

EUROPEAN YOUTH FOUNDATION 2024



Annual report

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Annual report
2024

European Youth Foundation

Youth Department

Directorate for Democracy

Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity

Council of Europe

EUROPEAN YOUTH FOUNDATION

Annual report 2024

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Contents

Introduction	6
1. The Foundation in 2024 at a glance	9
2. EYF reform	10
3. Special Call Ukraine	12
Selected projects supported through the Special Call Ukraine	14
4. Mission and delivery	16
5. Supporting projects and innovative practices in youth sector	18
Annual work plans	19
International activities	20
Pilot activities	20
Structural grants	21
Co-operation with the European Youth Forum (YFJ)	21
6. Enhancing Council of Europe strategic priorities - democracy, access to rights, inclusion and youth work	22
Priority 1: Revitalising pluralistic democracy	22
Priority 2: Young people's access to rights	22
Priority 3: Living together in peaceful and inclusive societies	23
Priority 4: Youth work	23
7. Foundation activities	24
Training course on essentials of non-formal education	24
Training course on project management and youth co-operation in times of war	24
Information sessions	25
Other thematic training sessions	25
Visits to projects	26
EYF Youth Sparks Change	26
Foundation team in 2024	27

Introduction

The Foundation entered its 53rd year of operation in a strong position. Thanks to voluntary contributions and a stabilised Council of Europe's ordinary budget, the European Youth Foundation was able to support youth-led international activities and their organisations with €3 874 622 in 2024.



The mission of the Foundation has not lost any of its meaning since its first endowment in 1972: supporting youth activities that foster peace, understanding, and co-operation across Europe and globally.

2024 proved particularly significant as the Council of Europe and the Joint Council on Youth had to engage with an evolving landscape of youth activities in Europe. Almost a quarter of the 21st century has passed. Young people are now shaping 21st-century European societies amid expanding digital networks, shifting demographics and a rapidly changing environment. The cyber, democratic and physical spaces they navigate are vastly different from those of previous generations, and this also means that youth organisations and youth-led projects are evolving.

At the same time, it is paramount to uphold the core values of human rights, democracy, tolerance, and solidarity. Our comprehensive grant programmes reached organisations and young people across Europe, delivering tangible support through structured funding approaches decided with young people as equal co-decision-makers in the youth statutory bodies. In 2024, the Foundation maintained the Special Call Ukraine, accepting applications on a rolling basis throughout the year. To date, the Foundation has supported 47 projects, benefiting over 3,600 participants under the Special Call Ukraine.

Taking these developments into account, in October 2024 the Joint Council on Youth agreed key principles for the reform of the Foundation's operational regulation in order to respond better to today's challenges. Building on its achievements, the Foundation will be nurturing trust-based relations with international and national non-governmental youth organisations and networks, as well as with other non-governmental structures involved in areas of youth work, relevant to the Council of Europe's youth policy. Attention should be given to supporting the independence of organisation, autonomy of action, and voluntary nature of youth activities at the European level. Against the backdrop of – at times – disruptive events, the Foundation will be striving to adapt to economic and social progress and changes and responsiveness to organisational development and needs of international youth organisations and networks.

This annual report introduces readers to the breadth and wealth of activities supported by the European Youth Foundation and reflects its ongoing work to anchor the Foundation as an important actor supporting young people's participation in democratic life at European and international levels. The support and dedication of the 46 Council of Europe member States to the Foundation, the partnership with young people, and the work of the Foundation's governing bodies and secretariat have also, in 2024, made a real difference, as the following pages show.

Tobias Flessenkemper
Head of Youth Department

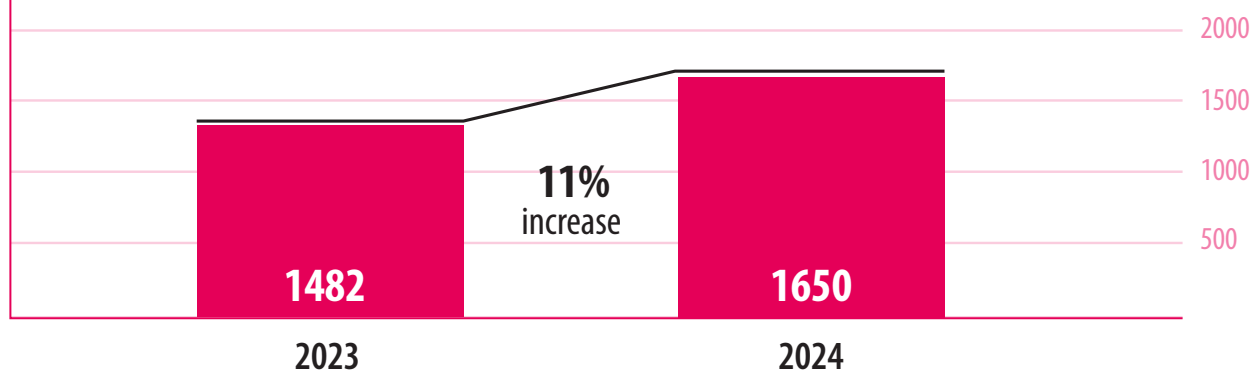


THE PRIORITIES OF THE YOUTH SECTOR

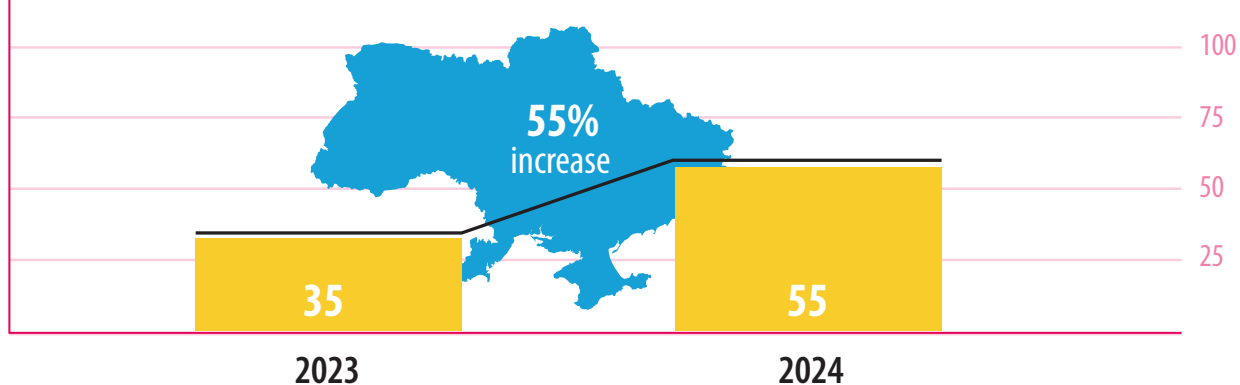
1. Revitalising pluralistic democracy, promoting democratic citizenship and participatory policies, removing barriers to participation
2. Young people's access to rights, supporting the implementation of the Council of Europe's standards in this field, promoting human rights education
3. Living together in peaceful and inclusive societies, countering discrimination, violence and exclusion, and promoting European unity, global solidarity, peace, diversity, intercultural and intergenerational dialogue and environmental sustainability
4. Youth work, strengthening, recognising and advancing youth work, improving its quality, and extending the access and attractiveness of youth work.

