



STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2023

COUNCIL OF MEMBERS // EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY
AMIENS, FRANCE
22-23 NOVEMBER 2019

We promote and defend the rights and interests of young people in Europe.

We represent over 100 members - National Youth Councils and International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations.

We represent tens of millions of young people in Europe. This makes us the largest collective of youth organisations in the world.

Young people must have every opportunity to reach their fullest potential in all aspects of their life. We work fiercely to protect and promote youth rights and strive for a fundamental change in how our political and economic systems respond to young people's needs. This is only possible by preserving an environment where society can thrive. Most of all, to do so we must fight the current climate crisis, which is one of the biggest threats to our generation.

We enable young people and youth representatives to meet, grow and speak out for change on issues affecting them and the young people they represent.

Our Vision is to be the voice of young people in Europe, where young people are equal citizens and are encouraged and supported to achieve their fullest potential as global citizens.

Our Mission is to be an independent, democratic, youth and volunteer-led platform, representing national youth councils and international non-governmental youth organisations from across Europe. We work to empower young people to participate actively in society to improve their own lives, by representing and advocating for their rights and interests and those of their organisations¹.

¹ [Source: Statutes of 2014 \(amended in 2018\)](#)

Pillars of change

This Strategic Plan presents three pillars of change.

Youth-friendly world

Young people and youth organisations are part of the solution for a youth-friendly world. Our engagement contributes to the betterment of the environment and the societies we live in. Young people need to be guaranteed the right to safe living conditions in a healthy environment. Current and future generations need to be educated on and equipped to access their rights and participate in democratic life at all levels.

Enabling environment for youth organisations

Flourishing youth organisations are a vital part of a healthy democracy. Civic space needs to be protected and expanded, so youth organisations can function without any barriers - financially, legally, politically and legitimately.

Thriving platform

Words are not enough: we will walk the talk. Our platform needs to be further cultivated to keep it relevant, strong and innovative. We want to remain and further strengthen being a credible actor as the main voice of young people in Europe.

We are working for sustainable development and with a rights-based approach

There is something deeply wrong in the way our world works today. Our planet and humankind are threatened by exacerbating climate crisis and increasing social injustices. Millions of young people are excluded and can't have their basic fundamental rights realised.

Young people are here to change the game. Our strength is our organisations. We get together to change the system in which we live in today. We are changing our practices and the rules that govern our societies, to make them more participatory, more inclusive and more environmentally socially and economically sustainable.

We, at the European Youth Forum, are working for sustainable development and a rights-based approach. Throughout our work for a thriving platform, an enabling environment for youth organisations and a youth-friendly world, we will ensure a holistic approach oriented towards system change and that all young people, as legitimate rights holders, will see their rights realised.

Youth-friendly world

	Priority		Change by 2023		Path to change, revised in 2021
	Youth Rights				
	Access to rights		Young people have increased access to their fundamental rights, hence reducing discrimination on the basis of age and other grounds.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The European Youth Forum will advocate for the elimination of age-based and multiple discrimination faced by young people in accessing their rights. • We will advocate for the full realisation of young people's rights, including through the implementation of a rights-based approach to policy-making. • We will advocate for youth organisations and young people to have better access to and make greater use of available legal tools and human rights mechanisms, to address violations of their rights, considering youth-friendly language as being important to the accessibility.
	Youth rights recognition		<p>Youth rights have been increasingly recognised, respected and protected.</p> <p>Rights-based policies have been adopted to ensure young people have access to all their human rights.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The European Youth Forum will advocate for young people to be recognised as rights holders, for the full recognition of youth rights by relevant institutions and for specific mechanisms and legal tools to ensure their protection.

	Social rights	<p>Young people have greater access to all social rights. Welfare systems are more rights-based, youth-inclusive, and sustainable.</p>	
	Employment & the future of work	<p>Policies have been adopted to help build a youth-inclusive future of work, where the rights and well-being of young people are better protected.</p> <p>Young people's access to quality transitions from education to employment has improved.</p>	
	Inclusion & Diversity	<p>Vulnerable and marginalised young people are better included in a more welcoming and diverse society.</p>	

- The European Youth Forum will advocate for full access to social rights for young people, including through increased and better targeted social investment, with particular attention to marginalised and vulnerable youth.
- We will advocate for welfare systems built on equality, intergenerational fairness and well-being, that focus on poverty reduction ensuring that everyone can live with dignity.
- The European Youth Forum will advocate for young people's access to social protection, investment in their skills, the protection of workers' rights and well-being, progressive parental leave policies, the building of a youth-friendly labour market and investment in a new economy, in light of the changing nature of work. This should encourage the creation and exchange of innovative ideas and take into account the impacts of globalisation, demographic change, technological advancements, and the climate crisis.
- We will advocate for young people's access to quality employment and transitions, banning unpaid internships, that allow them to reach their full potential and contribute to a fairer and more sustainable society.
- The European Youth Forum will coordinate the actions of its Member Organisations to support young people from vulnerable and marginalised backgrounds, including young migrants and refugees, to have access

	Climate crisis		In response to the climate crisis, a just transition to a carbon neutral economic system has been initiated.
	Sustainable development		
			Young people and youth organisations have worked towards creating an economic and political system that values the well-being of current and future generations within planetary boundaries supported by

to their rights, with an emphasis on ensuring their participation to policy and decision making, countering polarisation in our societies and standing for open and welcoming societies in Europe.

