping.EUSALP <https://eusalp-youth.eu/> , EUSBSR : <https://cbss.org/> , EUSAIR : <https://www.adriatic-ionian.eu/> , EUSDR : <https://danube-region.eu/>

C5. Youth4Territorial Cohesion (encouraging brain gain and circulation in less developed and peripheral regions)

The Youth for cohesion project will provide support from REGIO Technical Assistance to help qualified young people to move to and/or return to their home regions. It will test new ways for public administrations and private companies in less developed and peripheral regions to create opportunities for qualified young people from outside the region to contribute to innovation and economic development. It will be developed in close collaboration with young people and the public bodies concerned. These young people will develop and implement ideas that allow for a better cohesion of their territories. Young people between 15 and 24 years old will be able to receive up to EUR 10.000 for their projects, for a period of 12 months. They need to be resident in the regions under the scope of this initiative. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

C6. EU Children’s & Teen participation platform

The EU Children’s and Teen Participation Platform, one of the main deliverables of the EU Strategy on the rights of the child, will work towards a more **systemic, coherent, meaningful, inclusive and safe approach to child participation** (all individuals below 18 years old). It will be a hub for existing child participation mechanisms (e.g. national children’s parliaments; children city councils; children’s boards advising international non-governmental organisations, etc.), which will exchange experiences or peer learning. It will also contribute to involving children in EU decision-making processes. The Platform will include, alongside its offline work, an online website to promote it, and an online space for members, including children, to connect with one another. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

C7. Bringing Young People into Statistics

Eurostat will engage in the European Youth Year by improving the dedicated section and youth statistics of its database, and will finalise the revised dashboard of youth indicators. ESTAT will prepare a dissemination ‘package’ dedicated to the EYY 2022, with online publication, printed statistical booklet and updated visualization tool. This will allow better presenting the situation of young people in different domains of their lives. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

C8. European Statistics Competition

In parallel, the annual European Statistics Competition that targets secondary school students (14-18 years) and their teachers will allow more than 3000 teams and more than 16000 students to engage on important EU topics of the Green Deal/ environmental topic using data and statistics. After a national phase, an international jury will choose the best videos and the winners will be announced early June and invited to an award ceremony taking place at the end of June.

More info: [Join the European Statistics Competition 2022 - Products Eurostat News - Eurostat \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)

C9. #SHEU leads Social media communication campaign

Despite the slow and gradual improvement in many areas of gender equality, women are still either missing, or are invisible in many important areas of life especially in several science areas, mathematics, and informatics. The lack of women in these fields translates into biased output, loss of talent and growth opportunities. Research suggests that instead of knowledge and skills, it is self-beliefs, attitudes and motivational factors that matter and contribute to gendered differences in the career choices. Gender stereotypes, the dominantly masculine attributes associated with science and importantly, the scarcity of influential female role models all discourage girls from aspirations towards STEM careers.

To address this gap, and in the context of the European Year of Youth, it is time to put in the spotlight girls and young women making a difference in their communities and who are on their way to become successful in sport, culture, education, science and innovation. The #SHEU leads campaign would have two concrete goals: first, to highlight the EU’s support to young women and girls in sport, culture, education, science and innovation, through our different funding programs, including Horizon Europe, ERASMUS+, Creative Europe, Solidarity Corps and the Resilience and Recovery funds. Second, to showcase young women and girls across the EU that are on the rise to become stars in science, education, culture and sport. The one-year campaign will start on 8 March at the EUwomen4future event in Strasbourg. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.



D. FLAGSHIP GREEN

Young people will be most impacted by the effects of the climate crisis and biodiversity loss. Among the challenges faced by the EU, climate change is among the three main concerns highlighted by young Europeans ([Eurobarometer](#)). Since 2019, civic participation and engagement by young people, in particular through the global climate movement, shows the importance young people assign to tackling climate change and achieving climate justice. Therefore, it is key to involve and prepare the new generations for the green transition. In the context of the European Year of Youth, the EU proposes a range of opportunities under its Green priority for youth to engage, act and learn about climate and environment related topics.

Main Initiative (D1): The Green Track

The Green Track campaign, in the run up to the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15), invites youth to join the debate on the future of our planet through a series of events to be organised by young people, dedicated to nature and other environmental areas. The Green Track events will inspire actions that will help make the deal for nature to be agreed at the COP15 a reality. One key component of The Green Track will focus on the [EU forest strategy for 2030](#) and the role youth can play to contribute to the EU's commitment in **planting at least 3 billion additional trees in the EU by 2030**. Close interaction is foreseen with the **European Solidarity Corps**. More info: URL <https://on-the-green-track.campaign.europa.eu/>

Additional initiatives:

D2. European Solidarity Corps to support the planting of 3 billion trees

One of the objectives of the European Year of Youth is to enhance the role of the young people in the green transition. In this context, DG EAC proposes to use its initiatives, programmes and communication channels, to contribute to the EU Forest Strategy and, to the [3 billion trees initiative](#). Projects involving reforestation are already possible within the framework of the European Solidarity Corps and a number of projects are dealing with topics related to forests and orchards (including the cleaning up of forests, planting new trees etc.). To encourage the integration of tree planting into more ongoing or planned projects focusing on environment sustainability, further awareness-raising by the European Commission or the National Agencies will be done. Actions include identification of projects involving tree-planting to identify best practices and to showcase and promote specific ideas, dissemination of the produced materials on the 3 billion trees targeted outreach by National Agencies to encourage projects linked with the 3 billion trees initiative via its online counter. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