1. The Foundation in 2024 at a glance

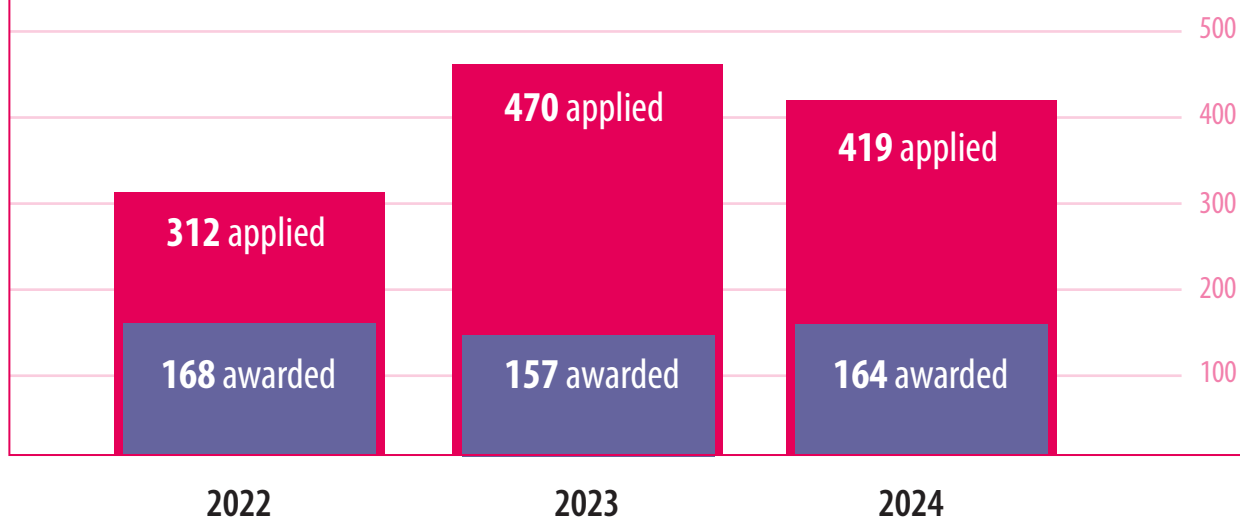
1.1. Youth organisations and networks registered¹ to EYF platform based in one of the signatories to the European Cultural Convention²



1.2. Youth organisations and networks registered to EYF platform based in Ukraine



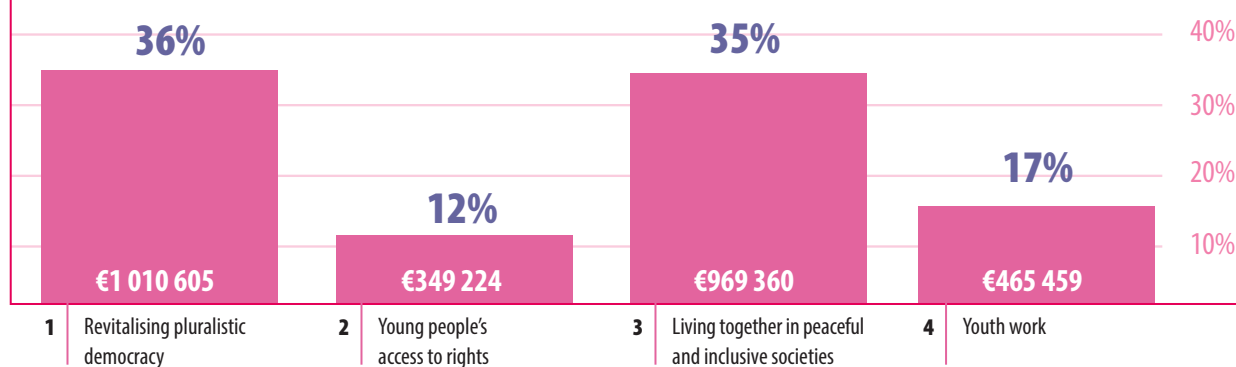
1.3. Ratio between number of applications for grants and awarded grants



¹ Registered from 01 January to 31 December

² All Council of Europe member states and Belarus, Holy Sea, Russian Federation and Kazakhstan.

1.4. Breakdown of grants awarded to projects by priority



Information sessions for international youth organisations and networks and bilateral meetings

- ▶ ahead of grant deadlines of 1 April and 1 October
- ▶ in co-operation with the European Youth Forum.



Training and information sessions for local and national youth organisations

- ▶ to promote the Council of Europe youth sector
- ▶ to inform about the educational opportunities offered by the Council of Europe for young people
- ▶ to train youth organisations and networks on project management
- ▶ to provide training on peace education and youth co-operation in times of war
- ▶ to offer guidance on the essentials of non-formal education
- ▶ to explain the EYF grant application requirements
- ▶ to support National Youth Councils and their members
- ▶ to assist youth organisations working with Roma and other minority youth and those interested in engaging with Roma or other minority youth issues.



Monitoring visits to EYF supported projects

- ▶ to monitor the project's implementation to ensure it complies with the grant obligations and approved conditions
- ▶ to support youth organisations and networks in carrying out their initiatives
- ▶ to (re)connect with partner organisations and strengthen co-operation.



2. EYF reform

In 2024, the European Youth Foundation intensified its efforts to reform its grant-making framework, undertaking a broad consultative and knowledge-based process. This reform, initiated in 2022, builds on feedback gathered from EYF beneficiaries and representatives of youth organisations.

The overarching objective is to ensure that the EYF remains a key instrument of the Council of Europe's youth sector—supporting youth civil society while adapting to evolving needs and challenges.

By April 2024, the EYF conducted several consultation meetings with international youth organisations. Additionally, a working group within the Joint Council on Youth (CMJ³) was established in 2023 to explore revisions to EYF grants within its existing regulatory framework. As a result, several improvements have already been implemented.

Alongside these incremental changes, a broader and more fundamental reform has been deemed necessary to ensure that EYF support effectively meets the current needs of young people and youth organisations in today's rapidly changing context. This process includes revising operational regulations in co-operation with the Council of Europe's Legal Advice and Litigation Department (DLAPIL) to align with the Organisation's administrative and legal framework. Strengthening the EYF's role as a relevant and responsive donor in the European youth sector is at the core of this reform.

To facilitate this process, the EYF launched an open consultation with youth organisations, gathering insights into the challenges they face and the support they need. Additionally, two in-depth studies were conducted, providing an analytical foundation for the reform process. These discussions were further enriched by a dedicated consultative meeting, which allowed stakeholders to exchange views and contribute to shaping the future direction of the EYF.

