



**Youth  
Goals**

**EUYD10**

**EU YOUTH CONFERENCE  
IN ALICANTE, SPAIN**

**Final Conference  
Report:  
Consultation on  
Inclusion**

**Implemented under the  
Spanish Presidency of the  
Council of the EU**

Title: **EUYD10 EU Youth Conference in Alicante, Spain. Final Conference Report: Consultation on Inclusion**

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## Executive Summary

The EU Youth Conference (EUYC) was held in Alicante, Spain, from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023 during the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU, launching the 10th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue (EUJD10) with a focus on Youth Goal no.3, "*Enable and ensure the inclusion of all young people in society.*" The conference aimed to serve as a major consultation event, addressing barriers, support structures, necessary changes in the realm of inclusion, as well as contributions by the youth field. Participants, aided by a web-based application, contributed written outcomes to inform the EUJD10 consultation phase report, thus shaping the overall EUJD10 outcomes. This report summarises the conference discussions and includes verbatim outcomes from working groups, along with the full conference programme in the annex.

In the discussion on barriers, several key challenges were highlighted by the EUYC Alicante participants. These included the absence of vital connections, be they among different generations, geographical disparities, or in terms of perceptions. Furthermore, the lack of resources, encompassing financial constraints, housing issues, skill shortages, and information deficits, were all pointed out. Insufficient recognition was another issue, not only concerning the competences acquired but also in acknowledging professionals in the youth field. Access obstacles, whether in education, infrastructure, or information, were also noted, alongside a shortage of initiatives addressing exclusion and inequality on the EU, national, and other levels. Moreover, the lack of diversity in school classrooms and the digital divide, involving disparities in hardware and software access as well as digital competency, were identified as barriers.

Regarding the necessary changes, the EUYC Alicante participants pointed out the need for complex approaches. This included mainstreaming youth policy, ensuring the active involvement of young people at all stages of policymaking, from design to implementation and evaluation. The focus needs to be on evidence-based, cross-sectoral youth policy which is co-managed by youth themselves. Universal income was suggested as a tool to combat exclusion in a broad sense, and improved funding across various domains, such as healthcare and public transport, was highlighted. Establishing outreach structures with youth and youth field experts, offering comprehensive education through non-formal learning and capacity building, addressing misinformation and the digital divide, enhancing access, particularly in mental healthcare, promoting transparency in social media algorithms, and setting EU-wide standards for public transportation were all emphasised as essential changes.

EUYC Alicante participants also underscored several youth work priorities. They called for increased support, resources, and awareness around working with diverse youth groups, emphasizing inclusion and intersectionality. They highlighted the importance of nurturing active listening, establishing trust, and creating safe spaces for youth participation. Recommendations included engagement with marginalized youth, intergenerational learning, and citizenship competences. Additionally, participants suggested measures to enhance the accessibility of EU mobility schemes. For the youth field generally, they proposed networking platforms, cultural exchange via EU mobility schemes, critical thinking skills, diverse consultation activities, representation support, policymaker engagement, and revised inclusion criteria. Outreach methods covered sports, arts events, social media, foster homes, peer learning, NGO networking, and more. Further suggestions involved strengthening civic education, implementing Advisory Councils on Equality and Inclusion, rural youth outreach, the EU Youth Test, support for national youth councils, increased interaction between young people and EU decision-makers, transportation funding for rural youth, urban accessibility improvements, and positive discrimination approaches.

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## Introduction

The EU Youth Conference (EUYC) took place in Alicante, Spain on 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023 under the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU. It was the first EUYC under the Trio Presidency Spain-Belgium-Hungary and it introduced the 10<sup>th</sup> Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue (EUYD). The thematic framework of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue (EUYD10) was defined by Youth Goal no.3 “Enable and ensure the inclusion of all young people in society” and summarised under the title “WE NEED YOUTH”.

The objective of the EUYC Alicante was to serve as a major consultation event and therefore to contribute to the consultation phase of the EUYD10. This was done by dividing participants in to working groups which deliberated on three key guiding questions defined by the Trio Presidency, namely on barriers, support structures, and necessary changes in the domain of inclusion. Youth delegates worked towards creating written outcomes which are subsequently to be taken into account when compiling the overall EUYD consultation phase report, therefore allowing the EUYC Alicante participants to contribute to shaping general EUYD10 outcomes and impacts. The participants of the EUYC Alicante were supported by a web-based application in which the agenda, profiles of all participants and speakers, as well as videos and photos were shared.

This report summarises the key discussions from the EUYC Alicante, and it also provides verbatim outcomes of the working group efforts, as well as the full conference programme in the annex.

## Diversity Survey

The EUYC Alicante participants were offered a chance to participate in a diversity survey where several questions concerning the background of the various delegates were asked. In total, 106 participants took part in the survey, constituting a response rate of 48.4%. It is important to keep this response rate in mind as it clearly shows that not all of the EUYC Alicante participants took up the opportunity to fill in the diversity survey and all results only refer to those who kindly did.

Only a small minority of survey respondents was aged 16-18 (7%), while most respondents were aged 19-25 (41%) and over 30 (31%), with a rather large group of respondents aged 26-30 (22%). Most of the survey respondents were female (58%) with only single percentages among those who identified as other gender or preferred not to answer.

31% of the survey respondents claim to have been victims of hate speech and 44% of them claim to have been victims of discrimination. When it comes to belonging to various minorities, survey respondents claimed to belong to the following ones:

- Ethnic minority: 11%
- Religious minority: 5%
- LGBT minority: 19%
- Linguistic minority: 7%
- Living with a disability: 6%
- Living with long-term health conditions: 18%
- Living in a rural or remote area: 19%

Only 3% of the survey respondents fell into the category of young people not in employment, education, or training (NEETs), with 57% of respondents working full time, 28% working part time, and 37% being in full time education. More than half of the survey respondents claimed to come from families with university backgrounds (54%), while 17% of the survey participants were deeply worried about financial matters in their everyday lives. Lastly, 41% of respondents claimed to have been newcomers to the EUYD processes, with the EUYC Alicante being their first ever activity within the EUYD context.

