

## ACTIVITY REPORT

### *Partial Agreement Seminar: 'Urban youth participation and inclusive youth spaces'*

*27-29th November 2024  
Andorra la Vella, Andorra*

Seminar of the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card and the European Youth Card Association (EYCA)

#### Index

<i>1. Introduction</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>2. Objectives and target</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>3. Program agenda and content</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>4. Evaluation from participants</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>5. Highlights of the seminar</i>	<i>17</i>

#### **1. Introduction**

From November 27 to 29, Andorra la Vella hosted the Seminar of the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card, organized in collaboration with the European Youth Card Association (EYCA). The seminar, titled *"Urban Youth Participation and Inclusive Youth Spaces,"* focused on exploring the challenges and opportunities urban settings present for young people, as well as the potential role of the Youth Card in addressing these issues.

This event was co-organised by the **Council of Europe** in the framework of **Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility** through the youth card, the **EYCA association**, **Carnet Jove Andorra** and the **Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of the Government of Andorra**, which served as the host institution.

**Urban settings and cities** increasingly serve as dynamic laboratories for testing real-world solutions to complex societal challenges, many of which directly affect young people. Youth participation in addressing these challenges is critical, as it brings fresh perspectives and contributes to long-term, sustainable impact within their communities. Equally important is the emphasis on inclusivity when designing spaces for young people, ensuring that all voices are heard and represented.

The seminar provided a platform to explore how the European Youth Card (EYC) can be leveraged to promote collaboration among diverse stakeholders and Youth Card members, fostering networks that enhance youth engagement and inclusion in urban settings.

## 2. Objectives and target

The **objectives** of this event were:

- To **promote the European Youth Card as a tool for policy development and implementation**, at local, national and European levels, especially towards Government representatives;
- **To share good practices** on how the European Youth Card is developed by EYCA members especially with a focus on urban youth participation;
- **Encourage Governments** who have not signed the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility to do so and address “youth mobility” as one of the priorities in their public policies.

This seminar provided a valuable platform for policymakers, EYCA members, community leaders, and young people to highlight the benefits of participating in the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility. It also served as a space to share best practices and successful initiatives aimed at fostering youth participation and promoting inclusion in urban environments.



### Target

- Figures: The event hosted a total of **36 participants** coming from 19 different partner countries, with diverse profiles of organizations, public institutions, NGOs or youth representatives.
- Profiles: There were participants from NGO, youth Panels and organisations, regional and national governments, Representatives of EYCA member organisations, including EYCA Board members, and also from youth card associations and youth activists.
- The countries represented were: Andorra, Spain, Georgia, Albania, Bosnia, Italy, Portugal, Rumania, Slovakia, Turkey, Greece, Estonia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Germany, Serbia, Montenegro, Lithuania and Armenia.

## 3. Program agenda and content

The event spanned one and a half days, with a concrete structured agenda designed to meet the expectations and objectives of the event coordinators. The agenda was developed as follows:

**DAY 1 - 28th of November**

Development outline:

The opening session focused on providing a contextual framework for the seminar, highlighting key concepts related to **youth participation in urban environments**, the promotion of **inclusive spaces**, and opportunities for **youth engagement**. It featured insights and experiences shared by representatives from the organizing institutions, as well as contributions from expert speakers.

The agenda included the following content:

**3.1 Welcome from the organizing institutions**

The opening of the Partial Agreement Seminar in Andorra was led by representatives from the organizing institutions, with the first intervention delivered by **Mr. Manel Sánchez**, Director of EYCA. In his remarks, he emphasized the seminar's role in **fostering capacity building** and collaboration, highlighting the importance of youth mobility—not only in its physical form but rather an openness of mind and an understanding of the social reality. He underscored the significance of the event, which coincided with the launch of the *National Youth Plan* by the Andorran Department of Youth.

At the national level, the event was inaugurated by **Ms. Monica Borrell**, Minister of Culture, Youth, and Sports of the Government of Andorra. In her address, she warmly welcomed all participants to Andorra and highlighted several key points:

- the relevance of debating about the tools for youth participation in a context where **mobility is a right**,
- **The essential role that mobility plays in the learning process and personal development**, as it provides young people with opportunities to explore different contexts and realities, fostering greater awareness and engagement in a **diverse and inclusive Europe**.
- The value of the Youth Card, which goes beyond offering discounts and cultural opportunities. It serves as a tool for **promoting inclusion, equity, and active youth participation**.



