



# Report on the Youth Policy Dialogue with Magnus Brunner, European Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration

Youth Policy Dialogue with Commissioner Magnus Brunner

Date: 8 January 2026

Location: AHS Heustadelgasse in Vienna, Austria



## Introduction

The Youth Policy Dialogue in Vienna brought together over a hundred young people from Austria to discuss the following topics with European Commissioner Magnus Brunner: Erasmus+ and opportunities for young people, migration, the growing threat of extremism in the EU, including antisemitic and anti-Muslim views, drug-related crime and its impact on young people, and expectations for the future of the EU.

The meeting took place on 8 January 2026 at the AHS Heustadelgasse in Vienna, Austria and was moderated by Benedikt Weingartner. The topics were chosen in accordance with the portfolio of Commissioner Brunner, covering the main aspects of his mandate.

## Summary of the Youth Policy Dialogue (In person-meeting)

The event brought together multiple youth panellists and featured lively interaction with the audience. The exchange explored a broad spectrum of issues linked to the EU's policy priorities and the Commissioner's portfolio.

One panellist drew attention to the successes of the Erasmus+ programme, stressing its value in giving young people opportunities to study, work and gain life experience abroad. An audience participant echoed this view, noting that Erasmus+ helps younger generations broaden their horizons and fosters a deeper appreciation of Europe's cultural diversity and common identity.

Regarding migration, another youth panellist outlined the difficulties the EU has encountered in managing illegal arrivals. He observed that administrative processes are often time-consuming and that illegal migration places a disproportionate burden on certain Member States. The Commissioner explained the difference between illegal and legal migration and reaffirmed that tackling people-smuggling remains a key EU priority. He emphasised that decisions on who may enter Europe must be taken by the EU and its Member States, rather than by criminal organisations. At the same time, the Commissioner highlighted the need to guarantee fair and efficient asylum and international protection procedures for those in genuine need. In this context, both the Commissioner and an audience member underlined the importance of solidarity between Member States.

Another panellist reflected on his own migration background and pointed to the necessity of improving and speeding up the recognition of qualifications acquired outside the EU. He argued that more efficient systems would enable newcomers to access employment sooner and apply their professional skills more effectively.

The conversation also touched on security, digital transformation and radicalisation. One panellist noted that online platforms and digital technologies have facilitated the spread of extremist narratives. While



stressing the need to prevent extremism and terrorism, she also warned that fundamental rights, including privacy, must be safeguarded. To meet these challenges, she highlighted the role of digital skills, education and media literacy at European level.

Social issues affecting younger generations were also addressed. One panellist raised concerns about substance abuse among young people and called for stronger action at EU level. In response, the Commissioner explained that EU efforts focus on limiting drug trafficking into Europe, particularly via ports, while also working to improve access to treatment by simplifying relevant regulatory frameworks.

In the closing round, the panellists shared their personal views on what the European Union stands for. Recurrent ideas included peace, democracy and opportunity, the value of unity in a more challenging global environment, mutual support, and the importance of stability and the rule of law.



## Annex

Official photos: <https://www.apa-fotoservice.at/galerie/39675/>

Article on the school website: <https://sway.cloud.microsoft/omKUSbLAln6b6iWb?ref=Link>

Instagram reel Commissioner Brunner: [https://www.instagram.com/brunner\\_magnus/reel/DTgEGdnCO\\_c/](https://www.instagram.com/brunner_magnus/reel/DTgEGdnCO_c/)

LinkedIn Commissioner Brunner: [https://de.linkedin.com/posts/magnus-brunner-26761815-die-ereignisse-des-jahresanfangs-haben-es-activity-7416184443675353088-EsK?utm\\_source=li\\_share&utm\\_content=feedcontent&utm\\_medium=g\\_dt\\_web&utm\\_campaign=copy](https://de.linkedin.com/posts/magnus-brunner-26761815-die-ereignisse-des-jahresanfangs-haben-es-activity-7416184443675353088-EsK?utm_source=li_share&utm_content=feedcontent&utm_medium=g_dt_web&utm_campaign=copy)

Instagram reel Representation: [https://www.instagram.com/eukommission\\_at/reel/DThySF4CL9I/](https://www.instagram.com/eukommission_at/reel/DThySF4CL9I/)

X post Representation: <https://x.com/eukommwien/status/2009308536266784842>