D3. Youth Climate Pact Dialogues

In order to enable young people to directly exchange with European decision-makers, including EVP Timmermans, Youth Climate Pact Ambassadors (CPAs) and representatives from youth civil society organisations are collaboratively developing Youth Climate Pact Dialogues focussing on the various aspects of the Green Deal and its implementation on the ground. The

first of these dialogues being the official EYY Youth Dialogue event with EVP Timmermans, the format will ensure that the EC is in close dialogue with young European citizens in climate action, as emphasised in the initial communication of the EC on the Climate Pact. The YCPD are unique in that the entire process of further developing the topic, developing the structure and the agenda of the event will be done by youth climate activists themselves, ensuring meaningful participation. Beginning of April, live-streamed from Brussels. More info: europa.eu/climate-pact/young-people_en and youth@euclimatepact.eu

D4. Young Environment Ambassadors (CLIMA/ENV)

Climate Pact Ambassadors are people who act as a bridge to all parts of the society and commit to climate action through engaging with their communities and networks. **On youth engagement, the young Ambassadors are essential multipliers and connectors with youth organizations and young people on the ground.** To illustrate the close links and interactions between climate change and environment under the EU Green Deal, DG CLIMA and DG ENV collaborate closely on the Young Environment Ambassadors scheme, for youth to help raise awareness in their communities on nature, biodiversity, circular economy and zero pollution. More info: [Ambassadors \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu/ambassadors)

D5. Climate Pact Ambassadors Forum

Following the identified need of young people to be in touch with both the European institutions and also climate activists from other countries a lot more easily than at present, the Climate Pact Ambassadors Forum (CPAF) will allow Ambassadors from all member states of all age groups, and also including DG CLIMA, the Climate Pact Secretariat, as well as the Climate Pact Country Coordinators to be very closely in touch with each other, exchange ideas and best practises and utilise synergies in their activities. Having two representatives per country, one of them always a young Climate Pact Ambassador, youth are put into a prominent role in this initiative, in the driving seat of pan-European collaboration among Climate Pact Ambassadors – aimed at fostering a wider dialogue and giving youth a sense of ownership in the Climate Pact. More info: https://europa.eu/climate-pact/young-people_en or send us an email at youth@euclimatepact.eu

D6. Youth in Climate Action – Youth Summit

As centrally organised European Year of Youth activity in Brussels, the European Climate Pact will co-organise a youth summit around youth engagement and climate action, collaborating with DG ENV, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Parliament (TBC), youth organisations and other partners to offer young participants to learn about the interlinkages between social justice, the environmental crisis and the climate emergency in an interdisciplinary event featuring inspiring key notes, passionate debates and exciting participatory formats and spaces to exchange views between the young audience and policy makers, youth and climate initiatives, climate pact business pledgers and others. Date to be confirmed but envisaged for end of Q3. Share your ideas via youth@euclimatepact.eu

D7. Development and Promotion of Best Practice Models (including toolkits)

The Climate Pact is a pact with and for citizen and civil-society-organisations (CSOs) with the aim of supporting existing initiatives and facilitating the creation of new ones. With youth organisations and youth activists often working on similar challenges all across Europe and struggling to find partners to disseminate their quality work, the Climate Pact will facilitate the production of new and promotion of existing models of best practice regarding communication, event formats and campaigns that can be useful for the daily work of climate activists and organisations, no matter how small they are. In a pursuit to prevent the “re-creation of the wheel” and to step-up capacity building among young activists, the Climate Pact will equip them with the right tools to communicate on climate issues to a wide audience, particularly “lukewarms” that are interested in the topic but not yet engaged. Following a successful workshop of the Climate Pact at the EYE 2021, a toolkit providing advice on communication strategies around tricky conversation regarding climate change is currently being developed. More info: https://europa.eu/climate-pact/young-people_en or send us an email at youth@euclimatepact.eu

D8. Connecting Europe Conference

From 28 to 30 June 2022, the **Connecting Europe Conference** will be organised in Lyon, in cooperation with the French Presidency. This conference will discuss themes linked to the Green Deal, amongst which transport, energy, climate, environment, digital and innovation. The conference will also celebrate the **10th anniversary of the TEN-T Days**, which will be redesigned to fully grasp all opportunities for synergies with the Year of Youth and the Conference on the Future of Europe, contributing to the implementation of the Green Deal and to the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

D9. Education for Climate Coalition

The Education for Climate Coalition is the European **participatory education community** to support the changes needed for a climate-neutral society. **Students, teachers and education stakeholders** can connect through the **open collaborative community platform to ideate and co-create** creative and innovative **education actions and initiatives** on environmental sustainability around awareness raising, bridging education with science, developing green skills and competences, training teachers and changing behaviours. In 2022, several such community challenges will be launched: from activities in and around the classroom over materials and learning resources to a call for places of education and knowledge together with the New European Bauhaus. More info: [Education for Climate Coalition | Education for Climate Coalition \(europa.eu\)](#)

