

11th Cycle of EU Youth Dialogue CZ NWG Consultation Phase Report

Section 1

Overview of CZ NWG

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Which stakeholders were part of your NWG?

- National Youth Council (Czech Council of Children and Youth)
- National Ministry with responsibility for youth (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Interior (Department of Strategic Development and Public Administration Coordination))

Other:

- Czech National Agency for International Education and Research
- Association of Workers of Children and Youth Centres in the Czech Republic
- National Network of Local Action Groups
- Czech Streetwork Association
- Republic Forum of Parliaments of Children and Youth

Consultation methods

Consultation methods:	
Face-to-face Youth dialogue events:	YES
Online youth dialogue events:	YES
Participatory video / Participatory photo competitions:	YES
Simple social media polls (not including surveys):	YES
A survey based on the standard survey questions:	NO
A survey which was not based on the standard survey questions:	YES
Description of consultation methods:	
<p>During the consultations, we used all recommended consultation methods except for surveys based on standard survey questions. We focused on a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Thanks to this combination of methods, we reached people of different genders, ethnicities, ages, disadvantaged groups, and from different regions of the Czech Republic.</p> <p>The events were organised by us, our partners and the young delegates of the EU Youth Dialogue. The delegates themselves ran the EU and You project, training volunteers to run interactive workshops on the European Union and its values in schools.</p> <p>Among the online methods were: social media polls, a photo competition and in-depth questioning on the interactive discussion platform Demdis.</p>	

Total number of EUYD participants

Number of young people who personally participated in EUYD activities.	138
Number of young people who gave feedback on EUYD themes through any one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Surveys (either online or offline), including the EUYD common survey ● Social media opinion polls ● Leaving social media comments or reactions, where the results are used to inform consultation findings. ● Other similar consultation activities 	1038

Section 2 Priority Recommendations

European level recommendations to support achieving Youth Goal#1

Recommendation:

Which area of the commission work plan does this recommendation link to:
3.3 Supporting people, strengthening our societies and our social model

Strengthen EU and value-based education through interactive and interdisciplinary methods.

Support experiential learning, such as model European Parliament simulations, mock EU Council sessions, or project-based learning about EU-funded local initiatives a
Develop pan-European educational materials, including short animated explainer videos, classroom games, and interactive case studies that illustrate EU values through real-life examples.

Recommendation:

Which area of the commission work plan does this recommendation link to:
3.5. Protecting our democracy, upholding our values

Use creative and clear communication to promote the EU's values and create participatory formats that allow young people to express what Europe means to them.

Invest in campaigns that show related faces and voices, and don't just rely on institutional branding: Highlight, for example, a student advocating for climate justice, a nurse working across borders or a refugee who has found safety in the EU; work with young influencers, artists and content creators to spread EU values through storytelling, memes, short videos and accessible humour or/and involve young people in co-designing EU youth communication campaigns and consultations through citizen panels, youth boards or online platforms.

Recommendation:

Which area of the commission work plan does this recommendation link to:
3.5. Protecting our democracy, upholding our values

Create a 'Youth Impact Tracker' - a digital tool that shows how youth recommendations, such as those from the EUYD, influence real laws and policies.

National level recommendations to support achieving Youth Goal#1

Recommendation:

Integrate European identity and values into both formal and non-formal education

Include topics such as European history, citizenship, democracy, diversity and human rights more systematically in school curricula across Member States by Training teachers and youth workers to facilitate critical discussions about the EU and its role in young people's lives using engaging, age-appropriate methods and by developing educational toolkits and games that allow young people to explore European values through peer learning, debates or simulations of EU decision-making.

Recommendation:

Make the link between EU values and everyday life visible at local level and strengthen a shared European identity by connecting values with personal experiences

Promote local storytelling where citizens and young people share their own experiences of EU policies (e.g. working abroad, voting rights, education opportunities) through blogs, podcasts or local media and initiatives that make Europe tangible in people's everyday lives—through youth exchanges, intercultural camps, or twinning projects that foster connections across borders. Creating a city youth council to have an advisory voice in local decisions to know mechanisms of participation through this experience.

Participation in concrete decisions: for example, distributing part of the budget through a youth vote - for example, 50,000 CZK a year for a "project by young people for the city".

Recommendation:

Increase the visibility of EU-funded initiatives and projects through creative tools like QR codes, mobile exhibitions or pop-up events in rural areas, making the EU more relatable, accessible and locally anchored.

Section 3 Guiding questions report

Guiding question #1 How can we ensure that all young people in the EU feel a sense of belonging to Europe and of being a part of the EU?