## Official Opening

**Mr. David Veloso**, the Director General of the Institute for Youth of Spain, welcomed all participants and thanked the Spanish Youth Council for their help in designing and implementing the EUYC Alicante. He stressed that Alicante is a symbolic space, on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea symbolising openness. He stressed the role of the European Youth goals in setting the agenda of the youth policy in Europe, and especially in events and processes which invite young people to take part in democratic deliberations, making it more possible for the policymakers to listen to the demands of young people. Mr. Veloso mentioned the need to include young people of all genders, devote energy to mental health challenges young people face, and the need to tackle lack of opportunities as well as the climate crisis, both of which influence young people to a large extent. Mr. Veloso also underlined that the current EUYD10 cycle is focusing on improvements in society, inclusion, and the commitment not to leave anyone behind, be it women, LGBT community, or youth from immigrant backgrounds. He also thanked the other Presidency countries for their kind support in preparing and implementing the EUYC Alicante.

**Ms. Andrea González Henry**, President of the National Youth Council of Spain, expressed gratitude to the policymakers who are present not only at the EUYC Alicante, but also during the wider EUYD10 processes, and stressed the gratefulness for being invited to co-design and co-implement the EUYC Alicante. She welcomed all youth delegates and recognised also the importance of the presence of the delegates from the EU candidate countries at the EUYC Alicante. She underscored the role of youth councils in all phases of political processes, especially in the development of policies, and in their implementation and evaluation. Ms. Henry further mentioned the negative impacts of omitting youth in policymaking and stated that youth delegates are present to make their voices heard, committing to making the world of the future to be better than the one we have today. Late age of youth independence, increasing mental health issues and suicide rates, climate change, gender inequality, and many other topics were mentioned as key challenges to tackle, all of them linking closely with the topic of social inclusion. Furthermore, she stressed that policies should be critically explored with respect to how adult-centred they are and what that means for youth. Ms. Henry welcomed everyone to enjoy the deliberation processes as well as their stay in Alicante.

Conference facilitators **Ms. Clara Drammeh** and **Ms. Covadonga Salvador** introduced various groups of participants to each other, initiated first plenary deliberations on various aspects of inclusion, and subsequently invited next speakers to the stage.



## Getting to know the EUYD and the 10<sup>th</sup> Cycle of the EUYD

**Ms. Biliana Sirakova**, the EU Youth Coordinator attending the EUYC Alicante on behalf of the European Commission, introduced colleagues from other EU institutions who also attended the EUYC Alicante, and continued to introduce the EUYD as a long-term youth participation process taking place within the EU and being supported by the EU with a long history of being implemented for 13 years (since 2010). She stressed the general priorities of the EUYD, namely: youth participation, youth perspective in policymaking, and European citizenship and sense of belonging. Ms. Sirakova also linked the EUYD to the current EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, stressing that the EUYD is one of the implementation instruments of the EU Youth Strategy. She also summarised the origins of the EUYD, underlining the importance of key policy documents, such as the 2001 European Commission White Paper on Youth, and also showcased outcomes of the different cycles of the EUYD (e.g., various Council documents adopted as a result of the EUYD). She outlined the key processes which take place during each EUYD cycle, and also stressed more recent developments such as more precise objectives, presence of youth researchers to support the whole process, and also the leading role of the national youth councils in the National Working Groups of the EUYD.

**Mr. Nicholas Kujala**, Board Member of the European Youth Forum (YFJ), welcomed the participants to the EUYC in Alicante. He stressed the extraordinary circumstances of the current world stage: the COVID pandemic, the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and many others, and thanked everyone for their resilience in keeping up the work towards youth participation. He underlined the importance of thousands of young people who take part in national consultations during the EUYD, providing guidance to policymakers with respect to youth priorities. He stressed the importance of including young people in policymaking at all levels, and especially at the EU level, stressing important developments such as the Youth Guarantee, or the European Youth Goals which are directly linked to former EUYD processes. Awareness of EUYD results among the decision-makers is key for such developments to occur, Mr. Kujala pointed out, and he stressed the role of the YFJ in designing and organising the EUYD processes, including the EUYCs, such as representing institutional memory of the whole process, or supporting national youth councils as the driving force of the National Working Groups of the EUYD.

## Introduction by the NYCs of Trio countries

A panel took place featuring three speakers: Germán Antón from the Spanish National Youth Council, Zoé Noël from a Belgian National Youth Council, and Benita Czirk from the Hungarian National Youth Council.

**Mr. Germán Antón**, Secretary of the Spanish National Youth Council, stressed that young people continue pointing out certain key challenges, such as poverty and exclusion, access to technology and employment, and others. On top of facing these challenges, Mr. Antón highlighted that there are specific groups of young people who must overcome additional barriers in accessing various services and in participating in public matters, such as the rural youth, various gender and sexual minorities, youth from immigrant backgrounds, and many others.

**Ms. Zoé Noël**, Youth Dialogue Project Manager at a Belgian French Community National Youth Council, underlined that she represents all three National Youth Councils of Belgium, and thanked all stakeholders who support the EUYD processes. She stressed the importance of celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> Cycle of the EUYD via new, innovative, specific tools, and to contribute towards this goal, she presented the [Inclusion Toolkit](#), an online toolbox prepared by the Belgian Presidency in cooperation



with their counterparts in Spain and Hungary. These are optional tools built to serve as inspiration and support for more inclusive consultations during the EUYD.

**Ms. Benita Czirk**, Policy Officer for EU Affairs at the Hungarian National Youth Council, underlined the importance of meaningful youth participation, and noted that it is necessary not only to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EUYD, but also to support its further development, as well as to support concrete policy proposals to be implemented in line with the EUYD outcomes. Ms. Czirk introduced two concrete projects which took place in Hungary as results of the EUYD, such as the DIYO project which supports capacity building and competence development in the domain of inclusive and value-based youth work. She also introduced projects to be started as a result of the work of the current Trio, including research and studies.