A key milestone in the reform process was reached during the 51st meeting of the Joint Council on Youth (CMJ) in Strasbourg from 21 to 23 October 2024, where representatives from the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ⁴) and the Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ⁵) endorsed the main orientations for upgrading the EYF's operational regulations. This decision paves the way for concrete changes in the way the Foundation supports youth organisations.

The aim of the EYF reform is to ensure that the Foundation remains a unique, agile, and relevant donor for youth organisations across Europe. Within the framework of the EYF Statutes, the reform will introduce new operational regulations governing the use of its resources. These updates will reinforce the EYF's role in advancing the Reykjavik Principles for Democracy and revitalising democratic engagement among young people, in line with the Council of Europe's youth policy standards.



3 The Joint Council on Youth (CMJ) <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/joint-council-on-youth>

4 The European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/cdej>

5 The Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/advisory-council-on-youth>



The reform is driven by the following key principles:

- ▶ Nurturing trust-based relations with international and national non-governmental youth organisations and networks as well as with other non-governmental structures involved in areas of youth work, relevant to the Council of Europe's youth policy.
- ▶ Supporting the independence of organisation, autonomy of action, and voluntary nature of youth activities at European level.
- ▶ Ensuring adaptability to economic and social progress and changes and responsiveness to organisational development and needs of international youth organisations and networks.

As part of the reform, the EYF will introduce updated grant modalities with clear requirements and conditions for co-funding. The Foundation will also place greater emphasis on accessibility, ensuring that EYF funding mechanisms are inclusive and reach a diverse range of youth organisations, and on environmental responsibility, encouraging sustainable and climate-conscious approaches in projects funded by the EYF.

With these strategic updates, the EYF is reinforcing its commitment to supporting youth-led initiatives that contribute to democratic renewal, human rights, and civic engagement across Europe.

The EYF reform is expected to be finalised and the revised EYF Operational Regulations approved by the Committee of Ministers by the end of 2025, with its implementation continuing into 2026.

3. Special Call Ukraine

A Special Call for projects in favour of young people affected by the war in Ukraine was launched following a decision of the Joint Council on Youth at the end of 2022. The aim of this Special Call is to support, through civil society and youth work interventions, young people from Ukraine affected by the war, in line with the values of the Council of Europe. Projects can be submitted by youth organisations in Ukraine and in other Council of Europe member states working with young people from Ukraine. Updated information on the Special Call Ukraine can be found on the dedicated EYF website⁶.

In 2024, **21** projects received an EYF grant for a total amount of **€329 715**. These were for **17** pilot activities and **4** international activities. **Eleven** were co-ordinated by Ukrainian civil society organisations and **10** by organisations from other Council of Europe mem-

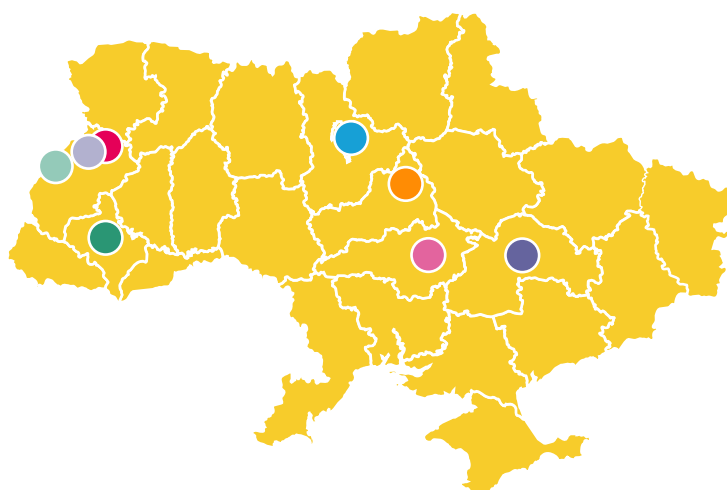
ber states based in Belgium (3), Bulgaria (1), France (1), Germany (2), Italy (1), Poland (1) and Sweden (1). The international activities were implemented by:

- ▶ Association des Etats Généreux des Etudiants de l'Europe (AEEGE)
- ▶ Human Rights Education Youth Network (HREYN)
- ▶ International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY)
- ▶ International Falcon Movement Socialist Education International (IFM-SEI).

In total, nearly 900 young people benefited directly from the supported activities, and the projects involved nearly 1 700 beneficiaries.

The map below shows the distribution of the 11 projects implemented in Ukraine.

Special Call Ukraine in 2024



- Dnipro
- Ivano-Frankivsk
- Zolotonosha
- Kyiv
- Pantaivka
- Radekhiv
- Rudky
- Lviv



Overall **1700**
beneficiaries
(nearly 800 young
people aged 15-30)



11 projects
implemented in Ukraine
(21 projects in Council of
Europe member states)



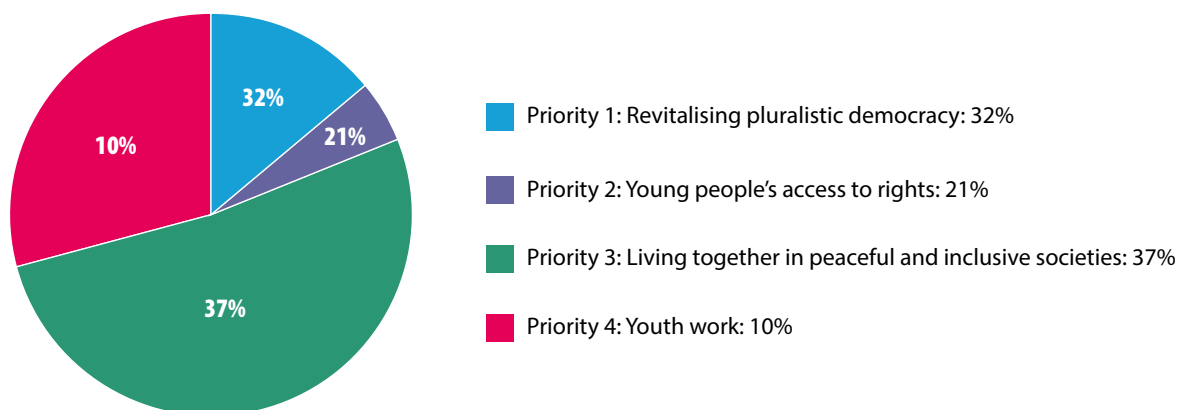
€329 715
8,5% of the total
EYF grant budget

⁶ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation>

The 21 supported projects under the Special Call Ukraine covered the following themes:

- ▶ Youth participation in community activities in rural areas
- ▶ Volunteering and solidarity actions at local, regional, national and international levels
- ▶ Education on information, data and media literacy for children and young people
- ▶ Access to quality services for mental health and well-being, opportunities for personal development for young refugees and all young people in and from war zones
- ▶ Development of the competences of youth workers and promotion of the recognition of youth work
- ▶ Combating all forms of discrimination, racism and exclusion, including its structural forms (combating antigypsyism, multiple discrimination and intersectionality, promotion of Roma youth participation, social inclusion of young refugees)
- ▶ Youth employability and integration of Ukrainian young refugees into the job markets in the host communities
- ▶ Human rights education
- ▶ Peacebuilding, conflict resolution and intercultural dialogue
- ▶ Strengthening the capacity of youth centres and youth councils in small communities
- ▶ Capacity building for internally displaced Ukrainian youth in social interaction and participation.

