



The future of EU programmes and EU Youth Strategy

Business meeting of National Agencies for Youth
Madrid, 17th September 2023



European Youth Forum

- Largest platform of youth-led organisations in the world
- 100+ Member organisations: NYCs and INGYOs
- Regular consultations with our membership

Erasmus+

1) *Accessibility and Inclusion*

- **Creation of explicit definitions of the groups** considered as participants with fewer opportunities to facilitate access to information and targeting, and evaluation and monitoring.
- Addition of **inclusivity considerations in project budgets** (not just as a priority). E.g: sign language interpretation, tops-up for support young people with accessibility needs
- **Reinforcement of financial support** to Erasmus+ programme also in the **current programming period**.

2) *Broadening beyond the EU and involvement of all European youth*

- Broaden Erasmus+ to **involve as programme countries all willing non-EU European countries** that abide to the principles of democracy, human rights and rule of law
- Creation of a **special visa category** for participants of Erasmus+ projects that require so
- Increase funding from **DG INTPA & DG NEAR** into the programme
 - Mainstream it across all centralised grants - e.g. KA2 capacity building focuses only on Western Balkans and MENA now

Erasmus+

3) A youth lens on the administration, structure and budget

- **In general:**
 - Indexation of the overall budget as well as grants to account for **inflation**
 - **Increase** of the overall Erasmus+ **budget** beyond just indexation
 - Ensure the selection criteria of **evaluators** of Erasmus+ grants include having a **familiarity** with the sector relative to the grants they evaluate, and implement **common trainings** to ensure fairness and quality in project evaluation processes.
 - Types of costs - adaptation of **unit cost** to reality of actual travel costs in Europe
- **Decentralised grants:**
 - KA1 and KA2 Small-Scale Cooperations - lack of access for small and grassroots youth organisations & almost impossible for informal groups of young people - **reduced administrative** and bureaucratic **burden**
 - Clearer **guidelines** for NAs on documentation requirements and evaluation procedures to enable **comparability** of results across the programme countries - **transparency**

Erasmus+

3) A youth lens on the administration, structure and budget

- **Centralised grants:**
 - Access for youth organisations: Establish a **more defined selection criteria for youth organisations** in the field of youth:
 - *Youth-led European NGO led by democratically elected young people at its highest level of governance*
 - Establish structural seeds-/ **micro-granting schemes** managed by umbrella organisations (similar to DG NEAR and DG INTPA examples through financial support to third parties)
 - Increase the **transparency of grants funded by EACEA** by: including additional information on the lead applicant such as country of origin, amount of the grant allocated to the project; making the information user-friendly by integrating everything into a database accessible through one click.
 - Change the **evaluation** methodology for Erasmus+ grants from the 2 evaluators + 1 to 2 evaluators conciliating their scores

Erasmus+

4) Sustainability

- **Green top ups**
- **Sustainability** as an **objective** of the Erasmus+ Programme

5) Governance

- **Institutionalise involvement of representative civil society:** Creation of a **structured and regular funding mechanism** to connect the European Youth Forum, representatives of Erasmus+ beneficiaries in the field of youth with DG EAC and EACEA to discuss **technical implementation matters** and challenges
- Inclusion of European Youth Forum as **observers in Erasmus+ programming committee** meetings
 - Inclusion of National Youth Councils as observers in Erasmus+ programming committee meetings at national level

European Solidarity Corps (ESC)

1) *ESC as a youth programme*

The European Solidarity Corps serves as a space to access and acquire personal, educational, social, civic and professional competencies, particularly during such a key age as youth, **being a transitional period between being dependent on your caretaker to becoming fully independent.**

2) *Overall inclusivity of the programme*

- National Agencies should **target further in their communication, outreach and capacity-building youth organisations**, to ensure that they successfully engage in the programme across Europe.
- In the case of volunteering solidarity placements and solidarity projects, the **age limit to access the ESC should be lowered to 16 years** old in order to reflect the reality of volunteering on the ground.

European Solidarity Corps

3) Participation of third country nationals and legal residents in the EU in the ESC

- Specific **financial provisions for legal administrative support** should be provided for ESC placements and projects involving third country nationals or legal residents in the EU, young people from Erasmus+ Programme and Partner Countries, as well as for young refugees.
- A **special visa category for ESC participants** with fast-track, free of charge visa procedure should be established.

4) Budget envelope and funding rules

- The annual budget envelope should accommodate for the **rising inflation** with annual indexations.
- The **overall budget should also increase** not only accommodate for inflation but also to further invest youth volunteering opportunities across Europe, with **increased contributions** to the volunteers.

European Solidarity Corps

5) *Local and international impact*

- The strong local dimension of the programme is a welcome component and instrumental for its inclusivity.
- **Centralised grants for solidarity projects** (beyond the humanitarian strand and the Volunteering Teams in High Priority Areas) should be established, to adapt to the needs and realities of international youth organisations

6) *IT and functioning of online platform*

- Organisations should have access to **better sorting and filtering tools**.
- Overall the **IT platform** needs to be updated.

7) *Governance of the programme*

- The European Youth Forum should be included **as an observer without voting rights in the Programme Committee responsible for the management** of the European Solidarity Corps.
- At the national level, the National Agencies should **include representatives** from the country's **National Youth Council** in their governing or advisory structures.

EU Youth Strategy

1. ***Mainstreaming***
2. ***Future National Activities Planners***
3. ***EU Youth Dialogue***
4. ***EU Youth Coordinator***
5. ***EU Youth Strategy Platform***
6. ***Evidence-based policy-making***
7. ***Funding***

EU Youth Strategy

1. **Mainstreaming:**

- It should be evaluated to which degree this approach has been implemented by all policy areas and what other additional tools could be adopted to realise this objective.

2. **Future National Activities Planners**

- Potential for more collaboration to occur both multilaterally/bilaterally between MS, and at EU level, it would be advisable to map whether the European Commission could do more to aggregate the FNAP data and act on this to convene MSs at EU level to best practice share, set up expert groups, seminars etc.
- Engagement of youth organisations.

EU Youth Strategy

3. EU Youth Dialogue

- Meaningful participation. Explore whether the process is duly supported by the EU institutions, whether the outreach is actually increased as it was targeted by the EU Youth Strategy and whether the voices of young people were indeed **considered in decision-making processes** on all levels and on different policy fields.
- Inclusion of funding for INGYOs.
- Explore whether National Youth Councils are indeed in the driving seat in all the National Working Groups and whether National Youth Councils of the TRIO Presidencies receive adequate support for their increased tasks.

4. EU Youth Coordinator

- The role of the EU Youth Coordinator raised high expectations among the stakeholders. The evaluation should observe whether the current positioning within the EC structures is suitable to have genuine influence and to realise all the aspects desired from the role.

EU Youth Strategy

5. EU Youth Strategy Platform

- Explore whether this format is actually fitting the requirements of the platform and what would be needed to make it more active and useful and truly realise the potential of gathering all these stakeholders at different levels.

6. Evidence-based policy-making

- The European Youth Forum would suggest considering the inclusion of the [Youth Progress Index](#) as another tool that should be referenced on the youth portal and in the list of 'Statistics, indicators and data collection sources'.

7. Funding

- Youth organisations are identified as one of the key beneficiaries of grants to implement actions with and for young people. The mid term evaluation should explore whether these organisations are indeed receiving sufficient and sustainable funding that can ensure their proper operations.

**Thank you for you
attention!**