## Presentation of the Youth Goal #3 and relevance in the 10th cycle of EUYD

**Ms. Karen Vandeweghe**, Deputy Head of Unit for the Youth and Volunteer Solidarity Unit, DG EAC, at the European Commission, stated that challenges young people face are especially hard for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, be it in the domain of economic, geographic, or social obstacles. Equality is therefore a paramount democratic value, ensuring no one is left behind. The EU took steps to increase equality by creating various frameworks to tackle inclusion of concrete subgroups (e.g., Roma), by building the EU Anti-racism Action Plan 2020-2025, but also through long-term mechanisms such as the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes. Skills development component of these programmes, as well as participation components of the programmes are to contribute to inclusion enhancement. Inclusion and Diversity Strategy 2021-2027 is another key framework outlining various measures, such as support for disadvantaged young people to take part in Erasmus+ or the European Solidarity Corps, but also support for organisations that implement these programmes, in terms of capacity building and networking. European Youth Portal is also an instrument that focuses on communication towards diverse audiences, utilizing clear and simple messaging, and therefore supporting young people from all walks of life. Evaluation exercises are taking place to collect data and explore inclusion within the Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps programmes. Ms. Vandeweghe stressed that it is important to note that the EUYD is already highly inclusive, and it needs to be highlighted that the National Working Groups play a key role in this success, as do various tools available to them (e.g., toolkits, online tools).

**Mr. Alex Quinn**, a policy officer focusing on social and economic inclusion at the European Youth Forum underlined that young people are not a homogeneous group, and that another layer of complexity is added when national realities are taken into account, especially when it comes to tackling inclusion. Inclusion is not necessarily solely about supporting young people in participating in different societal structures, but also about adjusting these societal structures in order to help young people from all walks of life to be included. As concrete examples, Mr. Quinn listed employment certainty (avoiding precarious work contracts), mental health support, solid social protection, and others. He also pointed out that precarity is currently so ubiquitous that it becomes a new normal for young people to live in and to stay in precarious situations. Mr. Quinn stressed that it is key to take into account the intersectional perspective when striving to guarantee the level of stability that allows young people to participate in democratic processes. He again listed some concrete examples of such measures: capped rent, increase of social housing capacities, eliminating age discrimination when it comes to social protection, but also distributing work equally to include

all young people in the labour market. Youth co-creation is key to meaningfully including young people in democratic processes, Mr. Quinn states, it is not sufficient to only to be consulted on policies which are already almost approved and ready to be launched. When it comes to the EUYD, transparency and explicit utilisation of ideas that come out of the consultation processes and EUYCs are among the key needs, he underlines. Lastly, he noted that exclusion of certain people from society is directly linked to concrete political decisions, and it is the same political decisions that are needed to amend that.

**Ms. Nadia Garrido Annoni**, Regional Social Programme and Advocacy Director for Latin America and the Caribbean at SOS Children's Villages International, emphasised that youth in alternative care should also be taken into account. She also pointed out that different identities and diversity perceptions exists in young people who face different obstacles: poverty, unemployment, violence, mental health issues, war in Europe, disability, climate change, migration, housing problems, access to education, racism, and others. It is also important to keep in mind how these young people feel: lonely, prejudiced, lost, failed, dependent. In Spain, several good practice examples of youth inclusion mechanisms exist, such as: minimum income for youth in vulnerable situations; key strategies on the national level, including mental health strategy; and scholarships for vulnerable youth to support access to universities. SOS Children's Villages International implements concrete projects which target young people living in alternative care, supporting these young people after they come of age, helping them become included in society as independent individuals in a stable life situation. Ms. Annoni also emphasised that diversity and identities need to be taken into account when designing any measures for young people living in alternative care. Increasing tolerance, acceptance, and sense of belonging for all these young people is key, and it can only be done by tailoring approaches to the needs of young people living in alternative care, she noted.

## Presentation of the Consultation during the 10<sup>th</sup> Cycle and in the EUYC

**Mr. Ondřej Bárta**, a freelance youth researcher and consultant, and one of the two youth researchers supporting the EUYD10, summarised the overall topic of the EUYD10: supporting achievement of the European Youth Goal no.3 "*Enable and ensure inclusion of all young people in society*", and specifically its targets no. 3, 4, and 6. He also introduced the concept of inclusion, presenting a definition by the EU-CoE Youth Partnership that highlights "*the idea that all people living in a given society should have access and participation rights on equal terms.*" Mr. Bárta also pointed out that the EUYD10 is currently in its consultative phase, and that the EUYC Alicante aims to serve as a major consultation event at the EU level, with the outcomes of the EUYC Alicante being included in the overall EUYD10 consultation report. He also introduced the overall methodology of the EUYC Alicante: working group sessions which allow all participants to come together in small groups and engage in a deliberative process with a clear goal of creating written outcomes which will become part of both the conference report, and the overall consultation report. Mr. Bárta also introduced the three key guiding questions which presented focal lenses of the working group deliberations: barriers, current support, and changes that are needed to achieve higher inclusion in our societies.

## Working Group Sessions

During Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023 and Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023, four working group sessions in the total length of 5.5 hours, and one working group session with experts and decision-makers in the field of inclusion in the total length of 1 hour, took place. Divided into groups of about 15 participants, guiding questions were deliberated on with support from facilitators who focused on creating safe and creative atmosphere, and with support from harvesters whose task was to capture the outcomes of the debates and support the groups in refining these outcomes, in order to reflect as closely as possible the ideas presented by participants themselves. Harvesters were also tasked with monitoring participation in the working groups, and based on their observations, 88% of the participants kept on working in the working groups from the very beginning to the very end.