On a different note, **Mr. Miguel Perestrello**, the **President of EYCA**, also extended his welcome to participants and expressed his gratitude to the hosting partners in Andorra, congratulating them on the launch of the National Youth Plan.

He emphasized the significance of over 30 years of dedication and efforts by EYCA members and highlighted several key aspects that the organization encourages participants to consider during the seminar:

- The importance of **fostering youth mobility** and supporting quality in youth work,
- How **culture can bring us together** or the importance of promoting the vision of **sustainability**.
- How we can consider the **urban context as a place for integration**, without forgetting the rural contexts and their complexities.
- EYCA's commitment to supporting key stakeholders in **connecting, inspiring, and developing innovative solutions** to address the challenges faced by youth in urban contexts.

### **3.2 Aims and expectations of the seminar**

After mapping participants across various dimensions—local, national, and international levels, as well as by sector and stakeholder type—they were invited to share their expectations for the seminar. The key insights and objectives that emerged from this exercise were:

**Aims:** promote networking and cooperation within new partners for future collaboration and exchange of good practices; but also learn new ways to promote the Youth Card and reach a better understanding and raise awareness on the key concepts of the seminar and the Partial Agreement mechanics. Furthermore, discover the reality of youth in Andorra and identify new future initiatives and projects.



**Expectations:** to find inspiration and the best strategies to integrate the Youth Card and youth participation in concrete ideas and solutions; also to actively participate by sharing experiences and create connections and promote capacity building among participants. In addition, to learn about youth participation with an open mindedness.

After the opening and mapping the audience, the program for the initial day included the following speakers and content:

### **3.3 Keynote speaker - Mr. Bilal Ata Aktas - Paris Youth Council**

Profile of the speaker: Bilal is a youth worker, researcher and policy analyst based in France. He is a member of the Parisian Youth Council and represents the city districts, the 10th. Born and raised in the Kurdish region of Turkey, a region facing numerous challenges, Bilal has developed a strong understanding of how to address the needs of individuals from diverse backgrounds, also focused on youth. He has worked with various NGOs, political entities, and activist groups, bringing valuable insights from his experiences in youth work and policy advocacy.

Topic: Cities as living labs - Example of Paris

Conference highlights:

Bilal's presentation focused on the structure and organization of the **Paris Youth Council**, as well as the broader engagement of youth across the Parisian districts. Drawing from his personal experience as a member since last year, Bilal provided specific insights into this mechanism for youth social and political participation:

- The Paris Youth Council, was established in 2023 to promote values of youth participation
- Initially was an advisory board, then it got more relevance in the local context.



- The council consists of 50 women and 50 men, aged 15 to 30, who live in Paris or have strong ties to the city. Members are selected from applicants for a two-year term.
- Each year, the municipality defines specific topics for focus during working sessions, consultations, and networking events. These sessions culminate in proposals presented to the Mayor of Paris at the end of the year, which undergo a process of validation and, if accepted, are incorporated into the city's agenda. For example, last year, a proposal addressing sexual harassment was successfully submitted and included in the agenda.
- This participatory space aims to **foster the understanding that diversity is an integral part of Paris**. It encourages youth to join cultural spaces and make them inclusive for all groups, **combating exclusion, racism, and inequality**.
- The council operates on four levels: sharing opinions, issuing recommendations, formulating proposals, and participating in committees and events.
- Participation is voluntary and emphasizes the representation of diverse districts among its members.

### ***3.4 Keynote speaker - Mrs. Alicia Puig - Democratic Societies***

Profile of the speaker:

Alícia Puig is a City Specialist at Democratic Society working on the Net Zero Cities project. Alícia brings her university economics and urban studies background and experience working on Barcelona City Council for five years on projects related to climate change, urban transformation, and participation. She is currently focusing on fair green transition and the power of local administrations to pave the way for sustainability.

Topic: Young people and democracy

Conference highlights:

Alicia focused her presentation on sharing concrete practices and strategies that have effectively engaged young people in decision-making processes. Key points highlighted included:

- Several studies show a **decline in youth satisfaction with democracy**, driven by issues like youth unemployment and inequality. As a result, young people are less engaged in democratic processes and do not feel fully integrated into society.



- **It is crucial to engage this group in democracy** by strengthening youth policies that amplify their voices and foster a sense of belonging, offering opportunities for deliberation and involvement on various issues.
- Ideas for participation:
  - creation of documents within the contribution of participants (with diversity of representation);
  - Development of local councillors and young people assemblies, that meet youth in diverse contexts;
  - Participatory budget: in Barcelona, 20% of the budget allocated to youth is decided by young people;
  - Concrete example of Baobab project: it created spaces for youth engagement, such as clubs and community-based leisure organizations and activities.

