



The Council of Europe youth sector explained

Interconnected and interdependent instruments for maximum impact

Why young people need the Council of Europe's youth sector...

... and why the Council of Europe needs young people

In the late 1960s, young people felt disenfranchised, prevented from living the active citizenship they believed was their role. Observing the growing discontent amongst young people in Europe, the Consultative Assembly (forerunner to the Parliamentary Assembly) decided to investigate what could be done to tackle the causes of this unrest. And so was launched the Council of Europe's youth sector.

In 1972, the **European Youth Foundation** and the **European Youth Centre** were established as permanent institutions of the Council of Europe to support young people and their organisations as recognition of the crucial role they play in promoting democratic participation and defending human rights.

Believing that young people needed to be given a **voice** at the centre of decision making, youth organisations and government representatives were charged with running together these instruments thanks to a new **co-management system**.



The youth sector has continued to develop its main instruments, inaugurating in 1995 a second **European Youth Centre in Budapest** so young people could actively contribute to the democratisation process in central and eastern Europe, and, in 1999, launching the first co-operation **partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the youth field**.



Co-management system
European Youth Foundation
European Youth Centres in
Strasbourg and Budapest
EU-CoE Youth Partnership

Four fully interdependent and coherent instruments
for a maximum impact of the
Youth for Democracy programme
shaping democracy and human rights-spirited
young Europeans.

Take a look inside to find out more.

The Youth for Democracy programme:

Young people struggle to **access their rights** and are often prevented from enjoying the autonomy required to **participate** in and fully **contribute** to society. The risks of **youth disengagement** are considerable. However, the sustainability of a democratic society relies on the



The three strategic priorities of the Youth for Democracy programme aim to create the conditions necessary to minimise this risk of disengagement and increase these qualities in young people. They are to:

- promote young people's **access to rights** and support them in advocating education for human rights and democracy;
- facilitate young people's autonomy and **participation** through the promotion of youth policies and youth work, as well as support for youth civil society;
- engage young people in **peace-building** and **social cohesion**, to combat discrimination and exclusion.

Based on the conviction that young people and governments must work together, the Youth for Democracy programme has two objectives:

Young people from all spectrums of European societies are empowered to participate in pluralist democracy and to promote human rights in order to protect and build inclusive societies based on being equal in dignity and rights.

Member states take concrete measures to develop and implement youth policy based on Council of Europe standards thereby facilitating young people's access to rights

The European Youth Foundation (EYF)

The EYF is more than just a donor, offering educational as well as financial support to youth NGOs, emphasizing the content, quality and methodology of the projects it supports. These projects must be developed **by, with and for young people** and respond to the needs of young people and to the challenges they face.



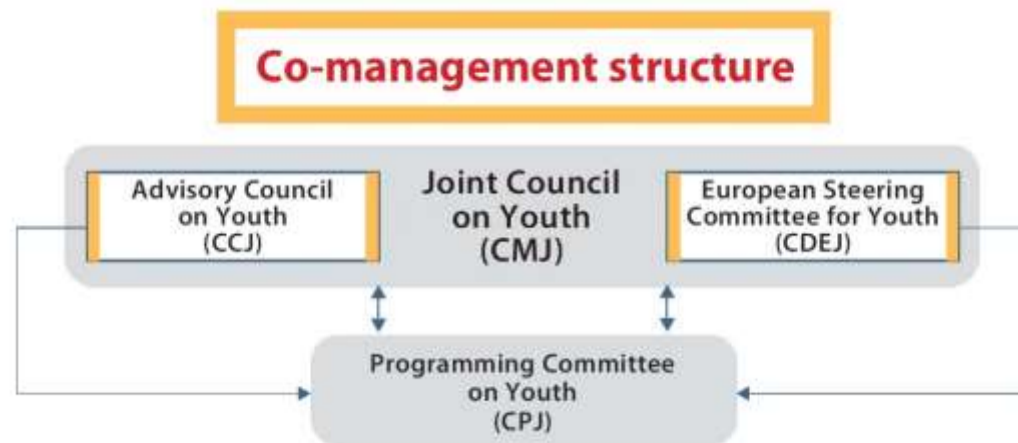
With an annual budget of approximately 3.7 million euros, it supports around 300 youth activities per year directly involving more than **300 000 young people**, reaching out to young activists to help them to further the **Council of Europe's values**. Since 1972, more than **350 000 young people**, aged between 15 and 30 and mostly from member states, many from the local level, have benefited directly from EYF-supported activities.