The working group sessions were focusing on the following three guiding questions, and their task was to tackle at least two of them, with also an option to focus specifically on young people with fewer opportunities:

- Barriers
  - What are the current barriers to the full inclusion of all young people in society, especially young people with fewer opportunities?
- Current Support
  - What sort of effective support is currently being given to enable the full inclusion of all young people in society, especially young people with fewer opportunities?
- Changes Needed
  - What further actions need to be taken to enable the inclusion of all young people in society, especially young people with fewer opportunities?

The following section of this Conference Report presents working group outcomes as they were finalised and presented by the participants during the final plenary session on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023. Please note that none of the working groups chose to tackle the second guiding question (Current Support).



## **Working Group 1**

### Barriers

- The lack of affordable accommodation limits youth from participating in society.
- Inaccessibility to information and digital knowledge hurts young people from participating in all aspects of society including education, work and social life.
- A common language can imply a limit on youth from different language backgrounds.

### Changes Needed

- Push for the implementation of a minimum income from the age of 18 in every country.
- Strengthen youth organisations and youth programs with a focus on young people with fewer opportunities.
- Support inclusive spaces for youth participation and engagement, especially for young people with fewer opportunities.
- Create decent social housing programs that focus on young people with fewer opportunities.

## **Working Group 2**

### Barriers

- Economic barriers
  - socio-economic inequality that results in unequal access to opportunities, for example in the labour market or youth activities
- Lack of information
  - lack of accessible information to participate in programs for youth
  - make relevant information more appealing
  - distribution of information
- Mobility and distance
  - public transport (no/too little, physical barriers, price, sustainable)
  - barriers for people with disabilities
  - fewer opportunities in rural areas (jobs, health care, culture, education)
- Invisible differences in society
  - lack of representatives of diversity: including vulnerable youth, religious, ethnic minorities, people with mental and physical disabilities, migration backgrounds and others
  - mental health issues: as they disrupt youth emotional and cognitive development that can lead to long-term challenges in personal, academic, and social life
  - foster empathy

### Changes Needed

- Training for teachers and other educators
  - mental health (signs of panic attack, signs of anxiety, depression)
  - bullying (online harassment - what action to take)
- Digital services to help the youth with, e.g., relationship problems, mental health, employment
- Engagement of students in decision-making at schools
- Accessible infrastructure for people with all kinds of disabilities

### **Working Group 3**

#### Barriers

- European youth, especially in rural areas, has unequal access to quality formal and non-formal education, due to socio-economic differences and a lack of resources and awareness.
- Lack of initiatives in the member states to improve informal, non-formal and formal education that would address the role of social norms to prevent exclusion. Exclusion caused by social norms can be hard to fight, because many times they are not explicit.
- Lack of information is not having knowledge regarding rights, opportunities, obligations, etc. It's due to lack of resources, social contacts, diversity and as well as disinformation.
- The barrier to inclusion of all youth, at national and local levels, is having insufficient youth policies.

#### *Messages from young people with fewer opportunities or specifically focusing on them:*

- Two of the young women talked about marital barriers and the restrictions that marriage could suppose to the women's lives. This barrier was included later at the laws/culture barriers and the working group decided not to focus on that topic.

#### Changes Needed

- We need well-funded, affordable education and the implementation of non-formal methodologies into formal education at all levels, whilst improving recognition of non-formal education.
- We need to raise awareness not only through activities for everybody, but also through mandatory courses involving NGOs in formal education and continuously fighting disinformation caused by an stereotypical mindset.
- Lack of information can be solved by ensuring good quality education, access to resources, fighting social exclusion... In addition, it's necessary to increase fact-checking and media literacy.
- Youth policies at all levels need to be evidence bases, co-managed, cross-sectional, actively targeting youth with fewer opportunities, follow international standards, fully funded, actively implemented and ensuring a fully inclusive and thriving youth community.

## Working Group 4

### Barriers

- Lack of connection within the urban-rural and intergenerational context, which includes various aspects such as access to public services, poor infrastructure or lack of it.
- Individual's Resource Constraints: Limited resources, including financial means, access to quality housing, information, time, and skills, restrict the social inclusion and participation of young people with fewer opportunities.
- Recognition of formal and non-formal education and its impact: the underestimation of both formal and non-formal education is strongly linked to the low social status and income of educators such as teachers, social workers and youth workers.
- Educational Accessibility: Barriers within the educational system, including a lack of schools in remote areas, inadequate infrastructure for disabled individuals, and a shortage of qualified educators and staff, hinder the participation of young people, particularly those with fewer opportunities.

### *Messages from young people with fewer opportunities or specifically focusing on them:*

- "Portraitzation" in traditional & social media: youth and marginalised groups - how are they portrayed in media connected to young people's self-esteem.

### Changes Needed

- Establish a Comprehensive Education Approach that encompasses not only learning outcomes (knowledge and skills) but also prioritises the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of young people. To achieve this, there should be a budgetary increase for the educational system, allowing for adapted group class sizes, increased personalised support, and targeted assistance.
- Implement a comprehensive and coordinated approach to address the needs of excluded and marginalized young people, especially NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) by strengthening cooperation and foster interconnection among public services at all levels.
- Build local outreach through people working with/for the youth, such as youth workers, volunteers and young ambassadors; and ensure that these individuals are provided with high-quality capacity-building activities to enhance their work with youth.
- Mainstreaming youth in policies: Integrate youth concerns into all policies by considering the diverse needs of this heterogeneous group. Implement youth impact assessments across all policies, not limited to youth-specific policies, to ensure that the interests and needs of young people are considered comprehensively.

### *Messages from young people with fewer opportunities or specifically focusing on them:*

- Legislation on working conditions – easing the transition to the job market; support for social business/entrepreneurship and the precarious conditions young people work in, especially marginalised youth (e.g., platform workers).
- Mainstreaming human rights education within the formal education system.

### **Working Group 5**

#### Barriers

- Clear, concise, and comprehensible information is not reaching its target audience.
- Access to all parts of life while being young is limited by socio-economic background.
- Geographical, physical, and cognitive access to education is not equal to all people.