Alicia also emphasized the importance of **targeting youth policies to vulnerable groups**, particularly those with fewer opportunities to participate. It is crucial to ensure they recognize that their voices matter, as these communities are often more affected by inequality. The main needs are:

- To engage youth and help them feel truly connected to their community, fostering their development into politically active adults and engaged citizens.
- The need to empower their voices by giving them opportunities to choose and decide.
- Engage youth through young leaders who can more effectively reach their peers.

### **3.5 Keynote speaker - Mrs. Natalja Turenne - Council of Europe**

Profile of the speaker: Natalja Turenne is co-secretary to the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) and the Secretary to the Partial Agreement on Youth mobility through the Youth Card and Head of the Publications Unit.

Topic: On behalf of the European Youth Council, she presented the Partial Agreement as a tool for member states, not only to promote mobility but also to create various ways to positively impact the lives of young people.

Conference highlights:

The key highlights that reflect the essence of the Partial Agreement, with its core elements closely aligned with the seminar's content and objectives:

- The PA is a special programme of the Council of Europe, that owns a specific budget, programme and working methods, that follows the priorities of the youth sector, and it is mainly focused on youth mobility.
- The aims are:
  - the development of the European Youth Card Scheme, but also the development of inter-governmental cooperation in the field of youth mobility and topics related to this issue.
  - The development of better policies with and for the governments (related to mobilise knowledge, share best practices and offer policy solutions).
- The main topics addressed by the Partial Agreement include active youth participation, youth work, employability and mobility, access to rights, as well as mental health and the promotion of inclusion.
- It is a valuable tool for policymakers, such as the Youth Card, which can be used to engage with young people, conduct surveys, reach out to them, and more.
- This is a platform for broader cooperation among diverse stakeholders: policy makers, youth card organisations, young people.

Natalja also highlighted that, despite the numerous opportunities for youth mobility, including those offered by Erasmus+, many young people remain excluded from these options. The ongoing challenge is to reach those in disadvantaged situations and individuals who are still disconnected from these opportunities.



### **3.6 Good practices from EYCA**

**Mr. Manel Sánchez**, the Director of EYCA provided an overview of the membership structure of the European Youth Card Association, addressing the audience's questions and concerns. He highlighted several key aspects related to the association:

- The youth card is named differently in each country but represents the same, and it is part of the same organisation.
- Originally based on local-level cards, even before reaching a national scale, it became clear how valuable this card could be for connecting cities. As a result, EYCA was established,

arriving to be an NGO of 35 member organisations currently, but with public administration as the majority of the members.

- The association is located in Brussels, very connected with European institutions and working specifically in the European dimension.
- The main actions provided by the youth card and EYCA are:
  - Discounts, information and promotion of opportunities.
  - All this focused on travelling, accommodation, culture, services and products, but also in mobility, participation, employability and entrepreneurship.
- The cards serve various roles and functions, including as a university card, national student card, culture card, discount card, travel and health insurance card, bank card, and regional/municipality/city card, among others.
- Companies are approached and encouraged to support the Youth Card through their corporate social responsibility efforts, aligning with values such as sustainability, inclusion, and more. However, there remains an ongoing debate about which companies should or should not support the Youth Card.
- There are NGOs that represent the European Youth Card in certain countries not being public institutions.

Manel concluded by emphasizing the **diverse activities and network coordination** that EYCA organizes to reach and impact as many young people as possible. EYCA is aware of the varied youth profiles based on age, location (urban, rural), and economic reality, with the goal of creating opportunities for this diversity.

### **3.7 Mr. Alain Cabanes - Secretary of State of Youth and Sports**

Profile of the speaker: Alain Cabanes is the Secretary of State of Youth and Sports in Andorra. he  
Topic: *National and Regional Youth Policy Frameworks*



Conference highlights: Alain's speech focused on sharing the concrete experience of Andorra. On that very day, his department was presenting the National Youth Plan, supported by the entire region and involving young participants, as well as the youth forum.

Alain described the process leading to the presentation of the new plan. They invited various youth-related associations from across the country and involved other departments of the



Government, such as health and education, to assess their current activities and explore potential collaborative actions.