- The European Youth Forum will coordinate the actions of our Member Organisations to strengthen their capacity to fight the climate crisis. We will work with other youth platforms and movements in order to amplify the voices of young people to increase our expertise on climate justice, sharing the burden of climate change by protecting and respecting human rights, including for the most vulnerable young people.
 - We will advocate for a just transition from our current consumption and production models to a resource efficient and carbon neutral economy. We will support Member Organisations to be leaders in this field, as main experts and implementers.
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- The European Youth Forum will advocate for systemic change through existing governance frameworks.
 - We will advocate for policy making to be based on holistic measures of progress, beyond economic growth, that encompass human and ecological well-being, including the one of future generations.
 - We will advocate for young people and youth organisations to be recognised as essential actors in

		democratic, participatory and inclusive political structures.
	Engagement	
	Non-Formal Education	<p>The skills and competences that young people acquire in youth organisations and through various forms of non-formal education are valued and recognised in society.</p> <p>Youth organisations and those who offer forms of non-formal education reached out to young people who were not included before.</p>
	Mobility	Young people have increased access to participate in quality mobility opportunities in the fields of education, volunteering and employment. These opportunities contributed to the personal and professional development of

- preventing and resolving conflict, countering violent extremism and building and sustaining peace.
- We will advocate for post-growth policy making to be mainstreamed across all levels of governance in order to tackle the root causes of current unsustainable practices and combating insufficient action.
- The European Youth Forum will advocate for the recognition and validation of non-formal education by mainstreaming it through its advocacy and actions, whilst monitoring policy discussions related to the topic. We will support Member Organisations to be leaders in that field, as main experts and implementers, by relying on the existing work done by its Member Organisations.
- The European Youth Forum will provide tools to those who offer non-formal education to better include young people that are now left behind.
- The European Youth Forum will advocate for young people's, in particular marginalised and vulnerable youth's, increased access to quality mobility opportunities, through the enablement of more favourable legal, financial and political environments.

			young people, as well as to the cultural enrichment of society.	
	Volunteering		Young people have an increased access to quality volunteering and mobility opportunities as a result of well supported volunteering organisations, effective public policy and removed all obstacles to local and crossborder volunteering.	
	Youth Work		Youth work enjoys increased recognition in the society and youth organisations are empowered to provide youth work. As a result of developed policy infrastructure on all levels and increased resources, more young people are able to access and engage in youth work.	
	Participation		All young people - no matter the background - and youth organisations, are empowered to meaningfully contribute to policy and decision making in areas that affect their lives.	

- The European Youth Forum will monitor the policy developments related to the volunteering sector to ensure that it provides quality and recognised opportunities to the widest range possible of young people across Europe. We will support Member Organisations to be leaders in that field, as main experts and implementers.
- The European Youth Forum will coordinate the action of its Member Organisations to promote the value of youth work and safeguard its founding principles.
- The European Youth Forum will advocate for meaningful participation of young people and youth organisations to policy and decision making processes at all levels. with specific attention to the quality of youth representation mechanisms in institutional settings.
- We will advocate towards the policy-makers and decision-makers to systematically assess the impact of

		Political decisions are taken considering their long-term positive impact on young people's lives and rights and those of future generations.
	Youth mainstreaming & the Future of Europe	The youth perspective is taken into account in the discussions, shaping the future of Europe, and youth participation in policy and decision making goes beyond traditional youth policy topics.
	Digitalisation	Digitalisation is increasingly used to improve young people's well-being, safeguard our environment and improve democratic life in our societies, while respecting our fundamental rights.

- their work and decisions on young people and future generations.
- We will advocate for transparent and evidence-based policy and decision making at all levels, including data disaggregation and taking into account the potential of digitalisation and open governments methods.
- The European Youth Forum will advocate for the voice of young people and youth organisations to contribute to policy and decision making beyond traditional "youth policy" topics.
- We will coordinate the actions of our Member Organisations in order to ensure that the voice of young people and youth organisations is at the heart of the debate on the future of Europe.
- The European Youth Forum will monitor the developments related to digitalisation relevant for the lives of young people and how it will affect them. We will increase our expertise on the topic in order to be a relevant actor that can defend the rights of young people in that context, while raising awareness on its consequences among Member Organisations.