Project distribution by priority – Special Call Ukraine



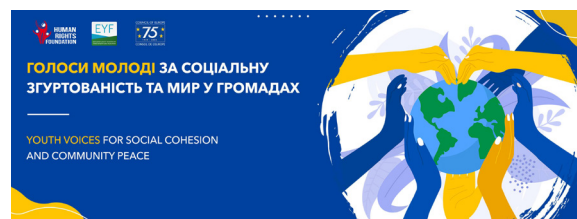
This chart shows the distribution of projects supported under the Special Call Ukraine in terms of the priorities of the Council of Europe youth sector.

Selected projects supported through the Special Call Ukraine



Beyond Boundaries: The Realities of LGBTQI+ Ukrainian Refugees project by NGO International Falcon Movement Socialist Education International, Werneuchen, Germany

This project supported young Ukrainian LGBTQI+ refugees in overcoming intersectional challenges. Over the course of eight days, 20 young people from Ukraine and other Council of Europe member states participated in non-formal education activities, exchanging experiences and learning about the social, economic, and political realities of Ukrainian LGBTQI+ refugees from a human rights perspective.



Youth Voices for Social Cohesion and Community Peace project by Human Rights Foundation Ukraine, Kyiv



This project enhanced the leadership skills of 20 youth leaders and youth workers through a five-day Training for Trainers programme focused on social cohesion, inclusion, youth engagement, non-discrimination, and equality.

The project fostered long-term collaboration between youth NGOs, youth councils, media, and policy makers, reinforcing sustainable partnerships and aligning with the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda—an integral part of Ukraine's National Recovery Plan.



Mental health and well-being programme for a small community, “Healthy Minds” – a project by City Youth NGO “Youth Development Center”, in Zolotonosha, Ukraine

The project supported establishing a network of community youth leaders trained in trauma-informed youth work, fostering psychological well-being and resilience among young people on a peer-to-peer basis. Through the leadership camp, 25 youth leaders and community professionals from five settlements in Ukraine gained skills in mental health support, teamwork, conflict mediation, and first aid.



Following the camp, local initiative groups received expert training, advisory support, and resources, enabling them to organise youth-led activities such as career workshops, cultural events, and mental health initiatives. Over 210 young people participated in these community-driven projects. The project also facilitated horizontal networking between active community members, promoting collaboration, experience-sharing, and long-term partnerships.

The project resulted in strengthening the co-operation between youth activists, local authorities, and social workers, leaving a lasting impact on local capacity building.



Key achievements of the projects and benefits for young people:

- ▶ Empowering young people to influence decisions affecting their lives
- ▶ Skills development of young people, such as media literacy and leadership
- ▶ Psychosocial support and resilience building through trauma-informed youth work
- ▶ Networking and partnerships between youth organisations and national youth councils, government representatives, stakeholders and donor institutions
- ▶ Community building and social inclusion
- ▶ Creating inclusive and safe environments for the young people and the communities they live in
- ▶ Production of education and training resources on human rights and democracy.

The EYF grant supported the beneficiary organisations of the Special Call Ukraine to:

- ▶ Ensure the sustainability and continuation of the project
- ▶ Build capacity and improve performance
- ▶ Increase visibility and reputation.

4. Mission and delivery



The Foundation empowers young people across Europe to effectively address the challenges they face in today's societies, fostering positive change. Through robust support for youth civil society organisations and networks, the EYF promotes and facilitates partnerships that strengthen European democracy. Its activities play a crucial role in supporting the Council of Europe's efforts to assist member states in improving and developing youth policies in line with Council of Europe standards.

► Council of Europe's values promoted by young people and youth civil society

The EYF's funding aligns with the priorities of the Council of Europe youth sector, serving as a tangible and effective tool for promoting the Organisation's values, principles, and priorities among young people across Europe.

In 2024, the EYF supported projects focusing on the four key priorities of the youth sector: revitalising democracy, young people's access to rights, inclusion, peace and intercultural dialogue, and youth work. A significant initiative this year was the EYF's Special Call Ukraine in support of young people from Ukraine.

The grants provided by the EYF offered young people valuable opportunities to engage with these priorities and deepen their understanding of human rights and democracy. These grants facilitated awareness-raising and the promotion of the Council of Europe's fundamental values, principles, and practices.

► Unique co-governance

Within the landscape of donors, the EYF stands out with its unique governance system, the Programming Committee on Youth. This Committee is distinguished by its inclusive structure, granting young people representing local, national and international youth organisations an equal voice in decision-making alongside government representatives. It is composed of eight government representatives and eight representatives of non-governmental youth organisations, each elected for a two-year mandate. The Committee is responsible for establishing and monitoring the EYF's programme and makes decisions on all grant applications submitted to the Foundation.

► Youth at the core

For a project to receive support from the EYF, it must be developed and implemented by, with, and for young people, addressing issues, needs, and challenges where youth is at the centre of the project. The EYF specifically supports activities initiated and executed by youth-led civil society organisations.

► Reaching out to young people and communities

In all its grants, the EYF supports projects that actively engage young people, youth organisations, and the broader community, including other stakeholders. The EYF encourages youth organisations to adopt a strategic approach to social change, implementing measures that promote long-term impact through a multiplier effect at both local and international levels.

► Flexibility and open approach to grantees

The EYF maintains regular communication with beneficiary organisations throughout the grant application and implementation processes. After a project proposal is submitted, the EYF team may initiate communication with the applying organisation

to ask specific questions and provide support in clarifying the project proposal. To ensure successful project implementation, the EYF offers inception meetings for those organisations awarded grants, preparing them in managing the grants effectively and advising on good practices.

In 2024, the EYF also built stronger capacities of international youth organisations in project management through a specific training course dedicated to this topic.

► **Volunteer Time Recognition**

In recognition of the value of volunteer work in youth organisations, the EYF has allowed grantee organisations to use volunteer time as co-funding for their projects. A document detailing the EYF's definition, specifications, and calculation method for Volunteer Time Recognition is available on the EYF website⁷.

► **Gender equality**

In alignment with the Council of Europe's gender equality strategy, the EYF encourages youth NGOs to consider gender equality and inclusion in the design and implementation of their activities. The EYF provides guidance to beneficiary organisations on how to mainstream gender equality throughout their actions. The EYF supports beneficiaries in developing youth work practices that create gender-sensitive and safe spaces for participants, ensuring gender diversity in project teams and participant groups as a priority across all EYF initiatives.