Thanks to EYF support, local/national NGOs and regional networks can implement pilot activities and raise **awareness** of important issues that otherwise would be beyond the reach of their finances. Structural grants, which help to cover general administrative costs, promote the **sustainability** of organisations. Grants to international activities **bring together** young people from at least seven countries to address Council of Europe youth sector priorities.

The ground-breaking co-management system

The Council of Europe's co-management system is a living example of **participatory democracy** and **citizen participation**, a place for **common reflection** and **co-production**, combining the voice of young Europeans and that of public authorities responsible for youth affairs, leading to a sharing and evaluation of experience.



Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ):

- representatives from youth NGOs/networks in Europe;
- advising the Committee of Ministers on youth issues;
- ensuring youth policies are mainstreamed into the Council of Europe's work;
- promoting youth policies beyond the Organisation.



European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ):

- representatives of ministries/bodies responsible for youth;
- fostering co-operation between governments;
- supporting the development of state youth policies;
- exchanging best practices; drafting standard-setting texts.

Joint Council on Youth (CMJ): bringing together the CDEJ and the CCJ; the co-decision-making body establishing the youth sector's priorities, objectives and budgets.

Programming Committee on Youth (CPJ): eight CDEJ members and eight CCJ members together establish and monitor the programmes of the European Youth Foundation (EYF) and the European Youth Centres.



Thanks to this **dialogue**, where each party has an equal say, ideas and experiences can be exchanged, in a spirit of **mutual understanding** and **respect**, giving **legitimacy** and relevance to the programme of activities proposed by the Joint Council on Youth and **meaningfulness** to intergovernmental co-operation for **responsive and needs-based youth policies**.

A package of support measures

To help ministries, public administrations and policymakers to evaluate, develop and implement their national youth policies, the CDEJ manages a package of measures, based on exchange, co-operation and knowledge sharing, which puts at the disposal of the member states the youth sector's competence and expertise, and which guarantees legitimacy and quality thanks to the Council of Europe's reputation for youth policy and youth work in the international youth sector.

Bilateral measures are tailored to the youth policy development needs and challenges of states and take the form of peer advice and coaching; youth policy advisory missions; and 50/50 trainings.

Multilateral activities foster peer learning, networking and exchange on priority themes, for example the European universities on youth policies; the Council of Europe quality label for youth centres; or secondments and traineeships.

For more information: www.coe.int/en/web/youth/support.

The European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest

The activities in the Youth for Democracy programme prepare the young beneficiaries to become **multipliers** for the **Council of Europe's values**. Most of these trainings, conferences, seminars, youth peace camps and study sessions are hosted in the **European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest**. These international training and meeting centres provide a **flexible and modern working environment**, with meeting rooms equipped for simultaneous interpretation, information centres, audio-visual and computer facilities, as well as residential facilities.



The aims of European Youth Centres are to:

- ensure participation of European young people and international non-governmental youth organisations in the **building of Europe**;
- supplement the **training of youth leaders** in a European context;
- further international understanding in a spirit of respect for **human rights** and **fundamental freedoms**, and the study of European problems;
- seek means of ensuring the **participation** of young people in solving the problems which concern them;
- contribute to the **implementation** of the Council of Europe's programme in the field of youth activities.

The EC/CoE Youth Partnership



The European Commission and the Council of Europe have different but complementary aims when it comes to youth issues. Thus, the goal of this **partnership** is to **foster synergies** between the two, based on the principle of an **equal involvement** in terms of political priorities, management, funding and visibility, working on issues that justify a **common European approach**. The activities address the needs of young people and the wider youth field, including decision makers, governmental experts, youth researchers, youth practitioners and youth organisations, **forging links** between **policy, research and practice**.

The priorities are: **Participation/citizenship, social inclusion, quality development of youth work.**

The objectives are:

Better knowledge: establishing a clear picture of current and upcoming challenges and trends in participation for all young people, based on research evidence, sociological and statistical analysis and input from within and beyond the youth sector;

Promotion of youth work: advocacy of the contribution of youth work to youth participation and social inclusion, including innovative youth work, partnerships, outreach, learning mobility and the recognition of youth work.

For more information:

www.coe.int/youth

<http://pjp-eu.coe.int>

youth@coe.int