

EVALUATION OF THE INTEGRATION OF A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE IN COUNCIL OF EUROPE WORK



Management response and action plan
July 2025

DIO-EVA(2025)01

Name of Evaluation Report:	Evaluation of the integration of a youth perspective in Council of Europe work		
Date of Evaluation Report:	8 January 2025	Date of the Action Plan:	4 July 2025
<p>Overall management response to the evaluation:</p> <p>The present evaluation acknowledges the “much exemplar work on youth across the Council of Europe”; a high level of stakeholders’ recognition of the importance and value of integrating a youth perspective in Council of Europe work and that the Council of Europe is seen as a frontrunner in terms of quality youth engagement both by youth and non-youth stakeholders within and outside the Organisation.</p> <p>The youth perspective has so far been ensured through the unique co-management system of the Council of Europe, based on the conviction that strengthening democracy also requires recognising young people as full-fledged actors in democratic societies. It is indeed important that this approach be preserved, as it constitutes both the distinctive feature and the added value of the youth perspective within the Council of Europe.</p> <p>Based on this unique role of the Council of Europe, the 2023 Reykjavik Declaration of the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government called for the integration of a “youth perspective in the work of intergovernmental bodies and other Council of Europe (CoE) deliberations as youth participation in decision-making processes improves the effectiveness of public policies and strengthens democratic institutions through open dialogue”.</p> <p>Against this background, the present evaluation is timely. All its recommendations are accepted and are reinforced by the ongoing follow up to the 4th Summit.</p> <p>A “Council of Europe Reference Framework on a Youth Perspective” is being developed based on «elements» adopted by the Joint Council on Youth (April 2024) and welcomed by the Committee of Ministers (May 2024). This tool constitutes indeed a strategy and aims to ensure that experiences and needs of young people are systematically considered in all policy areas that affect them, in member States and within the Council of Europe. It will be presented at the 10th Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth in Malta (8-9 October 2025) and will pave the way for the development of operational tools and an implementation strategy. This specialised ministerial conference is intended to turn the political commitment into concrete actions, deepening the Organisation’s engagement with young people in line with the Reykjavik Declaration. It is also expected to be one of the first milestones under the process of the New Democratic Pact for Europe initiated by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.</p> <p>Furthermore, a Senior Adviser for a youth perspective was appointed to provide a transversal support to this effect, both in the development of standards and in monitoring and cooperation. Particular emphasis will be placed on developing working methods that promote meaningful youth participation and on supporting Council of Europe staff to strengthen their skills in this area. Focus will also be placed to highlighting the contributions of young people to our work, develop tools and indicators to measure our progress, and promote regular dialogue between the Secretary General and Europe’s youth.</p> <p>The implementation of a youth perspective within the work of the Organisation has been included among the Secretary General’s priorities for the 2nd biennium of the Programme and Budget 2024-2027. Related budgetary proposals have been presented in the Secretary General’s basic framework (CM(2025)87) and will be discussed during the adoption process of the revised Programme and Budget for 2026-2027.</p>			

ACTION PLAN

Management decision ¹	Entity in charge ²	Planned actions ³ (determined by Entity)	Target date for action	Person responsible for action
Recommendation 1: For the Council of Europe to adopt an over-arching strategic approach to ensure the integration of a youth perspective across the Organisation. A strategic approach should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate a shared understanding of the role and value of a youth perspective, building on the goals outlined within the Reykjavik Declaration, • Address different contexts and mandates, with attention to proportionality, • Identify the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders within the organisation. This strategic approach should be implemented through the Reference Framework, as the principal mechanism for implementing the Reykjavik goals. (High⁴) 				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	DGII	<p>See managerial response.</p> <p>The Senior Adviser for a youth perspective (within DGII), in cooperation with the youth statutory bodies will develop a strategy for implementing the future Reference Framework on a Youth Perspective within the Council of Europe. To this effect, the Senior Adviser will engage with the various CoE sectors to identify needs, expectations and opportunities, and propose measures to address the needs identified, including those necessary to remove obstacles to meaningful participation, adapt working methods, develop capacity building and knowledge sharing.</p> <p>The precise contribution of the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities will be duly examined.</p> <p>As regards the Parliamentary Assembly, consideration will be given in particular to the follow up to its Resolution 2553 (2024) on "Strengthening the Youth Perspective in the Work of the Parliamentary Assembly" (see also June 2025 session of the Committee of Culture, Science, Education and Media "Young People for Democracy : Youth Perspectives for Action").</p> <p>As regards the Congress, consideration will be given to its Rejuvenating Politics initiative that allows one young delegate per member State at Congress sessions and the process of the revision of the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, initiated in March 2024 to which representatives of the youth statutory bodies contribute.</p>	31/12/2025	Director General of DGII with all relevant MAEs

1. The management decision concerns the Recommendation (Accepted, Partially accepted, Rejected).

2. Initial suggestion – to be defined/updated by management.

3. For implementing accepted recommendations.

4. Recommendations have been classified as either "high" or "medium" in terms of the assessment of their importance following the evaluation.