D10. Council Recommendation on learning for environmental sustainability

As part of the European Education Area, DG EAC has prepared a proposal for a Council Recommendation on learning for environmental sustainability for learners of all ages and at all

levels of education, that was adopted in January 2022. This initiative is the first step in helping EU countries cooperate and **develop stronger policies on learning for environmental sustainability and to develop the skills and competences needed for the green transition.** Linked to the Recommendation, EAC and the Joint Research Centre have released a new European competence framework ('GreenComp') for the development and assessment of knowledge, skills and attitudes related to sustainability. The goal is to establish a shared understanding of sustainability competences for learners at all phases and stages of education. More info: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_327

D11. New European Bauhaus

The New European Bauhaus will create the space to explore and test policy, funding and other tools for **designing and building a better everyday life for all generations where the role of Youth will be fundamental.** The New European Bauhaus expresses the EU's ambition of creating beautiful, inclusive and sustainable places and lifestyle. Sustainability is a major focus for EU youth and education policy, allowing for many synergies with the New European Bauhaus initiative. Social inclusion and an enhanced quality of life for all citizens are likewise key priorities. The New European Bauhaus initiative will dedicate special attention to Youth through a **Rising star (under 30) category in its prize** and has been introduced as a priority for Erasmus+ in 2022. In February 2022, **the Commission will launch a Call for Expression of Interest for places of education and knowledge** (from public libraries to schools and universities) **to develop their own New European Bauhaus projects**, in close collaboration with the Education for Climate Coalition. More info: [New European Bauhaus: beautiful, sustainable, together. \(europa.eu\)](#)

D12. EU Teens4Green

The EU Teens4Green is a unique REGIO Technical Assistance that gives young people up to EUR 10.000 for climate initiatives in the Just Transition regions, region with high dependence on fossil fuels for instance. In doing so, it promotes participation of young people in the design and implementation of cohesion policy and in particular with regard to the just transition towards climate neutrality, a greener Europe. By March 2022, a beneficiary will be selected to organise and manage **a call for projects dedicated to young people** who are willing to develop and implement ideas that allow persons with limited awareness and understanding of the impact of "green transition" to benefit from it. More info: [call proposals en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

D13. Youth Manifesto

DG REGIO, in cooperation with the Interreg Volunteer Youth, as well as young people of Macro Regional Strategies piloted a core group who elaborated the **[Manifesto for young people by young people to shape the European cooperation policy](#)** with 12 recommendations. This was done by **collecting their ideas on how to improve territorial cooperation, in order to make young generations feel heard by policy makers at EU, national, regional and local level as**

well as by Managing Authorities, project beneficiaries and civil society organisations. Based on the ideas collected by European Commission staff via targeted surveys, polls and online group discussions with young people from all over Europe (i.e. EU, outermost regions and its neighbouring countries), young people consider that Macro Regional Strategies and Interreg programmes can make a difference in 5 main fields: improving young people's skills & increase access to training opportunities; boosting employment for young people; simplification of rules, better communication via digital tools; addressing climate change; boosting citizens' engagement in policy making & implementation. More info: [youth manifesto interreg en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

D14. ERA Plastic Pirates – Go Europe! Citizen science initiative and campaign

Young people will learn and act to tackle plastic pollution through the ERA *Plastic Pirates – Go Europe!* citizen science initiative, which will be rolled out on a European scale in 2022 in support of the EU Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters. The citizen science campaign will **involve young Europeans in tackling the sources and finding measures to mitigate the problem of plastic pollution**, as well as raising awareness on plastic pollution in rivers, seas and oceans. Thanks to the initiative, schoolchildren will access sampling kits and educational material on plastic pollution. More info: [About the campaign | Plastic Pirates \(plastic-pirates.eu\)](#)

D15. EU4Ocean Coalition and & Hack4Oceans

European youth can get involved in the bottom-up, inclusive European Ocean Literacy Coalition EU4Ocean, that connects diverse actors contributing not only to ocean literacy, but also to the sustainable management of the ocean, marine policy science and more. EU4Ocean's Youth4Ocean Forum in particular (<https://ec.europa.eu/ocean-literacy/youth4ocean>) encompasses a variety of activities and offers connection and networking opportunities to youth that are interested in ocean sustainability. The **Hack4Oceans 2022 event**, part of MARE's Ocean Literacy activities, is a youth innovation event that will allow European university students to work together with Blue Economy professionals and experts to learn, explore and co-create opportunities for prosperity through ocean conservation and the sustainable use of marine resources. More info: [Homepage - hack4oceans](#)

D16. EU Beach Cleanup Campaign - 2022 Youth Edition

Every year, the EU organises an ocean-activism and awareness-raising campaign - #EUBeachCleanup - featuring events across the world. Teaming up with the United Nations and the bluest of friends, the Smurfs, the EU strongly believes that we can all make a real difference for our blue planet, taking responsible action as individuals and collectively. This year, in celebration of the 2022 European Year of Youth, we are more than ever focusing on how to empower young people to become active in the campaign. The younger generations can turn activism into societal and policy change, and help protect our oceans, rivers and beaches from plastic pollution. We are therefore creating a special kit for students and young people wishing to

organize their own event within their universities and communities completely autonomously. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

D17. All Atlantic Ocean Youth Ambassador Programme

The Youth Ambassador Programme of the All Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance, supporting young generations' engagement to **promote a healthy Ocean** while **developing their professional skills**, will also be actively contributing to the objectives of the Year of Youth. As part of the Year of Youth, a Youth Ambassadors Forum will be organised in September 2022, that will bring together the ambassadors of the different sea basins. The All-Atlantic Ocean Youth Forum will be a major vehicle for promoting young people's competences and motivation, as well as enhancing communication and outreach to youth on environmental topics that are of concern for them. More info: [AANCHOR - AAOYA Activities 2021 -2022 \(allatlanticocean.org\)](https://aanchor-aooya.org)