The EYF has developed a specific thematic page⁸ on gender equality in youth projects for organisations.

► **Focus on non-formal education**

During the year, the EYF focused its capacity-building work on non-formal education and emphasised the importance of integrating non-formal education or learning principles into the activities it supports. In 2024, the EYF supported the organisation to the youth sector training course on the essentials of non-formal education; a thematic page⁹ provides specific advice to organisations on this topic.

► **Inclusion and diversity**

Recognising diversity as a value and striving to ensure accessibility for all are at the core of inclusion and access to human rights. The EYF values an inclusive approach in the projects it supports.

► **Sustainability in practice**

As a part of the Council of Europe's initiative to green the youth sector, youth organisations running EYF-funded projects have been encouraged to green their practices and adopt ways to ensure a lesser environmental impact from their activities. For a decade now, the Foundation has encouraged youth organisations to use the guidelines¹⁰ towards environmental sustainability in their EYF-funded projects.

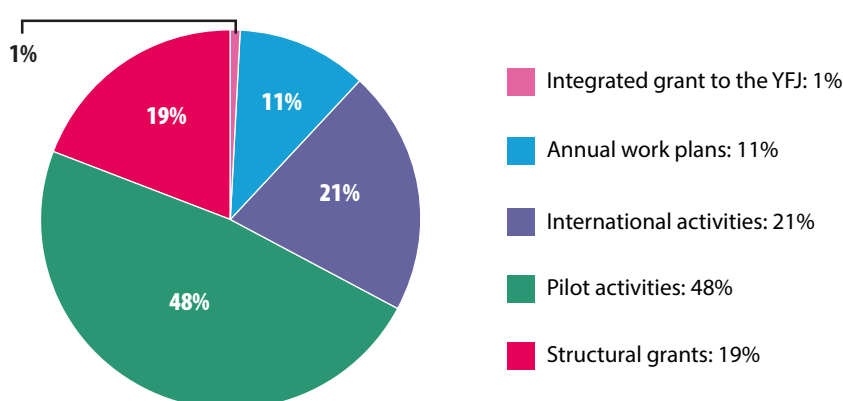
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- 7 Volunteer Time Recognition
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/volunteer-time-recognition>
 - 8 Gender equality in youth projects
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/gender-perspectives>
 - 9 Essentials of non-formal education
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/non-formal-education>
 - 10 Sustainability in youth projects
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/resources>

5. Supporting projects and innovative practices in the youth sector

In 2024, the EYF provided funding in grants to more than 131 youth organisations from 33 Council of Europe member states. Many of these were international youth organisations, extending their reach to additional member states and even to the global level. A total amount of €3 874 621 in grant money was awarded and distributed to 18 annual work plans, 35 international activities and 78 pilot activities, as well as structural grants to 33 international youth organisations and networks, including the European Youth Forum.

The chart below presents the distribution of EYF funding by type of grants

Distribution of the EYF funding by type of grants



In 2024, there was an 11% decrease in the number of EYF grant applications compared to 2023. A total of 419 applications were assessed, with 294 being for pilot activities. The total amount of grant money awarded to projects in 2024 was €2 794 659, compared to €2 571 625 in 2023.

Following the decision of the Joint Council on Youth, the EYF has continued a Special Call for pilot and

international activities supporting young people from Ukraine impacted by the war. Similar to 2023, in 2024 the Special Call Ukraine included funding for grants to pilot and international activities. In total, during 2024, the Programming Committee on Youth awarded grants to 21 projects within the framework of the Special Call Ukraine, comprising 17 pilot projects and four international activities.

the Distribution of EYF funding per type of grants

	Number of grants applications	Number of projects awarded grants	Total amount of grant money awarded
Annual work plans	34	18	€984 408
International activities (regular and Special Call Ukraine)	55	35	€713 755
Pilot activities (regular and Special Call Ukraine)	294	78	€1 096 496
Structural grants	35	32	€979 963
Integrated grant to the YFJ	1	1	€100 000
Total	419	164	€3 874 622

Annual work plans

Within an annual work plan implemented by international youth organisations and networks, an organisation can carry out several activities, such as international youth meetings and other types of activities, including local initiatives, workshops, campaigns and the development of tools. Following a decision by the Programming Committee on Youth in June 2023, the maximum grant for work plan activities was increased from €50 000 to €60 000 for projects implemented in 2024 and beyond. The increase in the grant was due to the global increase in costs resulting from the convergence of multiple crises.

The total amount of grant funding supporting annual work plans in 2024 was €984 408, representing 35% of the total amount of grant money awarded to projects. The 18 supported projects included international activities and other types of actions, encompassing training sessions, workshops, campaigns, online advocacy and awareness, tools development and publications.

Out of the total funding allocated to annual work plans in 2024:

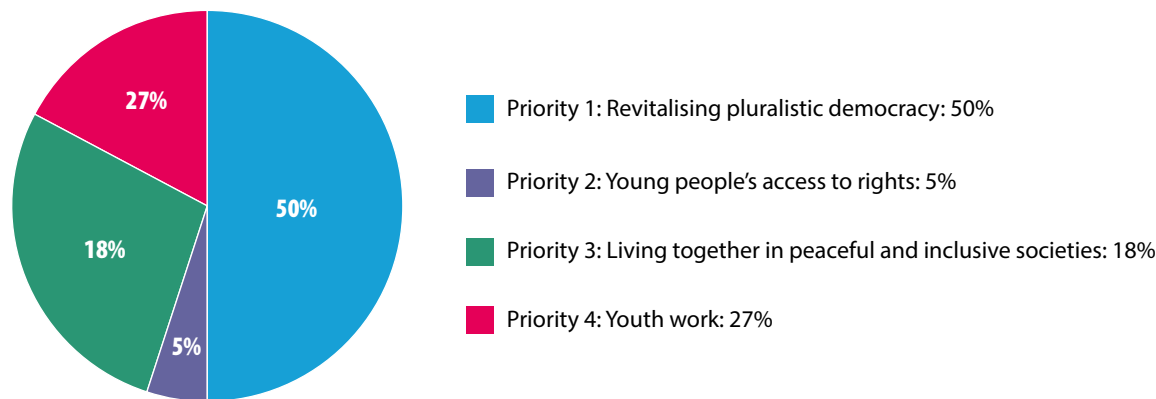
- ▶ 50% was used to support nine work plans focusing on revitalising pluralistic democracy. These initiatives included actions on youth participation in political processes, expanding space for youth civil society organisations, and addressing the impact of the climate crisis and environmental degradation on young people and democracy.
- ▶ 5% was allocated to one work plan promoting young people's access to rights. The project focused on mental health and well-being, addressing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

on young people and the need for provisions of free and accessible mental health services, with an intersectional approach.