Enabling environment for youth organisations

	Priority		Change by 2023		Path to change, revised in 2021
	Recognition of youth organisations		<p>Youth organisations are enjoying increased legal and political recognition at all levels as positive contributors to the societies and youth-led representative structures.</p> <p>Youth organisations will increasingly receive sustainable and appropriate funding for their operations and their activities, without external political interference.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The European Youth Forum will advocate for youth organisations to be legally and politically recognised as legitimate voices of youth and essential actors to all aspects of society. • We will advocate for the contributions of youth organisations as youth representative and youth-led bodies to be fully taken into account in policy and decision making at all levels. • We will develop quality standards for youth representation in order to secure a real and meaningful representation of youth at national and international levels. • We will advocate for increased and more accessible structural and activity-based funding for youth organisations. • We will advocate for an enabling civic space, offering the necessary legal, political and financial safeguards for youth organisations to fulfil their roles.
	Legal				
	Political				
	Financial				

	<p>Resilient youth organisations:</p> <p>Organisational development</p> <p>Tailored support</p>	<p>Youth Organisations are better equipped to be resilient and respond to the ever-changing political environments and challenges of young people, with the capabilities ensuring they can remain independent from political developments.</p>
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- The European Youth Forum will provide support to its Member Organisations to develop and strengthen their financial, legal and political foundations, reflecting the evolving needs of Member Organisations.
- We will provide tailored support to our Member Organisations when they face struggle from governments and institutions in their respective environment, if it threatens their existence, sustainability or ability to fulfil their role freely.
- We will ensure networking and exchange opportunities among our Member Organisations, to foster an environment of constant learning based on collective intelligence and provide spaces fostering their capacities and expertise.

Thriving platform

	Priority	Change by 2023	Path to change, revised in 2021
	<p>Good governance</p>	<p>Our governance processes and structures better reflect and enable us to achieve our mission and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The European Youth Forum will undertake a review of its governance structures and practices, including reviewing guiding documents such as the Statutes and

<p>Democratic</p> <p>Transparent</p> <p>Accountable</p>	<p>vision. Our decision making is transparent and information about decisions and our work is accessible to all Member Organisations, ensuring their ownership of the platform.</p>
<p>Diverse and inclusive platform</p> <p>Diverse</p> <p>Inclusive</p> <p>Accessible</p>	<p>We will increasingly reflect the diversity of young people in the societies in which we live and will enhance the inclusive environment in the platform, enabling equal engagement for all Member Organisations.</p>

- revise where needed, to ensure that they reflect the current needs of the organisation and ensure transparent and democratic decision-making, strengthening accountability towards Member Organisations and relevant external stakeholders.
- We will ensure effective and transparent communication towards our Member Organisations and partners and ensure that information about the decisions and work of the Youth Forum is accessible.
- We will develop and implement a process to better measure our impact and use the information for continuous improvement.
- The European Youth Forum will create spaces to promote the mutual learning of Member Organisations in efforts to become more diverse and inclusive in their structures and membership, reaching out to young people from all backgrounds.
- We will mainstream diversity and inclusion across all our work, and actively work towards enhancing accessibility and addressing internal barriers to being an inclusive and representative organisation and addressing barriers of participation for young people from all backgrounds.
- We will ensure that our communications are accessible and reflect the voice of all young people in Europe and that our events are diverse, inclusive and accessible.
- We will build our capacity to monitor whether our work, policies and practices contribute to an inclusive

	Reference point on youth		We are further recognised as the reference point on youth issues in Europe and globally.
	Sustainable platform Sustainability Finances Quality employer		We have further developed and improved our practices to be a more professional, sustainable, innovative organisation which leads by example and is able to respond effectively to changing environments. We have further developed the platform as a recognised quality employer. We

- organisation by building benchmarks and evaluation tools.
- We will dedicate resources to increase the scope and diversity of youth organisations in the platform, and support integration of new Member or Associate organisations.
- The European Youth Forum will build strategic partnerships with relevant organisations to increase the positive impact we have on the lives of young people.
- We will monitor the situation of young people's access to rights in Europe, and continue strengthening research, evidence and rights-based policy proposals and coming up with concrete solutions for change.
- We will strengthen the quality of data collection and analysis on youth issues and support our Member Organisations in telling the stories of the movement to demonstrate and show our impact
- The European Youth Forum will continue to act in line with our policies and principles and further improve the ways in which we do this and work towards ensuring a safe space for all our activities and work.
- We will invest in the well-being of volunteers and secretariat members, as well as develop concrete mechanisms and action plans to ensure this.
- We will invest in our organisational capacity in a targeted way and improve existing organisational practices that reflect our policies and principles, and

		will have a more diverse funding base.
	A regional platform in a global world	
	A community of organisations	We will have an increased Member Organisations' ownership of the platform and their level of engagement in joint actions to achieve greater impact.
	A regional platform	We contribute to further development of regional youth platforms across the world and encourage increased cooperation in order to contribute to change at global level.