D18. European Youth Energy Day

EYED is part of the European Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW) which is organised by CINEA together with ENER every year. EYED gives young participants a chance to discuss and get involved in the sustainable energy transition and provides concrete input on the policy theme of EUSEW. More info: [European Youth Energy Day | EU Sustainable Energy Week \(eusew.eu\)](https://eusew.eu)



E. FLAGSHIP DIGITAL

93% of European youngsters use online internet daily (Eurobarometer). The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an acceleration of digital trends. Although “digital natives”, young people, especially those under 18, deserve support and empowerment for a life where the distinction between online and offline is becoming more and more blurred. The more and more digitalised world means new opportunities, but also new challenges to young people, notably concerning digital skills, digital divide, and potential harmful content on the internet. Education and capacity building is urgently needed to accelerate the digital transition and equip young people with the necessary knowledge and skills needed to get by in a digitalised world.

Main Initiative (E1): Updated Better Internet for Children Strategy

The Better Internet for Children Strategy will be updated during the European Year of Youth in March. Children and young people have been heavily involved in the creation process contributing to the conception of the Strategy, and will have a major role in implementation through youth panels, peer to peer activities, focus groups, campaigns, and co-creation with industry. They will also help assess the implementation of the Strategy. Youth participation will feature high at the launch event of the new Strategy, as well as in other main events such as Safer Internet Day, Safer Internet Forum and the “Back to School” campaign. More info: [European Strategy for a better Internet for children | Shaping Europe’s digital future \(europa.eu\)](#)

Additional Initiatives:

E2. Digital literacy to tackle disinformation as part of the ‘Back to school’ campaign

Action 7 of the Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027 focuses on promoting digital literacy and developing skills to tackle disinformation among young people. As part of the ‘Back to school’ campaign, specific guidelines for teachers and educators will be launched in September 2022, in order to raise awareness across the European education and training community. Those guidelines will contribute to enabling **education and training as a space of empowerment of young people to benefit and contribute to the world of online debate and discussion**, critically engaging with information on one side and creating and sharing their own content on the other. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

E3. Virtual exchanges in higher education and youth

Erasmus+ finances virtual exchanges projects with the Southern Mediterranean, the Western Balkans, the Eastern Neighbourhood, Russia and Sub-Saharan Africa, with the first projects due to start in 2022. Projects financed consist of **online people-to-people activities that promote intercultural dialogue and soft skills development between young people from the EU (plus**

third countries associated to Erasmus+) and the **third countries** of the regions outlined above. More info: [Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange | European Youth Portal \(europa.eu\)](#)

E4. Children and youth consumer protection on digital markets

The consumer objective of the Single Market Programme will finance **awareness raising activities on unfair commercial activities to which children and youth are exposed online**. These practices are often not transparent, for example: influencers' blogs, targeted and manipulative recommendations, use of virtual currencies on social media and online games, etc. Furthermore increased "gamification" of online commercial activities, including through the "Metaverse" generate new fairness challenges. This project will be carried out through Better Internet for Kids Centres. Additionally, European Consumer Centres, which provide free of charge advice to consumers who are purchasing across borders, will run information campaigns while national consumer law enforcement authorities will pay particular attention to advertising practices targeting children. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

E5. European Robotics Week

The European Robotics Week is an event organised by euRobotics. Since 2011, the Week has offered **one week of various robotics related activities across Europe for the general public, including young people**, highlighting the growing importance of robotics in a wide variety of application areas and the growing importance of skills in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Tens of thousands of school children in Europe, who may have no interest in technical subjects, change their mind as a result of these essential interactions. The interaction with robots complements the overall teaching experience and helps to motivate young people of any age to learn not only the basics of STEM, but also to direct them on to an independent exploratory, self-motivated learning path. The last Week took place in 2020. More info: https://www.eu-robotics.net/robotics_week/

E6. International AI Doctoral Academy

The AI Doctoral Academy initiative has been created for **offering access to knowledge and expertise and attracting PhD talents in Europe**. Its goals are to coordinate its partners' PhD/postdoc educational and training activities on AI, to become a world-level reference for anything related to AI education (and research), to define mechanisms in order to create inter-university sharing of educational assets in the area of PhD-level AI, and to envisage future efforts towards a charter for European universities to share, accredit, and recognise, PhD education credits in the area of AI. More info: [AI4media project](#)

E7. Next Generation Safer Internet: Technologies to identify digital Child Sexual Abuse Material

Combating child sexual abuse in all its forms is a priority to the European Commission. Digital technologies have made it easier, quicker and cheaper than ever before for predators to contact and groom children, to produce high quality digital images and videos of acts of abuse, and to

share and trade this online child sexual abuse material (CSAM) on an unprecedented scale, both on the open internet and the dark web. One of the main challenges in the fight against online CSAM is the vast amount of potential new CSAM that Hotlines – where anybody can report illegal online material such as CSAM anonymously - and Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) have to assess and classify as illegal prior to takedown. Relying on human analysts alone to assess such vast quantities of material slows up both law enforcement investigations and notice and takedown actions. There is therefore an urgent need to further develop and test AI tools which support the classification of CSAM. **A new research and innovation project under Horizon Europe - cluster 4 is planned to start towards the end of 2022** to create AI tools and technologies (including classifiers) to allow identification, categorisation and prioritisation of Child Sexual Abuse Material. Such AI classifier tools will help law enforcement agencies, INHOPE Hotlines, and industry to analyse the vast amounts of digital CSAM more efficiently through automated identification and prioritization, thus leading to swifter takedown of illegal material by Hotlines and industry, and more effective investigations by LEAs. [More info: Funding & tenders \(europa.eu\)](#)