- ▶ 28% was dedicated to five work plans promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. These plans focused on the inclusion of young refugees and their transition from childhood to adulthood, promoting intercultural dialogue, peacebuilding and conflict transformation, and mainstreaming inclusiveness, equality, and intersectionality in youth activities.
- ▶ 17% was allocated to three projects supporting the quality development and recognition of youth work and non-formal education and learning, along with their dissemination in the member states.

The chart below illustrates the distribution of annual work plans according to the priorities of the youth sector of the Council of Europe.

Distribution of EYF funding for annual work plans across priorities



International activities

International youth organisations or networks and national youth NGOs with at least three partners in other countries can apply for a one-off international activity. This can be a multilateral meeting of young people from at least seven countries that contributes to the work and priorities of the Council of Europe youth sector. Following a decision of the Youth Programming Committee in June 2023, the grant for international activities was increased from €20 000 to €25 000 for projects implemented in 2024, as well as for projects under the EYF Special Call Ukraine in 2024. The increase in the grant was due to the global increase in costs and prices resulting from the convergence of multiple crises.

The total amount of grant money awarded was €713 755, which represents 21% of the total amount of EYF grants to projects in 2024. The EYF grants were awarded to 35 international activities implemented in 2024. This included four international projects supported within the framework of the EYF Special Call Ukraine, implemented by:

- ▶ Association des Etats Genereux des Etudiants de l'Europe (AEEGE),
- ▶ Human Rights Education Youth Network (HREYN),
- ▶ International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY),
- ▶ International Falcon Movement Socialist Education International (IFM-SEI).

Of the 35 international activities awarded grants:

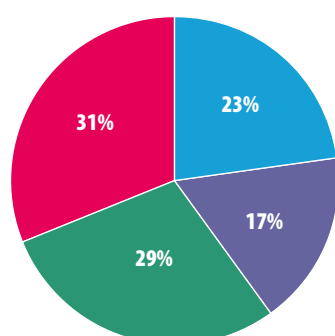
- ▶ 23% focused on promoting pluralistic democracy. These projects included efforts to increase young people's participation in political processes,

expand spaces for civil society organisations, and address the impact of the climate crisis on youth.

- ▶ 17% were dedicated to supporting access to rights for young people, with a focus on human rights education, media and data literacy, and addressing the effects of Covid-19.
- ▶ 29% centred on fostering peaceful and inclusive societies. These activities tackled multiple forms of discrimination, promoted inclusivity, equality, and intersectionality, and also combated antigypsyism and encouraged Roma youth participation.
- ▶ 31% of the projects were related to youth work, aiming to enhance the quality, development, and recognition of youth work and non-formal education.

The chart below shows the distribution of these international activities according to the priorities of the youth sector of the Council of Europe.

Distribution of international activities across priorities



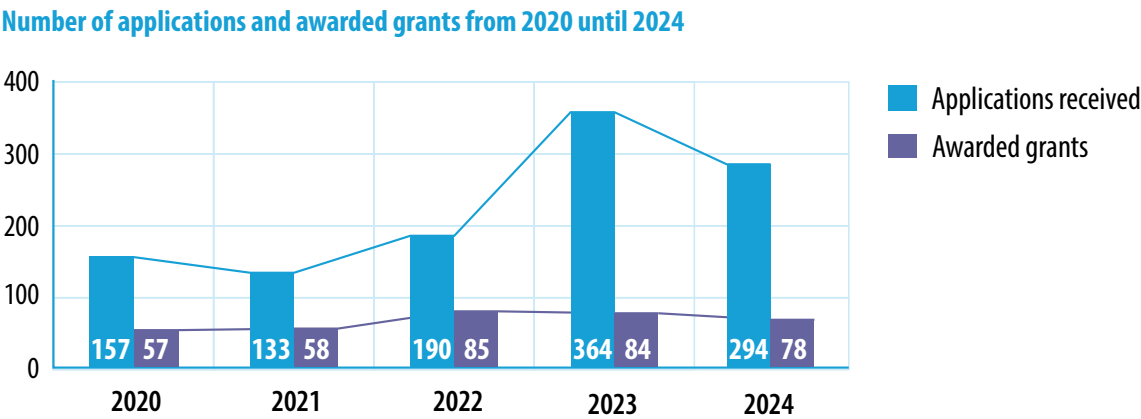
- Priority 1: Revitalising pluralistic democracy: 23%
- Priority 2: Young people's access to rights: 17%
- Priority 3: Living together in peaceful and inclusive societies: 29%
- Priority 4: Youth work: 31%

Pilot activities

In 2024, 78 project proposal for pilot activities were awarded grants, with the total amount granted reaching €1 096 496. This sum represents 40% of the total EYF grants awarded to projects in 2024, when the maximum amount of a pilot activity grant was €15 000. The EYF secretariat received 294 pilot activity applications, including those responding to the Special Call Ukraine.

The pilot activity grant scheme was designed to promote co-operation with smaller organisations and networks, allowing for a rapid response to emerging issues identified by young people. A pilot activity, which must be prepared and implemented by a local, regional, or national youth organisation, is required to involve young people and incorporate a European dimension. The activity should be innovative, promote youth participation, have a clear local impact, foster intercultural dialogue and understanding, and contribute to the priorities of the youth sector of the Council of Europe.

In recent years, particularly since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the demand for pilot activity grants has increased significantly, resulting in a substantial increase in the number of applications received. The chart below illustrates the trend in applications and grants awarded from 2019 to 2024.



Structural grants

The two-year structural grants are open to international youth organisations and networks. This financial contribution allows the organisations to cover part of their general administrative costs for the running of their activities, especially those costs for running activities supported by the EYF or in co-operation with the European Youth Centres. To be eligible for an EYF structural grant, an international youth organisation or network must have received a contribution from the Foundation for at least three international activities or have been funded within the annual programme of the European Youth Centre during the three years preceding the year for which the structural grant is requested.

Structural grants for the period 2024-2025 were awarded to 32 international youth organisations. The total amount of the awarded grant money for 2024 increased by 21%, from €811 028 in 2023 to €979 963 in 2024.

Co-operation with the European Youth Forum (YFJ)

The YFJ is the largest platform of youth organisations in Europe, representing over 100 youth organisations, including international youth organisations and national youth councils, and uniting millions of young people across the continent. The YFJ works to empower young people to participate actively in society, improve their lives and stand up for their rights. It promotes the rights and interests of young people in Europe through policy development, research, youth debates and advocacy.

The YFJ has observer status in the Joint Council on Youth, the co-managed decision-making body of the youth sector. It actively participates in the work and meetings of the Joint Council and the Programming Committee on Youth and supports the work of the Advisory Council on Youth.

The YFJ is a key partner of the European Youth Foundation, supporting its efforts by disseminating calls for proposals, co-ordinating consultations with youth organisations and co-organising information sessions for international youth organisations. In 2024, the YFJ continued to support the development and implementation of Council of Europe standards in the youth sector, such as Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)6¹¹ on the protection of youth civil society and the promotion of youth participation in democratic processes. The YFJ has also contributed to the reform of the EYF by being involved in the public consultation, the consultative meeting and the Joint Council on Youth reference group for the reform process.