This plan offers a comprehensive roadmap to ensuring young Andorrans reach their full potential in personal and public life. It includes 8 pillars, 8 challenges and 35 objectives. The main key pillars of this Plan are 1) Empowerment and youth participation, promoting the critical capacity and autonomy; then 2) Social, environmental and digital rights; 3) Integral health and quality of life; 4) Culture, sports and leisure; 5) Education; 6) Emancipation; 7) Social cohesion and 8) Organizational and coordination model of youth policies. Some key ideas that Alain wanted to highlight regarding the process include::

- The plan received support from the Council of Europe, marking an important first step toward developing a comprehensive youth policy.
- The challenge now is to implement the plan and, afterward, evaluate the outcomes and objectives, measuring the success rate and involving all participating stakeholders in the evaluation process.
- When developing each of the 8 key pillars, specific actions will be defined to address each objective, with a focus on youth involvement.
- Youth need to recognize the importance of having the opportunity to make decisions for themselves, as they may be the ones to set the priorities. The only way forward is for youth policy to align with and be shaped by the needs and perspectives of young people.

### **3.8 Visit to Encamp Youth Sports and Social Centre**

All seminar participants had the opportunity to visit various cultural and sports facilities in one of Andorra's municipalities, where they received detailed information from the promoters.



It was an insightful experience to learn how children and youth are supported and provided with various services and facilities aimed at promoting their active involvement in culture, sports, and the arts.

## DAY 2 - 29th of November

### Development outline:

The second day was designed to engage participants more actively, focusing on capacity building through good practices and experiences. It aimed to foster new perspectives and ideas on youth participation in urban contexts, with a strong emphasis on the use of the Youth Card.

The agenda included the following content:

### **3.9 Panel discussion on youth participation in urban settings**

The session featured a panel of four speakers from diverse organizations, each sharing different perspectives on the challenges they face and the services they provide to support youth in various contexts. The panelists and the organizations they represented were as follows:

- **Andorra Youth Forum** - Anthony Francome, director;
- **Paredes Municipality (Portugal)** - Paulo Silva, city councilor;
- **EYCA Youth Panel** - Stiven Domi, EYCA youth panel member;
- **Democratic Society** - Alicia Puig, city specialist.



Here are the most relevant observations that panelists answer to the following questions:

### ***Which are the needs of youth in urban contexts? (Is there any special difference / need?)***

Alicia Puig, from DemSoc, emphasized that youth needs vary depending on their background. While citizens have material needs, they also have the **need to feel part of a community**. She pointed out that leisure activities can be socially segregated due to their cost, highlighting the importance of addressing this issue.

On the other hand, Stiven Domi, from the EYCA Youth Panel, explained that despite living in different countries, young people often share similar needs. He highlighted several challenges, including the job; market, which fails to meet expectations and demands, and the housing crisis, with prices rising beyond the reach of young people. Additionally, issues like safety—particularly for women—equity, and social inclusion are significant concerns. Marginalized groups, including the LGBTQI community, face exclusion, leading to mental health consequences.

### *What has been done so far related to youth participation in urban contexts?*

Paulo Silva, from the municipality of Paredes in Portugal, described their strategy to engage young people, a task that is not always easy. They approach young people where they are, such as in schools, to encourage participation. Despite having organized numerous activities and initiatives, bureaucracy often hinders the implementation of youth proposals. For example, creating a skate park may not be costly, but certifications and procurement processes complicate the effort. Paulo also highlighted other initiatives, such as providing complementary information and opportunities for youth through EuropeDirect and establishing youth panels with various participatory opportunities.

From a different perspective, Anthony Francome, from the Andorra Youth Forum, emphasized the **importance of communication** in ensuring the active participation of youth. He explained that participation is about finding a **balance** between public administration and citizens to take shared decisions. It is a governance tool and an essential process for democracy that requires the transfer of power. In Andorra, Anthony highlighted initiatives such as participatory budgeting and a sustainable mobility process as key examples of youth involvement.

Anthony pointed out the lack of a proper diagnosis of issues and the absence of a long-term evaluation perspective, which can hinder the effectiveness of processes. He emphasized the need to guide participatory processes more strategically to ensure they are more effective and impactful for youth.

### *Which are the challenges to work collaboratively among stakeholders for youth participation?*

The main challenges for collaborative work in this sector, as identified by the panelists, were the structure of youth councils, which often involve elections, participation, and some bureaucratic processes. Additionally, there is a need for governments to **recognize the importance of participatory processes**, as they empower participants, and the outcomes should not be ignored. It was also emphasized that leaders must consider long-term impacts, as their decisions extend beyond the short term. Lastly, intersectional and intergenerational communication is crucial if governments aim to address the diverse needs of youth.