#### Changes Needed

- Tailor the language and channel of information to the target groups through target group participation in its creation and implementation.
- Input young people and all its diversity in political, decision making, and implementation processes.
- Prioritise funding of public services to specific areas, as people from lower socioeconomic or rural backgrounds are more adversely affected by underfunding of healthcare, public transport, or housing.
- Create and promote spaces for young people that help reduce socio-economic inequalities through recognising non-formal education.

### **Working Group 6**

#### Barriers

- Lack of correlation between education and labour market.
- Centralised opportunities as well as decentralised and “non-youth” friendly information.
- Non-affordable and available housing.
- Discrimination of non-native speakers and lack of language support available for them.

#### Changes Needed

- Adaptable and flexible curriculum with modern teaching methods.
- Recognition and validation of skills and competencies in formal, non-formal education and informal learning.
- Improve infrastructures and sustainable means of transport to develop mobility in rural areas.
- Recognising and providing political and financial support for youth civil society.

#### *Messages from young people with fewer opportunities or specifically focusing on them:*

- Interested in rural areas, mobility and accessibility to school.

## **Working Group 7**

### Barriers

- Social and economic barriers in everyday life of people with fewer opportunities.
- Lack of physical infrastructure to participate in societal and community life, and access opportunities and public services.
- Lack of accessible information on rights and services.
- Lack of needs-centred education.

### *Messages from young people with fewer opportunities or specifically focusing on them:*

- Access to digital tools or internet overall is harder for youth with fewer opportunities.
- Intersectionality for youth with fewer opportunities should be taken into account when thinking about approaches and mechanisms for inclusion.

### Changes Needed

- Giving more visibility to youth dialogue spaces and mechanisms for inclusion of diverse young people.
- Provide new EU-wide standard for public transportation.
- Require effective participatory processes with target groups in person about how to make information easily accessible, more user-friendly and effective/impactful.
- Provide the necessary skills, knowledge, and infrastructure, to create more adaptive, inclusive and needs-centred educational systems.



## **Working Group 8**

### Barriers

- Non formal education requires more extensive and flexible recognition mechanisms to have the same weight in the educational system.
- Insufficient accessibility and transparent management of the funds to allow real effectiveness of youth initiatives, especially in urgent matters, as there is no active involvement of youth in the impact assessment.
- Lack of discrimination-free workspaces and equal opportunities to access the labour market.
- Lack of innovation and updated curriculum in education centres which obstacles fair work conditions.
- Lack of resources of healthcare systems and continuous capacity building of health care professionals aimed at including diverse youth collectives and their specific needs.

### *Messages from young people with fewer opportunities or specifically focusing on them:*

- Different socio-economic backgrounds can have less impact on future decisions if the state provides opportunities, some participants manifested this being their case.
- Language barriers within countries add to the complexity of reaching real issues that impact youth, e.g., Romanian minorities that do not speak the official language and only mediators can access certain communities, in comparison with the Belgian context where 3 languages are spoken and youth councils work together addressing local needs.

### Changes Needed

- Receive feedback on the implementation of existing policies with an intersectional approach in order to adapt to changes in educational and healthcare systems by updating training or other instruments such as dialogues.
- Providing more training on intersectionality and inclusion to formal and non-formal educators to achieve long-term impact through early intervention, the construction of safe and inclusive educational environments and pursue long-term inclusive society.
- Ensuring every young person has access to using electronic devices and internet by 2030 in order to access information, opportunities, training, and thereby exercising their rights enhancing their autonomy and independent decision-making.

### *Messages from young people with fewer opportunities or specifically focusing on them:*

- Experiencing discrimination due to religion or gender preferences was a common feeling among participants.
- Having cultural traditions within the family sphere limits the access to commodities, e.g., having large families, work limitations due to religious beliefs, and access to certain social and administrative spaces due to misinformation.
- Mentoring from peers can have a deep impact on the successful development of young minorities.

## Working Group 9

### Barriers

- Education and understanding.
  - There is currently a lack of representation of diversity in education, meaning that mostly majority groups are represented. Hence, prejudices from a young age arise against the minority groups.
- Socio-economic.
  - There is a disparity in access to mental and physical healthcare services. Our social protection systems are not universally inclusive. Many face challenges in securing affordable housing, the quality of the labour market and employment opportunities varies significantly.
- Digitalisation-Infrastructures.
  - There is a lack of access to essential digital tools such as hardware and reliable Wi-Fi, particularly in rural areas where these resources can be both scarce and expensive. Additionally, the prevalence of algorithms in social media platforms creates barriers by fostering informational bubbles that can lead to polarisation among the youth.
- Representation and participation.
  - A significant factor is the superficial inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities, without ensuring their meaningful participation. Moreover, the deficiency in associations leads to a scarcity of non-formal education opportunities, enhancing the overall inequality experienced by the youth.

### Changes Needed

- Mental Health.
  - Improve the accessibility of mental health services. We must integrate mental health services into our healthcare system and make sure it is free of charge. We need to expand our mental health facilities and create more spaces to cope with the – increasing – demand and the long waiting lists. Additionally, we should implement peer-support systems in schools to destigmatise mental health issues and promote early intervention.
- Social Media Algorithm Transparency.
  - Engage with social media platforms to promote transparency and honesty about their algorithms. Push for changes that expand content variety, helping to break the cycle of repetitive information and reduce division. Ensure that young people have access to diverse viewpoints from different sources. We should take strict action against non-compliant firms.
- Mobility
  - Advocate for affordable and accessible public transportation for youth, especially in rural areas and for those with disabilities. Prioritise enhanced safety and improved connectivity.
- Education
  - Enhance digital literacy, from the baseline of computer skills to advanced digital competencies. Besides, we should foster non-native language education (especially English) in national curriculums, which is important for career advancement. Lastly, we should integrate civic education on democratic engagement and offer non-traditional space for informed participation.