11 The Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)6 on the protection of youth civil society and the promotion of youth participation in democratic processes <https://rm.coe.int/0900001680a5e7f3>

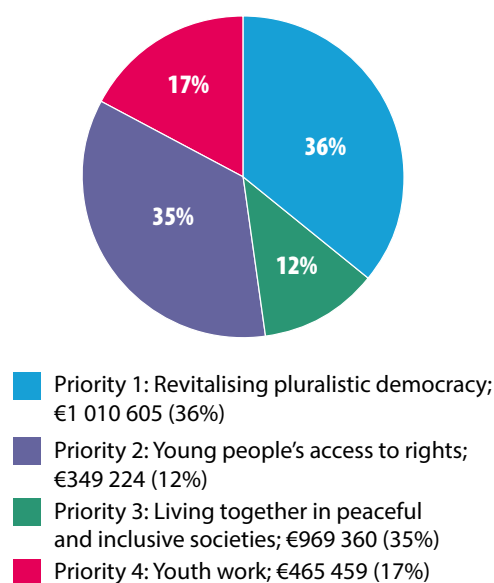
6. Enhancing Council of Europe strategic priorities - democracy, access to rights, inclusion and youth work

All activities supported by the EYF link to the strategic priorities of the Council of Europe youth sector. The thematic priorities of the youth sector are described in its Strategy 2030¹². The strategic priorities are defined by the Joint Council on Youth (CMJ¹³), and adopted by the Committee of Ministers, the Council of Europe's decision-making body. In the period 2024-2025, the strategic priorities relevant for the EYF focused on:

- ▶ Revitalising pluralistic democracy
- ▶ Young people's access to rights
- ▶ Living together in peaceful and inclusive societies
- ▶ Youth work

The following chart shows the distribution of the EYF funding in terms of the youth sector priorities:

Distribution of EYF funds across priorities



New projects in 2024 focused on revitalising pluralistic democracy, promoting the right of assembly and the right to form, join and operate freely in associations. Key initiatives supported youth actions promoting anti-discrimination, social inclusion and gender equality, including the participation of Roma youth and the social inclusion of young refugees. Youth participation in political processes and decision-making at local level, including in rural

areas, was the theme of a large number of funded projects. EYF also funded initiatives supporting peacebuilding, intercultural dialogue and conflict transformation, as well as addressing the impact of the climate crisis and environmental degradation on young people and democracy, and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on youth and the enjoyment of social rights, including physical and mental health.

Priority 1: Revitalising pluralistic democracy

Initiatives to promote young people's participation in political processes and decision-making at the local level, to expand the space for youth civil society organisations and to promote their rights to freedom of assembly and association are the main themes of the 47 projects which were awarded grants. Some projects addressed the impact of the climate crisis and environmental degradation on young people and democracy, while others focused on youth participation in rural areas, involving minorities and vulnerable groups.

Activities supporting young people's capacity to develop and implement actions to revitalise democracy received 36% of the grants, that is, a total of €1 010 605

Priority 2: Young people's access to rights

Several projects focused on understanding and addressing the impact on young people and their access to social rights, including physical and mental health. Projects included, inter alia, initiatives to enhance young people's capacities, advocacy skills and co-operation to support the implementation of the Committee of Ministers' recommendations CM/Rec(2016)7¹⁴ on young people's access to rights, and CM/Rec(2015)3¹⁵ on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights, as well as the Youth Programme on Human Rights Education and the implementation of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education¹⁶.

Activities promoting young people's access to rights and advocating human rights and citizenship education accounted for 12% of the grants awarded, totalling €349 224.

12 The youth sector strategy 2030 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/youth-strategy-2030>

13 The Joint Council on Youth <https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth/joint-council-on-youth>

14 The Committee of Ministers' Recommendations CM/Rec(2016)7 on young people's access to rights <https://rm.coe.int/1680702b6e>

15 The Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights <https://go.coe.int/eSnaI>

16 The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/council-of-europe-charter-on-education-for-democratic-citizenship-and-human-rights-education>

Priority 3: Living together in peaceful and inclusive societies

Among 46 projects supported, many addressed issues of discrimination, racism and exclusion, including combating antigypsyism, tackling multiple discrimination as well as promoting Roma youth participation and the social inclusion of young refugees.

Other projects enabled young people to promote peaceful societies by playing an active role in intercultural dialogue, peacebuilding and conflict transformation, volunteering and solidarity actions at local, national, regional and international levels, as well as promoting the inclusion and participation of young people in rural communities.

Youth initiatives promoting anti-discrimination, social inclusion and gender equality received 35% of the grants, a total of €969 360.

Priority 4: Youth work

Most of the 22 projects funded supported access to and dissemination of quality development and recognition of youth work and non-formal education and learning in member states (e.g. through the Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres and the Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio). In addition, some projects supported quality development and innovation (including digitalisation) and pursued the dissemination and implementation of the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4¹⁷ on youth work and the promotion of a European youth work agenda.

Youth initiatives promoting quality development and recognition of youth work received €465 459, representing 17% of the total grant money.



17 The Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 on youth work <https://rm.coe.int/1680717e78>

7. Foundation activities

In order to promote effective co-operation with youth organisations and to strengthen the quality of their projects, the EYF carries out a number of support activities.

Training course on essentials of non-formal education

In order to support youth organisations in implementing their intercultural activities and to promote the values and standards of the Council of Europe, the EYF and the Education and Training Division organised a Training Course on Essentials of Non-formal Education, at the European Youth Centre in Budapest from 29 January to 3 February 2024. The course brought together 30 facilitators and youth leaders, team members of study sessions in EYCs and/or international activities funded by the EYF.



Training course on project management for international youth organisations

In May 2024, the European Youth Foundation organised a training course on project management for international youth organisations, bringing together 33 participants from 31 youth organisations and networks. The course aimed to address the growing demand for project management skills within the context of international youth work, particularly in relation to the priorities of the Council of Europe.

The training provided a comprehensive overview of the project cycle, focusing on practical skills for managing international youth projects. It was designed for staff and volunteers in youth organisations, especially those who are responsible for

project management roles. The course also took place in the post-pandemic context, where the need for enhanced capacities within youth organisations has become even more critical.

Key takeaways from the course included the importance of youth organisations as safe spaces for young people, the evolving need for flexibility in grant management, and the ongoing need for skill development for young people with project management roles. Participants gained valuable insights into managing international projects, as well as tools to address the challenges and opportunities of working within the framework of the Council of Europe's priorities.