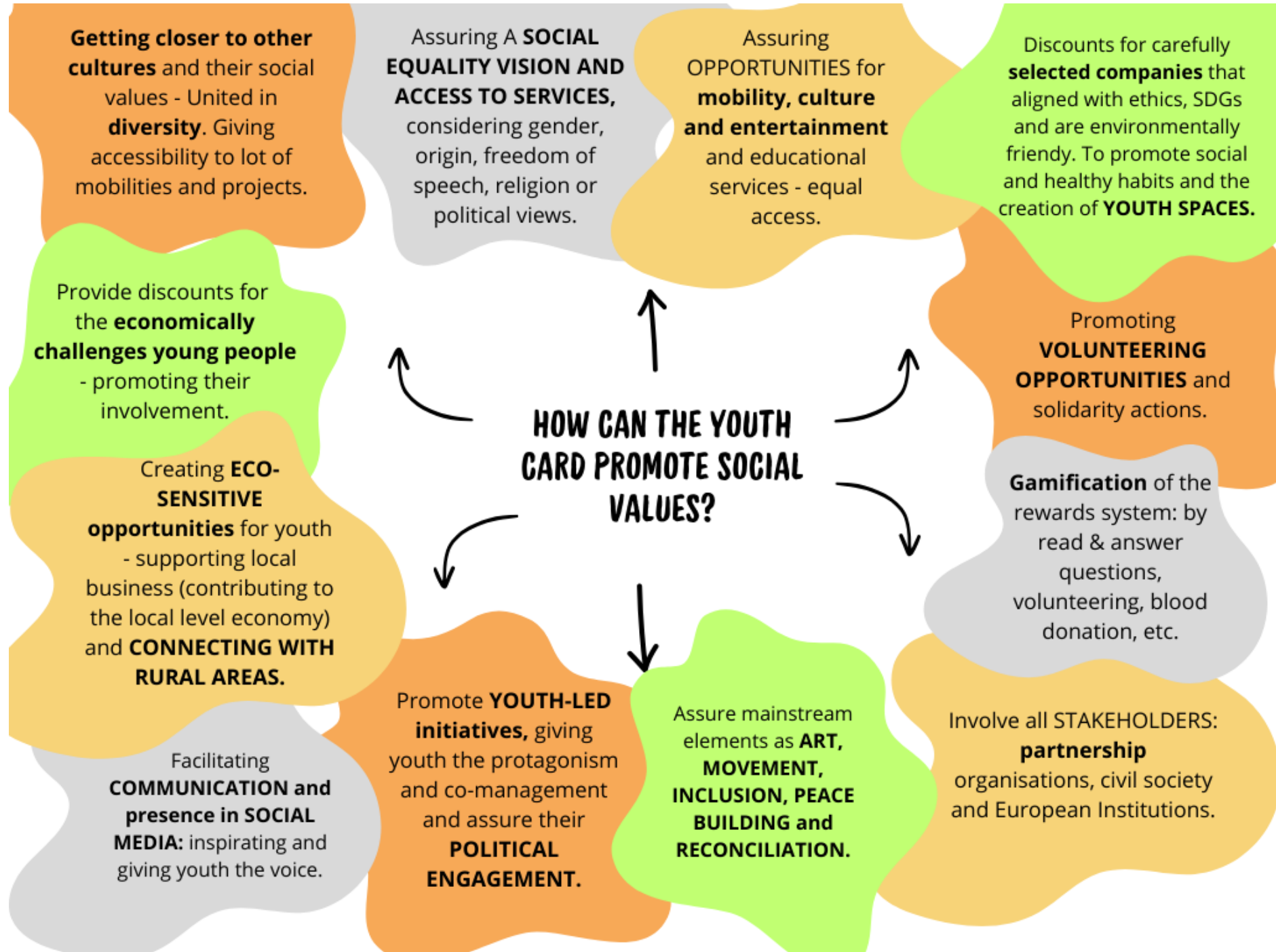
### *How can the EYC be supportive for youth in the urban dimension?*

