

## ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH (CCJ)

26 March 2024

*English only*

### **Why We Need Sustainable Funding Statement on the Permanent Closure of the British Youth Council**

With deep regret, the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) received the announcement of the British Youth Council's (BYC) intention to close after more than 75 years of empowerment and representation of young people in the United Kingdom and contributing to the European youth sector through international engagements.

As stated in its official announcement, BYC's decision is primarily attributed to ongoing financial challenges, leading to insolvency.<sup>1</sup> This unfortunate event underscores the critical role of funding in sustaining the operations of youth organisations, including BYC. Addressing funding limitations is essential to ensuring youth organisations' sustainability, viability, and outright survival, as they rely on financial support for essential functions such as paying staff, renting offices, and conducting activities.

To safeguard youth civic spaces, the CCJ will remain committed to raising awareness of the shrinking civic space and advocating for increased funding or reallocation of resources to support youth organisations' initiatives and activities, ensuring that youth-related funding is prioritised in the broader agenda of the Council of Europe. Furthermore, the CCJ calls on member states to ensure structural and direct funding for youth organisations, particularly NYCs, both abroad and in their home countries. This support is crucial in sustaining their day-to-day and long-term independent functioning.

National Youth Councils (NYCs) play a pivotal role at national level as they represent the voices of young people and the positions of numerous youth organisations in democratic and policy-making processes. Also, they are one of the core pillars of the CCJ, they hold significant representation and influence within its structure. For decades, the Council of Europe Youth Sector has been benefiting from the engagement of youth organisations and NYCs, strengthening their role is vital to uphold, defend and promote the core values of the Council of Europe: Democracy, Human Rights and Rule of Law.

For that reason, we call on the Council of Europe member states to reaffirm their commitment to Recommendation Rec(2006)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the role of national youth councils in youth policy development,<sup>2</sup> and Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)6 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on protecting youth civil society and young people, and supporting their participation in democratic processes.<sup>3</sup>

The CCJ recognizes and praises the work of NYCs and youth organisations across all levels – including local, regional, national, and international – and sees them as integral to fostering active citizenship among European youth. Their meaningful engagement ensures that youth voices are heard in policymaking processes. Without their input and participation, democratic processes would lack crucial youth perspectives and would risk policies being ineffective and disconnected from the realities young people face.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.byc.org.uk/news/2024/british-youth-council-to-close-following-seven-decades-of-youth-voice?fbclid=IwAR36C35wGEmq4dADxP1IzJY0ccUXJZN225xdCMXLbbCbWz2KR2iLVxwbvtQ>

<sup>2</sup> [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805d8caa](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805d8caa)

<sup>3</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/0900001680a5e7f3>

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