Overall messages

Insights gathered during youth consultations show that young people do not build their European identity based on abstract institutions but through personal experiences, shared values, and everyday encounters with European culture. When asked what makes them feel European, participants most often referred to moments of mobility, cross-cultural exchange, and benefits of EU membership.

One strong theme that emerged was the importance of education and awareness-raising about the European Union. Young people suggested that European identity should be discussed in greater depth in primary and secondary schools through engaging workshops, interactive lectures and discussions with experts. Teachers need training to be motivated to include EU-related topics across various subjects – geography (the Schengen area), history (European integration), civic education (EU values and institutions). Students should understand how EU decisions affect their daily lives and why these decisions are important.

Another key proposal was to increase the visibility of EU initiatives, opportunities, and especially values. Many young people do not know how the EU supports their education, mobility or local projects and what are the shared views of a common European space (both physical and mental). Highlighting the results of youth-targeted policies through social media, school events, and mainstream media could help create a stronger connection. Young people also called for transparent communication about the real impact how their voices are reflected in policy-making.

Young people emphasised the role of personal and collective experiences in shaping European identity through learning about it. Programs like Erasmus+, DiscoverEU, or European Solidarity Corps allow young people to travel, meet peers from other countries, and reflect on what unites them. Such programs should be better promoted and made more inclusive for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. One recommendation was to ensure that if a young person is not accepted into one project, they are offered an alternative to avoid discouragement and support long-term engagement.

Culture and shared history also play a central role. Participants in the debates stressed the need to show the interconnectedness of European cultures and to highlight not only the differences but above all what we have in common. As an example, reflecting on how the Lennon Wall in Prague has become a personal symbol of peace and freedom shared across Europe.

When it comes to reaching those who are disengaged or skeptical young people, participants proposed using youth-friendly, accessible communication (short videos, podcasts, social media content, or influencer collaborations) tailored to different age groups and educational backgrounds. Messaging should be transparent and balanced,

acknowledging both benefits and challenges of EU membership. Importantly, it should show the relevance of EU decisions to their everyday lives such as the impact of EU legislation on digital devices, environmental standards, or education.

Finally, young people called for more participatory mechanisms (online and offline) where they can express their views, co-create initiatives, and interact with EU representatives. These platforms should be inclusive, easy to access, and responsive. Celebratory events such as Europe Day, local debates, pub quizzes, or sports challenges were also proposed as informal ways to strengthen belonging and build community across Europe.

Messages from young people with fewer opportunities

Responses from marginalized groups of young people are included among the main responses. Most of the events were set up so that young people with fewer opportunities could participate. These were, for example, events in structurally disadvantaged regions of the country or online events disseminated through our partner organisations working with people with limited opportunities.

Guiding question #2 How can we make sure all people in the EU share common EU values?

Overall messages

Consultations with young people revealed that the core values of the European Union — such as democracy, cooperation, equality and freedom — are widely supported and appreciated by youth. These values are not seen as outdated or irrelevant. However, young people often feel disconnected from how these values are communicated and enacted. They struggle to relate abstract EU principles to their everyday lives. Therefore, efforts to strengthen the shared understanding of EU values must focus on meaningful education, authentic communication, and accessible participation.

One of the clearest findings from the consultations was the need to improve civic and EU-related education in schools. Young people often stated that they learned very little about the EU, and when they did, it was presented in a dry, theoretical way. Complex EU processes are perceived as difficult to understand and disconnected from real life. In one workshop activity, participants designed “houses of European values” and reflected on how these values are built, supported, or threatened. They agreed that values cannot be imposed — they must be experienced and co-created.

One particularly appreciated idea was the use of simulations of the European Parliament or other interactive formats, where students can step into the role of decision-makers. This experiential learning fosters a deeper understanding of how values such as democracy, dialogue, and compromise work in practice. Young people recommended that schools should integrate EU-related topics across various subjects and provide real-life examples of how EU values influence policies.

Many young people emphasised that values such as democracy, solidarity, and equality are not just principles to learn about — they must be lived. To share these values, people must experience them in action. EU programmes like Erasmus+ or the European Solidarity Corps are well-regarded, but participants often feel they lack direct influence on EU-level decisions. Therefore, the EU should create more opportunities for youth participation at local, national, and European levels. These can include youth-led initiatives, student projects, parliamentary simulations, debate clubs, and participatory grant programmes. Accessible digital platforms where young people can vote on topics, share feedback, or contribute to campaigns were also proposed. Such initiatives must be inclusive and designed to reach young people from diverse backgrounds — including those who may not feel represented or connected to the EU. Ensuring that their voices are not only heard but visibly reflected in decision-making is essential to building trust and ownership.