## Working Group 10

### Barriers

- All types of stereotypes & prejudices towards unfavourably treated groups lead to rejection, bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- The socioeconomic circumstances one grows up in determines their quality of life significantly.
- Some young people lack competence to access information, job opportunities and participation in mobility & social life. An unregulated cyber space hinders the accessibility to this information.
- The lack of transport services and infrastructure from rural and urban areas decrease accessibility of education, social services & participation mechanisms.

### Changes Needed

- Improve financial and human resources to ensure competence of educators regarding inclusion, support for low-income families & quality learning, especially in the fields of media literacy, civic education and career education.
- In order to abolish hate speech & foster acceptance, young people & educators should be educated on sensitive topics (like gender & sexuality, to name a few) and civic competence in a neutral way.
- Create mandatory ratio of a number of public youth spaces & youth workers to the number of young people in each community.

## Table Discussion on the Role of the Youth Field

After the overall outcomes of the working group deliberations (see previous chapter) were presented in plenary, the EUYC Alicante participants were invited to participate in open space discussions and share their reflections on how youth field can contribute to implementation of the ideas outlined by the working groups. The participants joined various tables and engaged in deliberations on different specific questions, results of which were captured on flip charts and are summarised in this chapter.

When it comes to the role of the youth workers and other educators, EUYC Alicante participants stressed the needs to:

- support the educators in increasing know-how on working with different groups of young people, to provide them with concrete resources which would support their work (e.g., educational materials), but also to raise awareness of inclusion among the educators, including the topic of intersectionality,
- build active listening skills in youth,
- create safe participation spaces for youth,
- establish trust between youth and youth workers,
- involving marginalised groups of young people by dedicating spaces for them in structures that already exist,
- hold consultation events in person with young people in fewer opportunities,
- foster intergenerational learning, communication, exchanges,
- develop citizenship competences in youth,
- educate young people on mental health topics, disabilities, and accessibility,
- mainstream human rights education,
- create a national outreach team linked to the EUYD processes,

- disseminate information on existing opportunities for young people with fewer opportunities.

When it comes to good practice sharing, the EUYC Alicante participants listed:

- Allianssi (the Finnish National Youth Council) as a good practice example of safe spaces,
- youth centres for Roma youth,
- state-funded, NGO-run programmes for mentoring young people with fewer opportunities,
- activities to empower young people to engage in consultation work with other youth (e.g., discussions, surveys, etc.),
- promotion of digital youth work by both state bodies and NGOs (e.g., outreach work),
- supporting youth work community of practice in further developments,
- youth workers themselves can create good practice examples in including everyone in their work,
- ensure the EU mobility schemes are accessible for young people with fewer opportunities (e.g., via workshops for ESC coordinators, etc.),
- ensure the EU Youth Capital is explicitly creating spaces for young people with fewer opportunities (e.g., via quotas; by creating regional or national youth capital schemes, etc.),
- National Agencies for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps should provide support during the application process to young people with fewer opportunities to eliminate barriers that the administration creates.

When it comes to actions the youth field may take, the EUYC Alicante participants listed the following:

- establishing of networking platforms among the young people, NGOs, INGYOs, and the state stakeholders,
- ensure using EU mobility schemes to learn about different cultures,
- provide more space for existing representative platforms of different groups of young people in public space and in policymaking,
- support young people in increasing critical and constructive thinking skills (e.g., via formal and non-formal learning opportunities),
- ensure there are enough consultation activities to continue understanding of differences in barriers, backgrounds, needs, and opportunities in various groups of young people,
- support and accompany representation processes for young people,
- include policymakers in the representation processes for young people,
- create spaces for face to face contact between policymakers and young people,
- rethink inclusion criteria for youth projects and programmes.

When it comes to types of outreach methods, the EUYC Alicante participants noted that the following is needed:

- sports, arts, and music events,
- youth and student councils established by law,
- social media outreach initiatives,
- foster homes engagement,
- increased recognition of youth workers,
- increased recognition of soft skills, e.g., via Youthpass,
- peer learning and peer sharing,

- NGO networking,
- Vlogs/podcasts,
- train community members to become multipliers,
- mentoring and tutoring.

When it comes to further suggestions, the EUYC Alicante participants listed the following suggestions:

- create a stronger civic education in formal education systems,
- implement Advisory Councils on Equality and Inclusion coordinated by national youth councils to support youth policy mainstreaming,
- ensure youth work is implemented in rural areas as well,
- implement the EU Youth Test,
- ensure national youth councils are the driving force behind the EUYD processes with adequate funding and independence,
- ensure increase of interaction between young people and EU-level decision-makers (e.g., at the EUYCs),
- fund transportation of rural youth when they attend youth projects,
- improve accessibility of urban infrastructure and services,
- include countries that neighbour with the EU in participatory activities,
- utilise positive discrimination approaches.

## Presentation of the Cycle and Conference Outcomes to the DGs

As a way of introducing the EUYD10 to all participants and the Director Generals for Youth from the EU Member States, and at the same time to celebrate the 10th Cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue, a [teaser video was shared in plenary](#) in order to highlight the commitment of the Trio Presidencies of Spain – Belgium – Hungary to explore means of including more diverse youth voices in the EUYD and, at the same time, further support its quality, visibility, and communication. The teaser outlined a series of youth-centred educational materials on youth participation in the EUYD which will be launched and published by the Trio.

**Mr. Ondřej Bárta**, a freelance youth researcher and consultant, and one of the two youth researchers supporting the EUYD10, summarised the outcomes of the working group deliberations. He outlined outcomes separately for the domain of barriers and for the domain of necessary changes. In the domain of barriers, he pointed out the following:

- Missing connections (among generations, geographically, or in terms of perceptions, etc.)
- Lack of resources (financially, in terms of housing, skills, or information, etc.)
- Lack of recognition (in terms of gained competences, but also in terms of recognising youth field professionals, etc.)
- Access obstacles (to education, infrastructure, information, etc.)
- Lack of initiatives to tackle exclusion and inequality (on the EU, national, and other levels)
- Lack of diversity (in school classrooms, etc.)
- Digital divide (access to hardware and software, lack of competences to work digitally, etc.)