E8. Youth EU Datathon

EU Datathon is the annual competition organised by the Publications Office of the European Union. It invites people who are passionate about data to develop new, innovative apps that make good use of the EU's numerous open datasets and demonstrate the power of open data. These apps should showcase opportunities for concrete business models or social enterprises. Participating teams are also expected to find suitable new approaches and solutions to help EU achieve through the use of open data important political goals set by the European Commission. Young people are particularly encouraged to participate and display the potential that open data presents in today's society and, of course, to show their creativity and talent. In 2021, some 80% of the finalists were under the age of 35 and a total of 33 countries were represented in the competition.

2022 will introduce a special Youth EU Datathon Award. The competition rules will be published at the beginning of 2022 and the announcement of the awards will happen during a final event in October. It will feature four challenges where one will be specifically focused on youth issues. The total prize fund for the winning teams will be EUR 200 000. [More info: About - EU Datathon - Publications Office of the EU \(europa.eu\)](#)



F. FLAGSHIP CULTURE

29% of young Europeans look at culture when they are asked what creates a feeling of community in the EU (Eurobarometer). Europe's cultural heritage is a rich and diverse mosaic of cultural and creative expressions, an inheritance from previous generations of Europeans and a legacy for those to come. Cultural heritage and creativity enrich the individual lives of citizens, are driving forces for the cultural and creative sectors and play a role in creating and enhancing Europe's social capital. The European Year of Youth will connect young people with culture through music and will encourage them to visit cultural heritage sites around Europe.

Main Initiative (F1): Youth angle in the new mobility scheme for artists in the EU

In 2022, the Commission will launch a new mobility scheme to offer artists and cultural professionals the opportunity to go abroad for artistic or professional development or for international collaborations, to find new audiences, to co-produce, co-create or present their works. The European Year of Youth provides an excellent opportunity to develop a special youth angle in the scheme. Thanks to this scheme launched in 2022, **thousands of young and emerging artists will be able to travel, perform and work across Europe over the next years.** More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

Additional Initiatives:

F2. Music and cultural events in 2022

The European Year of Youth will be promoted through **a series of cultural and artistic events (summer festivals, music concerts, artistic performances, etc.) organised throughout 2022** at European or at national level, in particular in cooperation with Member States and stakeholders active in the Creative Europe Programme. This will bring Europe closer to its youth and bring the young closer to Europe's vibrant culture and heritage. Music plays a fundamental role in young people's development and often represents a window to the everyday social, psychological and cultural needs of contemporary youth. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

F3. Youth4Regions for aspiring journalists

After five editions, the Youth4Regions programme, which provides training, mentorship and work experience to young journalists, will expand in 2022 and include a new branch for young photojournalists in their early careers. The programme includes the Megalizzi-Niedzielski prize, which rewards aspiring journalists that show a strong attachment to the EU and its values. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

F4. Youth discovers culture thanks to DiscoverEU in 2022

Learning about European culture is at the heart of DiscoverEU. The action does not only offer 18-year-olds a travel pass but also encourages connection and cultural dialogue among young people across Europe. In this context, a **‘Cultural Route’ will be published on the European Youth Portal in the first half of 2022**, with an aim to encourage young people to embark on a cultural journey during their DiscoverEU travel. The route will highlight places of cultural interest. Some of those cities will be European Capitals of Culture or the hosts of European Heritage Label sites. In addition, **as of summer 2022, the DiscoverEU travellers will receive a card allowing them to get a discount on many cultural activities** across Europe. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.



G. FLAGSHIP HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND SPORTS

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an unprecedented increase in mental health distress, particularly among young people. Well-being calls for a holistic approach to policy, bringing together sport, health, food and other policies. A healthy lifestyle is first and foremost about being aware of its importance, but many people are facing barriers of different kinds, for instance their financial situation or a lack of information. The promotion of a healthy and active lifestyle at a young age is key to help reduce non-communicable diseases at a later stage in life.

Main Initiative (G1): *HealthyLifeStyle4All* Youth Ideas Labs

The Commission will launch ***HealthyLifeStyle4All* Youth Ideas Labs** at the next EU Sport Forum (June 2022 in Lille, France) **to encourage young people** to explore new ideas collectively and to challenge them to come up with innovative proposals to entice all generations to change lifestyles and promote inclusive approaches in particular in the context of the pandemic recovery. The Youth Ideas Labs will gather young students, researchers, athletes, experts and other interested young people from the fields contributing to and/or promoting healthy lifestyles and well-being. The youth participants will be asked to define challenges and ideas during the Forum, and afterwards elaborate them into fully-fledged proposals among which they would select those to be presented during the European Week of Sport in September. Entertaining and sport-inspired activities will be organised and key-note high-level speakers will be invited (EU Commissioner and French Minister of Sport, representatives from the European Parliament and international organisations, etc.). More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

Additional Initiatives:

G2. Promoting mental health

This action will provide support to stakeholders in implementing best practices **promoting children and adolescent mental health and well-being**, with a focus on vulnerable groups, such children living in deprived areas. It will contribute to giving young people more and better opportunities for the future, in line with the activities of the 2022 European Year of Youth. Two calls for proposals will be launched in the first quarter of 2022, implementing best practice(s) to 1) improve life skills and social, psychological and emotional resources among socially vulnerable **children and adolescents** and 2) to support mental health and wellbeing **of young people** and their families in vulnerable groups. More info: https://ec.europa.eu/assets/sante/health/funding/wp2022_en.pdf.

