



Fifth meeting of the EU Youth Stakeholders Group

15 October 2026, Online (10:00-12:00)

MEETING REPORT

On 15 October 2026, DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) organised the **fifth meeting** of [the EU Youth Stakeholders Group](#), a network launched in March 2025 as a legacy of the 2022 European Year of Youth, delivering on commitments made in the [Communication on the Year of Youth](#).

The meeting was moderated by Marta Markowska ([EU Youth Coordinator](#) in DG EAC) and attended by 75 members of the EU Youth Stakeholders Group (representatives from Member State Ministries, national youth councils, European youth organisations, stakeholders and EU institutions). The European Parliament, the General Secretariat of the Council, the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee were also represented.

DG EAC published the report, presentations and an overview of the Youth Check Consultations conducted on 15 October on the [European Youth Portal](#).

Highlights

Marta Markowska (EU Youth Coordinator) opened the meeting and briefly informed on the main policy messages brought to light in President Von der Leyen's State of the European Union speech (SOTEU) and implications for youth. The key themes highlighted in the SOTEU focused on the need to strengthen Europe's economy, the transformation of society due to advances in technology and AI, climate change and transition to toward clean, growing threats to democracy and, lastly, protection of children and young people online. Marta reminded the Group that the Commission Work Programme will be adopted shortly and will inform on the Commission's key policy initiatives for 2027.

Representatives of the Youth and Intergenerational Fairness Unit in DG EAC provided an overview of main policy initiatives and developments since the Group's previous meeting in Brussels in June as relates to the [Youth Policy Dialogues](#) (i.e. 31 dialogues took place in 2026, with 3 more coming), the [EU Youth Dialogue](#) (i.e. EU Youth Conference in Dublin in late September included the finalisation of the revision of the European Youth Goals), the [President's Youth Advisory Board](#) (i.e. July meeting focused on Youth policy priorities for post-2027), [Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness Strategy](#) (i.e. **Launch of [Pledge on Intergenerational Fairness](#)** on 13 October and **Day of Intergenerational Fairness** taking place on 16 November 2026), results of the [online public consultation](#) feeding into the post-2027 EU Youth Strategy (i.e. Over 6,000 replies with active citizenship, health/well-being and transition from education to employment indicated as top priorities

for next strategy), update on [Youth Check](#) (i.e. Twenty-four initiatives undergoing Youth Check in 2026 and list of initiatives for 2027 to be published in the spring), and **Irish Presidency** (i.e. Two sets of Council Conclusions on (i) empowering young people in an evolving information environment and (ii) Promoting youth spaces for young people in Europe to be adopted on 19-20 November during the Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Council).

The Group's members provided updates on their main achievements and projects.

Anu-Cristine Tokko from the **Estonian Ministry of Education and Research** reported that the Estonian Parliament recently backed lowering the voting age to 16 for European Parliament elections.

Audrey Frith from **Eurodesk** shared that the [Time to Move campaign](#) is currently underway, with 800 events taking place across Europe to inform young people about European opportunities. Eurodesk has also contributed to the EU Inclusion and Diversity Strategy.

Angelo Locatelli from the **National Youth Council of Luxembourg** noted that the organisation recently sent two open letters to the government, one on the [Multiannual Financial Framework](#) and another on [voting at 16](#) at communal level.

Daphne Scherer from the **European Parliament** reported that Parliament adopted a [Resolution](#) on the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy, following consultations led by rapporteur MEP Sabrina Repp.

Theodoros Barkas from the **Greek Ministry of Social Cohesion and Family Affairs** highlighted an upcoming vote in Greece on 22 October on banning social media use for young people under 15.

Alexander Kaul from **Junior Enterprise Europe** outlined progress on their policy hub, launched last year, which has already produced [two policy papers](#), with more expected this year. A new cohort is currently being onboarded, with training due to begin in autumn.

Gabor Berczeli from the **Robert Schuman Institute** said interest in the organisation's work is growing, with around 1,000 participants each year in its regular programmes.

Ines Likar from the **Youth Health Organisation** shared that a [Youth Policy Dialogue](#) with Commissioner Olivér Várhelyi was held in September in Portorož, Slovenia, focusing on the Safe Hearts Plan and cardiovascular health.

Clotilde Talleu from the **EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership** reported the development of several new [training kits](#) and tools, including on funding, financial management and project management, as well as a [self-assessment tool](#) on shrinking civic space. Work is also ongoing on a European code of ethics for youth work, expected in early 2027. The Partnership will host a seminar in Brussels in December on preparedness and peace education, and will launch a communication action, Voices for Youth Work, at the European Youth Work Conference in Dublin in November.