In the domain of necessary changes, Mr. Bárta outlined the following:

- Youth policy mainstreaming

- Inclusion of youth in all stages of policymaking (design, implementation, evaluation)
- Ensuring youth policy is evidence-based, co-managed by youth, and cross-sectoral
- Universal income as a tool to battle exclusion in the widest sense
- Generally better funding across different domains (health care, public transport, etc.)
- Setting up outreach structures featuring youth and youth field stakeholders as experts
- Comprehensive education including non-formal learning, and capacity building
- Battling mis- and disinformation and tackling of the digital divide
- Improving of access (e.g., mental health care)
- Transparency of the social media algorithms
- EU-wide standards for public transportation



## Dialogue Session with DGs and Conference Delegates to Discuss the Conference Outcomes

After introducing the working group outcomes, the World Café methodology was used to facilitate deliberations between the EUYC Alicante delegates and Director Generals for Youth from various EU Member States (DGs). The methodology was introduced in plenary, and it was implemented in a comfortable outdoor environment at a terrace featuring refreshments. DGs were asked to stay at different standing tables, and EUYC Alicante delegates joined them to engage in conversations on various topics concerning inclusion. In order to keep the conversations as smooth as possible, flipcharts were used to capture the interesting ideas stemming from these debates, and harvesters were also asked to take notes of quotes which illustrated the debates well.

Lack of information for young people has been debated with social media as one of the potential solutions to this issue, with an overall need to better focus on youth as an audience, and youth in rural areas in particular. Local and innovative ways of communicating important information were also discussed, including intergenerational dialogue, awareness raising campaigns, and ongoing consultations. It was also highlighted that information is key to any participation: *“Some young people do not have knowledge about the opportunities.”*

Accountability of policymakers has also been debated, with an emphasis on more dialogue with concrete outcomes, and on strengthening the roles of youth representative structures to become advisory bodies at the level of ministries, as well as on sustainability being mainstreamed in policymaking generally. As one participant put it: *“Ministry delegates should share with us what they plan to do with our recommendations.”* Policymakers were also encouraged to stop youth washing and ageism and to increase transparency of the policymaking processes, especially with respect to how youth voices are included. EUYD has been debated as well, with participants concluding that better links across the EUYD Cycles are needed, as is a clear plan on how EUYD links to the development of the future EU Youth Strategies, and how it connects to policy design in various areas at the EU level. The need for effective implementation of outcomes of each Cycle of the EUYD has been underlined, and it has also been mentioned that processes similar to the EUYD should be set up in national, regional, and local contexts to facilitate policymaking at these levels as well. As one participant stated: *“All of these projects are useless if people from rural areas, minorities... if the people who suffer the exclusion and the consequences are not involved in creating them or participating in their implementation.”* Furthermore, the importance of the EU Youth Test and of lowering the voting age to 16 have been mentioned in the debates as well.

In terms of outreach, it was emphasised that national youth councils have the potential to reach young people from different walks of life, but they need to have appropriate support, including funding. The national youth councils should also strive for as much diversity as possible within their own ranks. It was also debated that prejudices, different opportunities, and social discrimination all need to be taken into account, and that concrete steps can be taken to remove some of the barriers: banning unpaid internships, for example. Different culture of an individual, feelings of not belonging somewhere, or various strengths of passports can all prevent young people from attending various events, including the participatory activities and consultations. It was also noted that youth delegates can and should become young leaders in their communities, and creating a networking platform for youth delegates to share their experience and enable peer learning as well as teaming up for various initiatives would be very welcome. One of the participants noted: *“We should not discover this on our own, I would appreciate professionals teaching youth how to participate!”* Visibility of various initiatives was also explored to be one of the key factors, with various digital tools having the potential to establish connections between youth and different initiatives. As one participant noted: *“I come from a minority and we fought for participation, but it is not our task to fight, it is the task of the structure to include everyone.”*

Language barriers, such as lack of English skills, can also create barriers in inclusion, especially when it comes to youth participation, with several other barriers being debated as well: transportation (good practice example from Hungary where monthly passes are rather cheap); housing; misinformation; intersectionality; or invisible illness. As one of the participants noted, all barriers should be exposed: *“Establish a culture to feel free to talk about your fears.”*

## Closing of the Conference

**Mr. David Veloso**, the Director General of the Institute for Youth of Spain, thanked all EUYC Alicante participants and stressed that outcomes of the working groups have been highly inspirational and stimulating. He reassured the EUYC Alicante participants that social inequalities and social justice in young people are the key priorities of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU, and that the work towards inclusion of vulnerable young people continues. Mr. Veloso acknowledged both hidden and visible barriers to young people and shared that two policy documents which were drafted by the Spanish Presidency are debated in Brussels at the moment: one focusing on mental health, and another on youth mainstreaming. He also underlined the newly established housing policy as a good policy example from Spain which demonstrates the cross-sectorality and mainstreaming of current youth policymaking. Mr. Veloso also emphasised that young people are not only a cornerstone of each EU Member State, but also of the EU itself, and that it is not possible to build strong EU without its young people. Finally, he thanked all European and Spanish youth as well as all stakeholders who helped the EUYC Alicante to become a success.



**Mr. Ignacio Álvarez**, State Secretary for Social Rights of Spain, delivered a video message to acknowledge the high level of uncertainty put onto young people by recent events and highlight the key challenges young people face: access to decent and affordable housing, stable and quality employment, quality education, political participation, and the fight against climate crisis. He stressed the need to take on demands and needs of young people by governments on the national and European level, and the need for young people to play a role in elaborating of key policies. Mr. Álvarez also stressed the upcoming Council Conclusions on mental health.