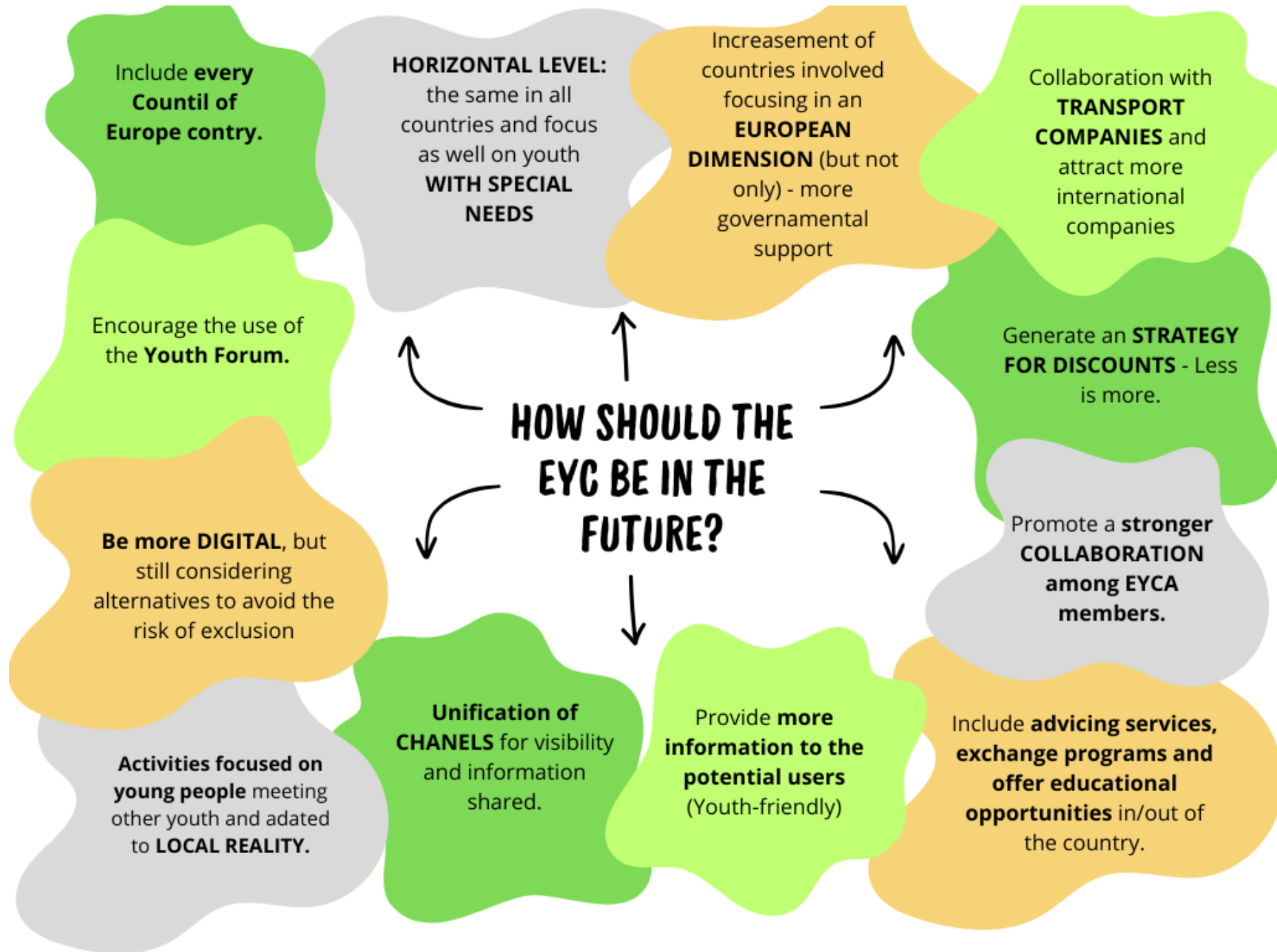
Anthony referenced the Andorran experience with the Youth Forum, which is currently undergoing a legitimization process as a representative body for youth. It has an organized structure to connect with young people and address their needs. The Youth Card, in this context, is a **valuable tool for reaching a broader youth audience**. On her part, Alicia Puig from DemSoc highlighted the challenge of using the Youth Card to promote participation, given the diverse profiles of its holders. Stiven Domi shared an example from Albania, where rural youth participated in a youth camp, with young people also serving as facilitators. This initiative, supported by EYCA, demonstrated the impact of providing **resources / opportunities for youth**.