G3. Tobacco-Free Generation

Available data shows that more than half of smokers began smoking before the age of 18. To **prevent the next generation of Europeans from suffering the gruesome consequences of nicotine addiction, the Commission must prioritise protecting young people.** This happens through rigorous enforcement of the EU tobacco control framework and its adaptation to new developments and market trends, including stricter rules on novel products. Europe's Beating Cancer Plan has put forward a series of actions from 2021 to help create a 'Tobacco-Free Generation' where less than 5% of the population uses tobacco by 2040, compared to around 25% today. (Source: [Eurobarometer February 2021](#)) Concrete actions towards achieving Tobacco-free Europe that are currently in the pipeline include: Reviewing Tobacco Products Directive, Reviewing Tobacco Taxation Directive, Reviewing the legal framework on cross border purchases of tobacco by private individuals, an Update of Council Recommendation on smoke-free environments and further work on enforcement of EU laws and full implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. **More info:** [2021-2025 cancer-roadmap_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

G4. Fight against child sexual abuse

In 2022, DG HOME will continue to implement the initiatives of the EU Strategy for a more effective fight against child sexual abuse (CSA strategy), where a child is a person under age 18. The negative consequences in the short and long term for the victims of child sexual abuse (e.g. psychological distress, limiting academic and professional performance, substance abuse, etc) can severely limit the opportunities for youth to thrive and therefore should be taken into account and discussed during the European Year of Youth. The initiatives from the CSA strategy that should be considered include: upcoming **legislation on preventing and combatting the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children** (to be proposed in Q1 2022), which could establish obligations on companies to detect and report child sexual abuse online (and to put in place safety by design systems to better protect children online) and the possible establishment of an **EU centre to prevent and combat child sexual abuse**. The prevention function of the EU Centre will build on a network of researchers and practitioners on prevention of child sexual abuse, which is currently being developed. The network could provide a platform for young people to provide their views to relevant professionals and share their experiences to feed into the development of a broad range of prevention initiatives. During 2022 the Commission will assess whether the current legislation (Directive 2011/93) to combat child abuse and sexual exploitation, remains up to date to support EU Member States to protect children from these crimes, including online. To this end, DG HOME will launch in December 2021 a one year study supporting the evaluation and impact assessment of the Child sexual Abuse Directive. The input of youth, in particular on the online dimension of the crimes, would be very valuable. **More info:** [Child sexual abuse \(europa.eu\)](#)

G5. Anti-Racism Summit 2022

As part of the measures provided by the EU Anti-racism Action Plan, on March 2022 the Commission will organise a European Anti-Racism Summit with the involvement of EU

Institutions, Member States, civil society, equality bodies and grassroots organisations and youth. This second summit will include a High-Level panel discussion **focusing on racialised youth and the impact of racism and its consequent effects on their everyday life and future prospects**. The summit will also be a timely opportunity to revisit the importance of the need to continue our concerted efforts in the fight against racism in the EU, and highlight the important role all young people can play to this end. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

G6. EU Network of Youth Cancer Survivors

Under Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, one of the Commission's flagship initiatives and a main priority in the area of public health, the Commission announced the launch of work on the '**EU Network of Youth Cancer Survivors**' on 2 February 2022. The main aim of the initiative is to connect young cancer survivors and their families as well as informal and formal carers. The Network will help strengthen long-term follow-up in cancer care plans at national and regional level. Children, adolescents and young adult survivors will be nominated as Network representatives in Member States. More info: Europe's Beating Cancer Plan [A cancer plan for Europe | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

G7. Expert Group for supporting Well-Being at school and Pathway to School Success Recommendation

School education is key to help all children and young people reach their full potential and grow as responsible, engaged and active adults and citizens. When we guarantee that all children and young people have access to a quality and inclusive education, we are contributing to make our societies fairer, more inclusive and prosperous and build stronger economies. Two new Commission initiatives, Pathways to School Success and the Expert Group on supportive learning environments for groups at risk of underachievement and for supporting well-being at school, to be launched in 2022, aim to make an impact on the learning experience of young Europeans and make more effective, meaningful and rewarding.

Pathways to Schools Success aims at addressing simultaneously two EU-level targets on basic skills and early leaving from education and training and ensuring that all learners develop the competences they need for learning and in life, including through promoting positive, safe and supportive learning environments. It proposes a broader vision for promoting inclusion and school success. Three intertwined conditions - **engagement, achievement and well-being** - should be enhanced simultaneously, in order to promote better educational outcomes for all children and young people and increase their chances to succeed in education and in life. Pathways to school success will also pay increased attention to those groups that have been most difficult to reach, i.e. the most vulnerable groups and learners with multiple and complex needs.