Panagiotis Chatzimichail from **OBESSU** presented ongoing advocacy and project work, including open letters and position papers on the MFF and EU programmes. OBESSU also issued a [statement](#) in support of protesting students and is preparing policy papers on civic education, citizenship skills

and mental health for December. Ongoing projects include [Skip the Barriers of International Mobility](#), [Safe and Ethical Use of Digital Tools in Youth Organization Work](#), [Youth4Change](#) and [DECITEL](#).

Selin Gurlemez from **YEU International** shared that the organisation is celebrating its 45th anniversary with a special magazine featuring stories from across generations of the network. YEU also published a [statement](#) on the targeting of youth, civil society and LGBTQI+ communities in Türkiye, and continues work on projects such as PoEM, BICYCLE, Art4U and LED, alongside reviewing its PET Guidelines and developing Safety Standards for more inclusive events.

Carmen Teubl-Kiviniemi from the **RAY Network** highlighted the [RAY Triangular Summit](#) in Dublin, which brings together 170 stakeholders from policy, practice and research. The event aims to strengthen evidence-based discussion on the future of European youth programmes and youth policy.

Marion Fernandez from the **European Youth Parliament** reported that two [flagship events](#) were recently held in Pordenone, Italy, and in Niš and Novi Sad, Serbia. Over the past year, the network has organised around 300 events across Europe and has led initiatives such as the [Rebuild Ukraine Ambassadors](#) programme and [Youth Together for Arctic Futures](#).

Furthermore, Willy Kokolo (Europe for Culture Unit, EAC.D1) presented an overview of what is foreseen for the upcoming **Artificial Intelligence Strategy for the Culture and Creative Sectors** due to be adopted by the Commission in the first half of 2027. A **Youth Check consultation** was implemented on the Strategy during which the Group's members worked in sub-groups with a view to address the question: *What are **three key messages or priorities** that young people would like to **share with EU policymakers** working on the Artificial Intelligence Strategy for the Cultural and Creative Sectors?*

The Group highlighted that AI must be used in a safe, fair, transparent, and inclusive way. AI-generated content should represent diverse communities, and systems must be designed to avoid reinforcing stereotypes or discrimination. There must be clear mechanisms for reporting harmful AI generated content, along with a commitment to the principle of safety by design. AI companies should be accountable for their environmental impact. Young creatives must receive appropriate credit for their work, have the ability to opt out of their work being used to train AI models, and receive adequate compensation if their work is used for this purpose. Transparency regarding the data used to develop AI content is needed, and AI-generated content itself must be clearly labelled. The Group highlighted that the use of AI may present opportunities, but it is important that these opportunities are accessible to all, rather than further widening any gaps. Further information and guidance, through both formal and informal education, are needed to develop citizens' understanding of AI and strengthen critical thinking skills. This is essential so that people can identify disinformation and make informed decisions.

Lastly, the Group's members worked in **sub-groups to provide feedback on the objectives and operational aspects** of the Groups since its launch in March 2025 with a view to provide ideas on the following two questions: (i) *What worked well in 2025/2026 with a view to identify best practices as relates to the EU Youth Stakeholders Group?*; And (ii) *What areas require further reflection?*

The Youth Stakeholders Group highlighted several strong practices that positively supported its work and impact. A key achievement was making European Commission processes more accessible to young people, notably by creating direct opportunities to engage with Commission departments and helping youth stakeholders better understand and contribute to EU policymaking. Networking and mutual learning also worked well and gave participants a valuable space to exchange updates, share practices, and provide constructive feedback. The Microsoft Teams channel was noted as a useful information hub. The group's broad and diverse membership — including national youth councils, NGOs, ministries and researchers — was another major strength, ensuring a wide range of perspectives and supporting collaboration across sectors and levels. The inclusion of Youth Check consultations also is appreciated, while practical support from the Commission and opportunities for European-level visibility helped strengthen cooperation within the youth sector.

In addition, participants highlighted the need for clearer information on how different EU youth participation mechanisms connect, as well as for a more structured way to track how their input has influenced outcomes. Some also noted that the range of groups represented in the Group may be too broad to be useful for youth checks on more technical topics. Participants called for greater opportunities for youth organisations to steer the group, including through youth facilitation of meetings and involvement in agenda-setting. The group felt some issues require clarification, such as whether the involvement of national ministries is necessary for the youth check consultation element, and how decisions are made on whether an issue is addressed through a youth check within the group or through a youth policy dialogue. Lastly, participants expressed a need for more time for discussion during meetings.

Next steps:

The members of the EU Youth Stakeholders Group were encouraged to continue exchanges on the online Teams Channel of Group and to further explore the results of the online public consultation feeding into the post-2027 EU Youth Strategy. They were encouraged to check out the Eurobarometer on Youth and Democracy (to be published by end of this year) and reminded that the report and all presentations from the meeting would be available on the European Youth Portal.

The next meeting of the Group is foreseen in early 2027.