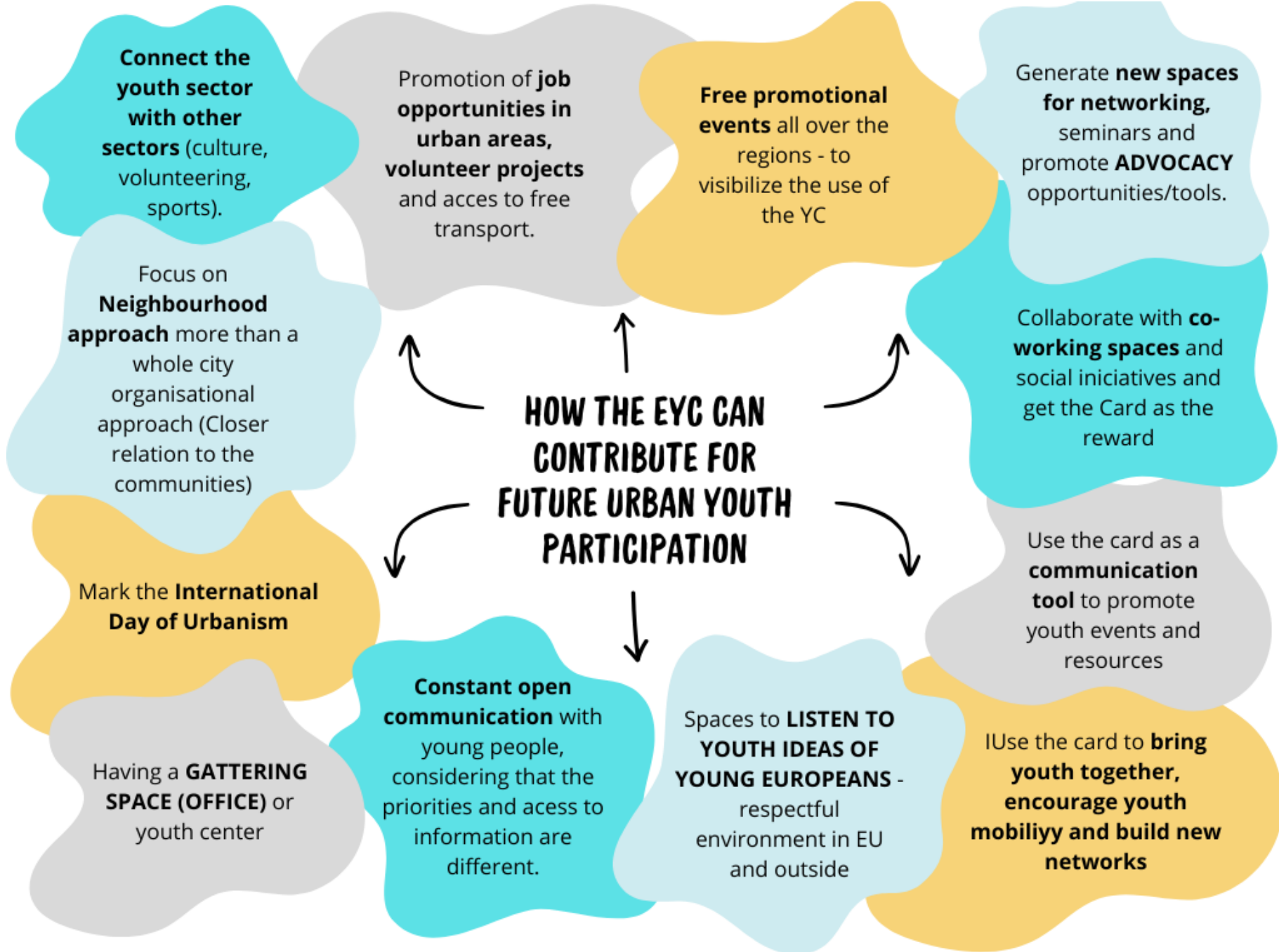
Based on the questions and comments from the audience, it was suggested that the Youth Card **should have a standard on its cost**; the importance of promoting through this platform the **co-management and the connection of youth with the policy makers**. It was also questioned if we are willing to attend the political system and then be listened to by the ones governing, or if we wish to change the rules to **construct a more inclusive and human-centered society**.

### ***3.10 Untapping the potential of the European Youth Card in connecting stakeholders and building youth participation at local level***

As the final session, a collaborative workshop was introduced where participants were encouraged to reflect on the values the Youth Card can promote, its future as a tool for youth, and its direct connection to urban youth participation. The audience was divided into groups to propose and create ideas together. Here are the main ideas shared after the brainstorming session:









#### 4. Evaluation from participants

A final evaluation was conducted to assess various aspects of the seminar. A summary of the results, based on the responses from some participants, is shared below.