The **Expert Group** for supporting Well-Being should outline policy guidance on developing supportive learning environments (with special attention for groups at risks), **promoting mental health and physical and emotional well-being, and for preventing bullying and violence at**

school, as well as proposals for effective up-take of successful practices in schools and recommendations for awareness raising activities at EU and national level.

Both Pathways to School Success and the Expert Group on Well-Being involve to some extent **consultations and/or discussions with young people** to know their views and hear their opinion, and raise their awareness on the policy initiative in the field of inclusive education.

More info: [Pathways to school success – tackling underachievement in basic skills and early leaving from education and training \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)



H. FLAGSHIP YOUTH AND THE WORLD

The European Year of Youth is not only relevant to the European youth, but to young people from all over the world. Through specific initiatives, the EU aims to provide opportunities for education, learning and exchanges, partnerships and dialogue between youth from the EU and partner countries, such as from the Eastern Partnership, the Western Balkans and Africa, and to increase the role of youth engagement in strategic communication and public diplomacy action.

Main Initiative (H1): Youth Guarantee for the Western Balkans

The Youth Guarantee is an activation scheme to ensure that young people (aged 15-29) in the Western Balkans receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship, or traineeship within a certain period after becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. It is a multi-year initiative focused on strategic reforms that will ensure partner countries develop effective measures to support young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) and ensure they are sustainably integrated into the labour market. In each economy of the Western Balkans, the scheme will be developed and implemented with the contribution from a wide range of stakeholders, including young people's organisations. The Commission has set up an EU-ILO Technical Assistance Facility in cooperation with the International Labour Organization and the European Training Foundation in order to support Western Balkans partners in this endeavor. The competent authorities are expected to present their implementation plans in 2022. [More info: declaration wb labour market integration young people final agreed.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

Additional Initiatives:

H2. EU4Youth Days

The NEAR EU4Youth Days is a series of events to showcase inspiring youth action, share knowledge and good practice, including from EU-funded youth programmes, with a view to advancing the strategic priorities of the EU action on youth in the Western Balkans, under the Eastern Partnership and in the Neighbourhood South. The public programme of the EU4Youth Days consists of one conference day (30 March) and a knowledge sharing day (31 March). Besides presenting key achievements and disseminating good practices under the EU-funded youth programmes from the NEAR regions, the EU4Youth Days aim to reflect on models to promote dialogue between young people and policy makers, including recent experiences gathered from implementation of Youth Policy Labs. With a total of 500+ participants expected to connect online, the EU4Youth Days would serve as an excellent platform to engage youth in all EU neighbourhood regions simultaneously. [More info: Home - EU4Youth Days](#) (Please also note that the event page of EU4Youth Days is still being updated over the coming weeks.)

H3. EU@UN Youth Delegates

The UN Youth Delegate programme aims at **enhancing the participation of young people in the work of the United Nations**. Each participating Member State or Observer selects one or several young persons to attend intergovernmental meetings as their representative. The selection processes, mandates and responsibilities of youth delegates are determined by each partner.

Two EU Youth Delegates will be selected each year to participate in the programme. While the United Nations and the African Union have youth representatives, there are currently no equivalent positions in the European Union. The participation of the EU in the UN Youth Delegate programme will allow the EU to be present in relevant Youth dialogues at the UN, to advocate for the interests and rights of young people in Europe and to increase the representation of the EU's youth. More info: [UN Youth Delegate Programme | United Nations For Youth](#)

H4. Youth Track ahead of the EU-AU Summit

In the run-up to the EU-AU Summit, the first edition of the [Africa-Europe week](#) aim at connecting people from both our continents, through various events gathering young people, civil society and the private sector from Africa and Europe. In particular, the Youth Track of the Africa-Europe Week will bring together young people from Africa, Europe and the diaspora to contribute to the future of the EU-Africa Partnership. The programme includes a series of events prior to the start of the Week (as of 7th February) and events during the Youth Day (14th February). All the sessions will be youth-led and include exchanges with decision-makers to amplify youth voices and foster meaningful participation.

The overall objective is to create the space for young people to discuss and share their ideas on the priorities of the Partnership. The joint outcomes of the Youth Track will be presented to the European and African leaders. More info: [Africa-Europe Week | International Partnerships \(europa.eu\)](#)



ANNEX : processes, action plans and similar ongoing initiatives

Youth Action Plan in EU external action

Following the Council Conclusions of 5 June 2020 on youth in external action, the **Youth Action Plan 2022 aims to ensure that EU external action contributes to youth empowerment, leadership and participation at political, social and economic levels**. It will make youth engagement and participation a core element of the EU's foreign policy and public diplomacy and it will facilitate young people's meaningful inclusion in decision and policy making processes. In terms of geographical scope, it will cover all regions and in terms of context, it will put forward youth related actions structured along the main priority topics of EU external action. The joint Communication on the Youth Action Plan (YAP) is expected to be adopted in September 2022. More info: [Youth Action Plan – involving young people in EU external action \(europa.eu\)](#)

Micro-credentials

The Commission adopted on 10 December 2021 a proposal for a Council Recommendation on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability. Micro-credentials certify the learning outcomes of short-term learning experiences, for example a short course or training. They offer a flexible, targeted way to help young people and people of all ages to develop the knowledge, skills and competences they need for their personal and professional development, in line with the Skills Agenda and the Communication on achieving a European Education Area by 2025. The European approach to micro-credentials offers key resources and guidance to support their value, quality, recognition, transparency, portability and uptake in a consistent and coherent way. In these ways, the European approach to micro-credentials contributes to a lifelong learning culture and increases the number of flexible learning opportunities available for young people. The proposal was adopted together with a proposal for a Council recommendation on Individual Learning Accounts that can support the development, use and uptake of micro-credentials. More info: [Q&A: Individual learning accounts and micro-credentials \(europa.eu\)](#)