- seek best practices with Member Organisations and partners.
 - We will secure the resources, such as financial, personnel and skills, to enable the organisation to fully implement its strategic objectives, including diversifying funding sources, in agreement with our values.
 - We will ensure sustainability in our work, our events, and our statutory meetings, and start measuring our environmental impact
 - We will develop methods to mainstream a sustainable development approach in all our work.
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- We will upscale existing strategies and provide enhanced networking and coordination opportunities to our Member Organisations in order to strengthen their ownership of the platform, including in our joint advocacy efforts.
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- The European Youth Forum will continue developing strategic and sustainable engagements with other regional youth platforms. Where relevant we will engage with them on advocacy processes and strengthen our Member Organisations' understanding and involvement on a global level.

Rights-based platform	We apply a rights-based approach in all our work, and we support our Member Organisations to do so too. We call for the rights-based approach to be the compass for the action of institutions at all levels.
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- The European Youth Forum will advocate towards all relevant institutions for the implementation of rights-based approach in their policy-making. We will apply a rights-based approach in all our work, and build the capacity of our Member Organisations to do so in their work.

Our Environment & our Tools for Change

We are an independent organisation but do not operate in a vacuum. Over the past years, a series of decisions at global and European levels led to essential agreements, strategies and other decisions that are vital in a shared and collective responsibility to work towards sustainable development.

As we ground our work in a rights-based approach, there are obvious texts that frame our actions, like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Beyond this, there are also essential policy frameworks and our action will contribute to their realisation. While not being exhaustive, such framework include:

- **At global level:** the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Youth Strategy
- **At European level:** the European Union Youth Strategy, the European Youth Goals and the Youth Sector Strategy of the Council of Europe

We are also a brand and equipped with strong tools for change. Our platform is known for putting in place highly valued tools and processes. Throughout the four year period, we will continue to implement, mobilise and further improve our flagship projects such as the European Youth Capital, the Yo!Fest and the Youth Progress Index but also essential contributions to the change we want to see, such as the Quality Standards for Youth Policy or the European Quality Charter for Internships and Apprenticeships.

Throughout this period, we will also continue to play an important role in fostering interregional and global cooperation among youth platforms and organisations as well as supporting the Network of Universities on Youth and Development.

Only by combining forces, mobilising passion and intelligence we can work towards sustainable development and ensure the realisation of youth rights.

Implementation and evaluation

In order to achieve the change set in this Strategic Plan and to learn from it, we will put in place the following elements related to:

Implementation - In accordance with the Statutes of the European Youth Forum, the Board will adopt a yearly Implementation Plan, drafted by the Secretariat. The Implementation Plan lays down more detailed outcomes and actions within the scope of this Strategic Plan. In order to remain realistic, targeted and strategic, we will need to see how we act up each "paths to change" throughout the four year period. We will need to make sure we remain an agenda setter and an essential stakeholder on youth issues. .

Based on analysis and assessment provided by the Secretariat, the Board will decide on the sequencing of implementation under each respective "change" goals laid down in the Strategic Plan for the four year period. This should be applicable to all three pillars of change.

Revision - In order to remain accurate in our action, this Strategic Plan will be presented for review to Member Organisations in 2021, i.e. mid-term. While our "change" goals and other text will remain relevant throughout the four year period, the "path to changes" should be open to amendments and recalibration where necessary.

Evaluation - There is no plan without a proper evaluation. Throughout the four year period, we will keep track of our progress, evaluate our impact towards the change we set to realise, and report on a yearly basis to our Member Organisations. Transparency and efficiency should be fundamental principles of our evaluation mechanisms.

Flexibility - We need to remain relevant in our actions. Should there be any unexpected developments that require action of the European Youth Forum throughout the four year period, the Board should be at liberty of taking the necessary decisions to act upon them. This should be reported to Member Organisations at a later stage, within the evaluation mechanisms foreseen above.

With these elements at the heart of the realisation of this Strategic Plan, we can ensure efficient implementation, ownership by Member Organisations, and learnings that can contribute to the constant improvement of our work.

Timeline for implementation



Timeline for preparing the following strategy

2022	2023	
July-December	January-June	July-December
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous evaluation on the progress of the current strategy. • Consultations with the Member Organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further consultations with the Member Organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further developing the draft strategy reflecting the Membership's views as well as lessons learnt from the current Strategy. • Statutory meeting: Adoption of the next Strategy.
BOARD MANDATE 2021-2022	BOARD MANDATE 2023-2024	