Training course on project management and youth co-operation in times of war

In October, in partnership with the City of Lublin, the youth sector of the Council of Europe organised a study visit to Lviv, followed by a capacity building event in Lublin (Poland) organised by the European Youth Foundation. The aim was to enhance international youth co-operation among youth organisations in and outside of Ukraine. The training course on project management and international youth co-operation involved 15 representatives from youth organisations from Ukraine and 15 youth organisations from other Council of Europe member states interested in international youth co-operation with Ukraine. The key objectives were to strengthen the skills and capacities of representatives of youth organisations in carrying out projects in the area of the priorities of the Council of Europe youth sector, to strengthen the partnerships between youth organisations from Ukraine and from other member states, and to provide space to develop joint initiatives and to promote the values, principles, tools and resources of the youth sector of the Council of Europe. Additionally, the participants increased their knowledge about the EYF Special Call Ukraine in support of young people from Ukraine.

Information sessions

Twice a year, in co-operation with the European Youth Forum, the EYF organises information meetings for international youth organisations based in Brussels, Belgium. The aim of the meetings is to provide an update on developments in the EYF and the Council of Europe's youth sector, as well as to meet with NGO representatives to discuss their challenges and issues related to EYF grants. The 2024 meetings included training elements, networking and partnership-building sessions, and a consultation on the future of EYF grants. The EYF meetings in 2024 brought together more than 50 representatives from youth organisations.

In April 2024, the EYF organised a panel at the European Youth Event 2024 (EYE 2024) in Berlin to

promote funding opportunities for youth organisations and the co-management system in the Council of Europe youth sector, and to discuss with partners and beneficiaries the importance of youth initiatives within the context of civil society support. The EYE was organised in close collaboration with the German Federal Youth Council (DBJR) and the European Youth Parliament (EYP).

Throughout the year, the EYF continued to reach out to youth organisations and increase their understanding of the EYF grants through online information sessions. In 2024, six online sessions were organised with the participation of over 300 youth organisations.



Other thematic training sessions

In 2024, the EYF held a significant number of thematic and targeted training sessions:

- ▶ 20 March, online information session for National Youth Councils. The session focused on the work of the Council of Europe's youth sector, as well as the grants and support available to National Youth Councils and their members through the European Youth Foundation
- ▶ 5 June, online information session for international and national youth organisations and national youth councils about the Council of Europe's actions in relation to young people from Ukraine and Ukraine youth policy
- ▶ 7 September, information session on the special grants for young people from Ukraine for youth NGOs as part of the All-Ukrainian Youth Forum "Molodvizh", held in the city of Lviv – European Youth Capital 2025. The Forum was organised

by the Ministry of Youth and Sport of Ukraine, the Department of Youth and Sport of the Lviv Regional Military Administration, the Lviv City Council and the TVORY network, and more than 200 young people from different regions of Ukraine benefited from this event

- ▶ 18 November, online information session on funding opportunities for youth organisations working with Roma youth directly or interested in working more on Roma youth issues, organised in co-operation with the Roma and Travellers Division of the Council of Europe. This session was part of the Council of Europe roadmap to the implementation of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)4 on Roma Youth Participation¹⁸, which included provisions for the EYF to take into account specific needs of Roma youth organisations, also by offering dedicated information sessions

18 The Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)4 on Roma Youth Participation <https://rm.coe.int/roma-youth-participation-cm-rec-2023-4-web/1680af2a36>



Visits to projects

As part of its work to monitor and support youth organisations, EYF regularly carries out visits to the projects of organisations awarded grants. During the visits, EYF team provide advice to the organisations, information on EYF grant requirements and discuss observations related to the quality implementation of the EYF grant. In 2024, 14 visits were carried out, which helped strengthen the partnership between those organisations awarded grants and the Council of Europe's youth sector.



EYF Youth Sparks Change

In May 2024, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Council of Europe, the EYF launched a social media campaign Youth Sparks Change, which featured several stories of young people and youth organisations involved in EYF supported projects.

The campaign, which lasted several months, was disseminated over the social media of the European Youth Foundation as well as the Youth Department. The campaign presented 35 youth projects supported from the EYF.

Youth Sparks Change campaign

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/campaign75>

Examples of projects featured in the campaign:

The "Romni Si Zor" project focused on **addressing the exclusion of Roma women and girls**. Through educational workshops, Roma women networked, interacted, and trained by sharing experiences and knowledge.

"I feel that **my wings have grown a little more**, I met new women" - participant

"The meetings **give girls courage to go to school**, to learn their rights at work." - participant

#YouthSparksChange #RomniSiZor

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Attendees developed these strategies over the course of several days, supported by **expert trainers** and **fostering a collaborative approach to tackling disinformation**.

The project event in Tbilisi, Georgia, focused on **combating fake news and disinformation**. Participants engaged in learning about **digital activism**, explored the dangers of disinformation, and **created a toolkit to identify critical information sources**.

#YouthSparksChange #iflry

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Foundation team in 2024

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Deputy Head of the European Youth Foundation

Mara Georgescu

Programme Manager - Youth organisations and participation in democratic life

Katalin Lerch

Financial Support officer

Marilyn Horst

Administrative and Financial Officer

Olga Baltag

Project Officer
(from December 2024)

Beata Owsiana

Project Officer
(from December 2024)

Stéphanie Attil

Project Officer

Margit Barna

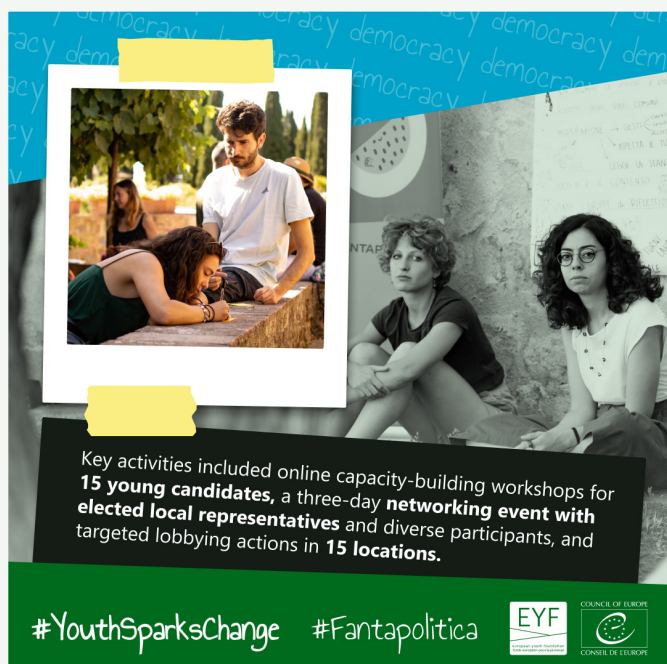
Project Officer
(until September 2024)

Dragana Jovanovska

Project Officer
(until July 2024)

Nino Kheladze

Administrative Assistant





The European Youth Foundation supports international youth co-operation by providing financial support to European activities that promote peace, understanding and co-operation between young people of Europe and the world, in a spirit of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.



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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member States, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member States have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