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Recommendation 2: To support and encourage opportunities for mutual learning between Council of Europe staff, representations, and youth through existing human capital, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaling non-formal opportunities to listen and exchange with youth, • Developing closer links with grassroots projects in member states. (Medium) 				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	DGII	<p>Support for mutual learning between Council of Europe staff, representations, and youth will be part of the mission of the Senior Adviser (see also under Recommendation 3).</p> <p>The exploration of the appropriate avenues for non-formal opportunities to listen and exchange with youth and development of developing closer links with grassroots projects in member states will be ensured through the expertise of the youth statutory bodies, the two Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest with the assistance of the Youth Department.</p>	31/12/2026	DGII with all relevant MAES
Recommendation 3: To strengthen quality assurance and access to supporting tools and materials, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An enhanced quality assurance and brokerage role for the Youth Department, in particular with regards to supporting intergovernmental work, • Collated examples of tools and materials for institutions and departments to support the integration of a youth perspective as relevant, and to operationalise the Reference Framework. (High) 				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	DGII	<p>The collection of good practices and the coordination of efforts also to streamline these practices and ensure peer learning in the intergovernmental sector is one of the priorities of the future Reference Framework and of the mission of the Senior Adviser for a youth perspective.</p> <p>A number of successful pilot projects can serve as working basis to this effect: e.g. in 2024–2025, youth representatives from the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) participated in the drafting group and contributed to the development of the CDBIO Strategic Action Plan for 2026–2030; the 2024 Annual Conference of the Gender Equality Commission (GEC) lead to a renewed commitment by GEC to collaborate with young people.</p>	31/12/2026	Director General of DGII with relevant MAES

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Recommendation 4: To establish a principle of 360-degree feedback, to improve an understanding of youth perspectives by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling youth representatives to share their views and experiences of participation in Council of Europe consultative activities or deliberations, and • Enabling the Organisation to communicate the outcomes to youth. (High) 				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	DGII	<p>The feedback of the youth representatives is an underlying element in the CoE's work on youth and central element of the future Reference Framework on a youth perspective and the relevant strategy. The involvement of the youth statutory bodies and the Youth Department will be crucial.</p> <p>The mission of the Senior Adviser for a youth perspective would include a communication strategy on young people's expectations and experiences, and showing success stories on the added value of their participation, as well as to promote the work of the Council of Europe and contribute to the youth statutory bodies' efforts in this respect.</p>	31/03/2026	Director General of DGII
Recommendation 5: To establish the needs of diverse youth, and to support an evidence-based approach towards reaching and engaging youth in the context of gender mainstreaming and the human rights-based approach. (Medium)				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	DGII	<p>The needs of diverse youth are part of the focus of the Council of Europe Youth Sector Strategy 2030 (its mid-term review will be examined by the GR-C on 8 July 2025). Standard setting activities have led to the adoption of recommendations by the Committee of Ministers on Roma youth, national minorities' youth and youth in rural areas.</p> <p>The underlying aim is that policies must address the barriers faced by young people from different backgrounds and identities, ensuring equitable participation, particularly for vulnerable and marginalised groups.</p> <p>Further streamlining will be considered by the Senior Adviser in the context of the implementation of the Reference Framework on the Youth Perspective in co-operation with the Youth Department and its relevant networks.</p>	31/03/2026	Director General of DGII

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Recommendation 6: To develop an action plan for implementing the priorities in the Reference Framework, and to ensure that roles and responsibilities are agreed within the Organisation. (High)				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	DGII	See overall managerial response and planned action under Recommendation 1.	31/03/2025	Director General of DGII with all relevant MAEs

Abbreviations	
PO	Private Office
DGII	Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity
GR-C	Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on Education, Culture, Youth, Sport and Environment
MAEs	Major administrative entities