- Coordination for the assistance to the seminar. It was 85,7% valued with the maximum valoration.
- Accommodation in Andorra la Vella 92,9% also achieved the maximum points.
- Meals: duration and quality. 50% valued 4 points over 5, and 42,9% valued with the maximum 5 points.
- Logistics and location. It was 92,9% with maximum value given, and 7,9% 4 points.
- There were some comments as:
  - the possibility to have longer time to visit the city,
  - also the possibility of having short welcome session from the organisers on the first evening;
  - it was positively appreciate the opportunity to learn with other peers;



- It was also recommended for future opportunities to have a warm lunch or dinner, instead of snacks in both cases.
- Furthermore, it was considered a great opportunity to work together with policy makers and youth, considering young people's concerns and reality.
- About how interesting and meaningful the content of the seminar was: It was valorated in 71,4% with the maximum punctuation, then 14,3% with 4 (over 5), and also 14,3% 3.
- The conferences from the external speakers: Bilal Ata Akdas, got a good valoration with the following rates: 85,7% with 5 points and 14,3% with 4 points. On the other hand, Alicia Puig was also positively valorated with 85,7% with 5 points, and then 7,1% with 4 points and 7,1% with 3 points.
- Regarding interest and the information shared during the panel discussion, it was valorated at 64,3% with the maximum 5 points and 35,7% with 4 points.
- The general valoration of the content provided (considering both external speakers and discussion panel), there were some comments and/or contributions:
  - It is more interesting to hear about solutions and best practices rather than problems
  - appreciation of youth as no only discussed, but also present and actively contributing to the panels,
  - Interesting and helpful content, excellent contributions.
  - Suggestion: to have some tool to contribute with questions,
  - Interesting good practices shared during the panel
  - Good practices / ideas from Paris and Barcelona are very useful and inspirational
  - All voices, also youth ones, may be respected during the seminar.
- The facilitation and conduction of the process. It was valorated in 92,9% with the maximum punctuation (5) and then 7,1% with 4 points. The main observations pointed out were the great energy, effectiveness and efficiency; it was appreciated to have non formal methods but not abusing them; It was considered very well organised within the length and timetables. On the other hand, it was also considered very useful workshops that facilitated the exchange of opinions between participants.

The most relevant content provided during the seminar was listed as follows:

- The good practices in Andorra
- the information related to youth policy and the youth panel
- New ideas on how to put EYCA forward
- sharing with other participants challenges, desires related to youth projects
- The excellent organisation, interesting panels and all the dynamic generated
- All the good practices and experiences shared during the seminar.
- Sharing practical information on how local youth councils/authorities tackle challenges
- Grateful to have the opportunity of discovering new ideas for the communities.

Other suggestions or comments:

- Maybe it can be interesting to include participant discussion after the speeches and not only sharing questions, considering that the audiences use to be full of experienced people.
- Consider easier traveling options for such a short term seminar.
- Be better advertised in the related countries so more people can participate.
- Interesting and great seminar, especially for the fact of being in hard-to-reach locations, because the impact is higher than if it would happen in a big EU capital.
- Maybe a whatsapp group will support participants in getting to know each other better.

- Topics to empathise: Research about young people's needs; promotion of the European Youth Card; emphasis and priority to youth mobility by encouraging the governments.
- It would be interesting to analyse on group work real cases from participant countries
- It was short, maybe one day longer could let longer space for networking.

## 5. Highlights of the seminar

As a general assessment of the seminar, several key elements can be highlighted:

- The understanding and consideration of the diversity within youth that the Youth Card addresses, with services and opportunities adaptable to the various profiles and circumstances of young people.
- The importance of creating spaces for youth participation and genuinely listening to their voices. Giving youth a presence and a voice is a crucial element promoted through both the EYCA and the Partial Agreement seminars.
- Urban contexts can serve as spaces for integration, helping to prevent all forms of exclusion and promoting equal access to services and opportunities.
- There is a need to engage youth in democracy, enabling them to become active participants now, ensuring they will be engaged and active citizens in the future.
- Learning from experiences and good practices: One of the most valued aspects of the seminar was the sharing of good practices and the spaces for interaction, where participants could contribute their ideas or co-create solutions, all based on shared experiences, common goals, and challenges.
- Team-building opportunity: The seminar provided a valuable opportunity to collaborate and define new strategies and actions, both among EYCA members and other participants from the Partial Agreement.



*Thank you!*