**Ms. Sophia Eriksson Waterschoot**, the Director for Youth, Education and Erasmus+ at the European Commission's Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, the European Commission, congratulated the Spanish Presidency for its hospitality, highlighted the dedication of the EUYC Alicante participants in working towards the outcomes of the Conference, and appreciated both sharing the needs, and sharing the suggestions to tackle these needs. She stressed the importance of the cooperation of the whole Trio of the Presidency Countries for ensuring continuation and success of future EUYD activities and thanked the European Youth Forum for their support as well. Ms. Eriksson Waterschoot underlined the importance of upcoming elections to the



European Parliament in connection to implementing concrete measures towards inclusion in coming years, and urged all EUYC Alicante participants to vote, and to empower their peers to vote as well. She also urged the participants to reach out to candidates who stand in the European Parliament elections, asking them about their views of the youth policy and inclusion, to ensure that the representatives who become the European Parliamentarians accent values and solutions the young people do. Ms. Eriksson Waterschoot also stressed that democratic change takes time, at the same time urging the EU Member States' representatives to take away as many ideas as possible and start working on their implementation. She also stressed the role of the EU Youth Coordinator in continuing the democratic process of pursuing the EUYC Alicante outcomes.

## Annex: Programme of the EUYC Alicante

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023





Sunday 1 Oct <b>16:00</b> 18:00	Arrival and accreditation at Meliá Alicante Hotel	FINISHED
Sunday 1 Oct <b>18:00</b> 18:30	Presentation of the European Union Intellectual Property Office EUIPO	FINISHED
Sunday 1 Oct <b>18:30</b> 19:00	Informal space presentation of the EUYD Ambassadors	FINISHED
Sunday 1 Oct <b>19:00</b> 19:30	Opening and welcome by Casa del Mediterráneo	FINISHED
Sunday 1 Oct <b>19:30</b> 23:00	Informal Activity Casa del Mediterraneo	FINISHED

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023

Monday 2 Oct FINISHED

**09:00**  
09:30

**Official opening session**

 ANDREA GONZÁLEZ HENRY SPEAKER	 CLARA M. W. DRAMMEH MAIN FACILITATOR
 COVADONGA SALVADOR MAIN FACILITATOR	 DAVID VELOSO YOUTH DIRECTOR

Monday 2 Oct FINISHED





**09:30**  
10:00

**Getting to know each other**

Monday 2 Oct FINISHED

**10:00**  
11:00


**Getting to know the 10th cycle of EUD -Trio ES-BE-HU**

 BILIANA SIRAKOVA EU Youth Coordinator	 NICHOLAS KUJALA Board Member of European Youth Forum
 Germán Antón Secretary of NYC SPAIN	 Zoé Noël Youth Dialogue project manager - NYC BELGIUM

MORE SPEAKERS

Monday 2 Oct FINISHED

**11:00**  
11:30

 **Coffee break**

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023

FINISHED

Monday  
2 Oct

**11:30**  
12:30

**Presentation of the Youth Goal #3 and relevance in the 10th cycle of EUYD**

 **ALEX QUINN** DEL EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM  
SPEAKER & EXPERT

 **KAREN VANDEWEGHE**  
SPEAKER


 **NADIA GARRIDO ANNONI**  
SPEAKER & EXPERT

FINISHED

Monday  
2 Oct

**12:30**  
13:00


**Presentation of the Consultation during the 10th cycle and in the EUYC**

 **ONDŘEJ BÁRTA**  
EU RESEARCHER

FINISHED

Monday  
2 Oct

**13:00**  
14:30

 **Lunch Break**

FINISHED

Monday  
2 Oct

**14:30**  
15:00

**Introduction to working groups sessions**

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023

Monday  
2 Oct  
**15:00**  
17:00

Working groups session I

FINISHED

Monday  
2 Oct  
**17:00**  
17:30

Closing of the day - in plenary

FINISHED

Monday  
2 Oct  
**18:30**  
23:00

Informal activity and dinner "RUTA DE TAPAS"

FINISHED

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023

Tuesday  
3 Oct


**09:00**  
–  
10:30

Working groups session II

FINISHED

Tuesday  
3 Oct

**10:30**  
–  
11:00

 Coffee break

FINISHED

Tuesday  
3 Oct

**11:00**  
–  
12:00

Working groups session III

FINISHED

Tuesday  
3 Oct


**12:00**  
–  
13:00

Working groups session with experts and decision makers in the field of inclusion

FINISHED

Tuesday  
3 Oct

**13:00**  
–  
14:30

 Lunch break

FINISHED

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023

Tuesday  
3 Oct  
**14:30**  
15:30

Working groups session IV

FINISHED

Tuesday  
3 Oct  
**15:30**  
17:00

Plenary session to share overall conference conclusions

FINISHED

Tuesday  
3 Oct  
**17:00**  
17:30

 Family photo of participants in the EUYC and closing of the day

FINISHED

Tuesday  
3 Oct  
**19:30**  
23:30

Informal activity and dinner "CASTILLO DE SANTA BÁRBARA"

FINISHED

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023

FINISHED

Wednesday  
4 Oct

**09:00**  
-  
09:30

Presentation of the cycle and conference outcomes to the DGs

FINISHED

Wednesday  
4 Oct


**09:30**  
-  
11:30

Dialogue session with DGs and conference delegates to discuss the conference outcomes

FINISHED

Wednesday  
4 Oct

**11:30**  
-  
12:00



 Coffee break

FINISHED

Wednesday  
4 Oct

**12:00**  
-  
12:45


**Closing of the conference**

	<b>DAVID VELOSO</b> YOUTH DIRECTOR		<b>IGNACIO ÁLVAREZ</b> STATE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL RIGHTS
	<b>Sophia Eriksson</b> Director for Youth, Education and erasmus+ at the European Commission		

FINISHED

Wednesday  
4 Oct

**12:45**  
-  
13:00

 Family photo with DGs