Individual Learning Accounts

The Commission adopted on 10 December 2021 a proposal for a Council Recommendation on Individual learning accounts. These can be a real step-change in helping Member States and their education and training institutions to develop an enabling environment for all working age adults to upskill and reskill, and develop personal and professional skills, in line with the Skills Agenda and the Communication on achieving a European Education Area by 2025. Individual learning accounts provide access to financial support for training, validation and guidance. They incentivise the uptake of training: by giving young people the means for it, and by ensuring that it will pay off for them. The target group of the initiative includes young adults, who can benefit

from individual learning accounts to **develop the skillset they need to enter and make successful transitions in the labour market.** More info: [Q&A: Individual learning accounts and micro-credentials \(europa.eu\)](#)

Minimum Income initiative

The Action Plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights announced that the Commission will propose a **Council Recommendation on Minimum Incomes in 2022.** It will support Member States for establishing the appropriate policy mix of income support, activation and access to enabling services for people in different situations and needs, also reflecting the situation of young people. More info: [Income support - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

European Vocational Skills Week

The Commission will organise a European Vocational Skills Week campaign in 2022, after having organised 5 editions in previous years (2016 until 2020). The aim is to raise the attractiveness of vocational education and training (VET). The topic of the Week organised from 16-20 May 2022 will be dedicated to VET and the green transition. The Commission event will be organised on 18 and 19 May and will include an award ceremony. More info: [Homepage \(europa.eu\)](#)

EU Anti-racism Action Plan

On 18 September 2020, the European Commission adopted an ambitious EU Anti-racism Action Plan that sets out **a series of measures in the course of five years.** These measures cover a comprehensive range of policy areas including, among other things, employment, digitalization, media, youth, education and child protection. Measures also extend to EU's external relations and Commission's own personnel policy. The aim is to mainstream the fight against racism into all EU policies. More info: [EU Anti-racism Action Plan 2020-2025 | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

The LGBTIQ Strategy

This strategy addresses the inequalities and challenges affecting LGBTIQ people, setting out **a number of targeted actions, including legal and funding measures, for the next five years.** In addition, the strategy includes actions relevant for LGBTIQ children and young people and supports the fostering of best practice exchanges between Member States and experts on ensuring safe and inclusive education for all children, young people and adults. More info: [lgbtiq_strategy_2020-2025_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

EU Roma Strategic Framework and the 2021 Council Recommendation on Roma equality

The EU Roma Strategic Framework and the 2021 Council Recommendation on Roma equality, inclusion and participation, promote empowerment of, among others, Roma young people and children to overcome socio-economic gaps, fully exercise their rights, realise their potential and be active agents of change. In its EU Roma Strategic Framework, the Commission commits to organise a series of awareness-raising events focusing on Member States with large Roma communities, to fight stereotypes, promote cultural diversity, empower and highlight Roma children, young people and women as role models in diverse communities, and bring communities together. More info: [The new EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation \(full package\) | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

Network on prevention of child sexual abuse

In terms of continuous actions, DG HOME will continue working on **developing the network on prevention of child sexual abuse**. The network is envisaged to consist of several working groups, and once the network reaches its full potential, it could provide a platform for young people to communicate with relevant professionals, share their views and experiences to feed into the development of prevention initiatives. In addition, DG HOME's study supporting the evaluation and impact assessment of the Child sexual Abuse Directive (2011/93) will be completed in 2022, accompanied by an open public consultation in 2022. More info: [Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Network \(CSAPN\) \(europa.eu\)](#)

EU in my school

The initiative aims at making the local action and impact of the European Regional Development Policy more visible to local populations, specifically pupils of all ages (3-18 year old) and their families, as well as educational staff. The initiative seeks to engage the target audience in a light and playful manner that resonates with local realities and identities. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

Youth4Regions

Youth4Regions helps journalism students and young journalists discover what the EU is doing in their region and builds a community of journalists that are knowledgeable about and engaged with EU Cohesion Policy. The programme targets journalism students and journalists in their early careers and includes trainings on journalism and EU affairs, mentorship from established journalists, visits of media organisations and EU institutions, as well as work experience as journalists. The Megalizzi – Niedzielski prize is awarded under the Youth4Regions programme and aims to reward and encourage promising journalists. More info: [Youth4Regions – the programme for aspiring journalists - Regional Policy - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

New European Bauhaus Prize for Rising Stars

The Prize recognizes and celebrates existing achievements and supports the younger generation to further develop emerging concepts and ideas. It gives visibility to examples and concepts that illustrate how beautiful, sustainable, inclusive places already exist in our territories, our communities and in our practices, paving the way to the future. The Prize is for concepts or ideas submitted by young talents aged 30 or less. More info: [2021 Prizes \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)

Masterclass with the Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms

In this initiative the Commissioner regularly engages with PhD students and early career researchers from all over the EU and beyond to discuss future challenges of cohesion policy. These exchanges allow to stimulate reflections on the policy and gather the insights and perspectives of the young researchers. More info: Stay tuned for more soon.