According to social media surveys, many young people associate the EU with positive concepts like unity and peace, but also with complexity, distance, or even boredom. EU values are often communicated through formal and institutional language that fails to engage younger audiences. To make these values resonate, young people recommended using the platforms and formats they already use (short videos, memes, Reels, podcasts,

and influencer collaborations). Instead of abstract campaigns, communication should show real-life stories of how EU values are lived: stories of students studying abroad, communities helped by EU funds, or activists shaping greener policies. Highlighting human stories makes the values visible, tangible, and inspiring. Values should also be more visible in policy decisions.

For values to be shared, they must be experienced as meaningful and relevant. Some young participants noted that while they support the idea of European values, they do not clearly see how the EU affects their everyday lives. However, the EU influences many concrete aspects: food safety, air quality, labour rights, access to healthcare, and freedom of movement. These links should be communicated more clearly — not only in schools, but in public spaces, media, and daily interactions with EU-funded services.

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Guiding question #3 How can we build trust between young people and democracy within the EU?

Overall messages

Building trust between young people and democracy in the European Union requires more than promoting institutional values. It calls for a sustained effort to make democratic processes understandable, relevant, and inclusive. Findings from a questionnaire focused on trust in EU democracy, reveal that while many young people value the EU in principle, they often feel disconnected from its procedures and doubtful of their own influence within them.

A recurring theme across youth discussions was the lack of understanding of how the EU functions. Many participants admitted they “do not understand how decisions are made in the EU” and perceive the institutions as complex or remote. This confusion fosters mistrust. While some expressed curiosity and a willingness to learn, others found the topic abstract or “boring.” However, when participants were presented with concrete examples of how the EU impacts their lives most acknowledged its relevance. This suggests that trust grows when abstract structures are made tangible. In the questionnaire, students proposed that schools implement simulation exercises such as role-playing the European Parliament or Council negotiations. These methods would not only demystify EU institutions but also show how compromise and decision-making actually work.

Young people repeatedly emphasized that feeling heard is essential to trust. Many stated that while they are often encouraged to “get involved,” they rarely see how their participation translates into real influence. This disconnect contributes to mistrust in democracy. Research findings showed that participants were significantly more likely to trust EU democracy if its processes were clearer and more responsive. In fact, 70% of participants in one part of the dialogue said they felt powerless because the ways to participate were unclear.

To address this, EU institutions should develop more youth-friendly feedback mechanisms, digital participation platforms, and participatory events that demonstrate responsiveness. While Erasmus+ and DiscoverEU are well-known and appreciated, knowledge of other opportunities (for example the European Solidarity Corps) remains low. Visibility, guidance, and follow-up are critical. Participants recommended creating accessible online tools where young people can vote on priority topics, propose ideas, and see how their input is taken forward.

While most youth describe the EU positively using words like “unity,” “cooperation,” and “strength,” they simultaneously described EU discourse as “dry,” “complicated,” or “irrelevant to real life.” These seemingly contradictory perceptions point to a communication gap. Young people are aligned with EU values, but not with how they are presented.

Finally, trust in democracy increases when young people see its impact in their own communities. Schools, NGOs, and local institutions should highlight youth-led initiatives, civic campaigns, and EU-funded projects and especially political decisions that created real

change. Sharing these stories connects democracy with lived experience and helps young people understand not only that change is possible—but that they can be part of it.

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Guiding question #4 Across the EU, how can we make sure new laws, policies and decisions are youth friendly?

Overall messages

Throughout consultations with young people it became clear that youth want to be active co-creators of EU policies. However, they frequently experience political processes as overly complex, distant, and disconnected from their everyday lives. To ensure that new EU laws and decisions are genuinely youth-friendly, the EU must address five critical areas: accessibility of information, early engagement, education on decision-making processes, feedback mechanisms, and visible relevance.

Young people consistently expressed frustration with the technical and formal language often used to describe EU policies. They called for communication that is creative, human, and adapted to their realities. Suggestions included using humour, memes, and social media formats such as short reels, podcasts, or influencer content to explain current EU developments and how they affect youth.

Young participants strongly supported integrating EU topics in primary education — not just in secondary or tertiary. Basic knowledge of EU institutions, values, and democratic processes should be part of the core curriculum. Moreover, young people proposed combining civic education with cultural and social experiences. Ideas such as a Europe-themed festival on 9 May (Europe Day), with international food, music, debates, and youth-led talks, were considered both engaging and educational. This blend of formal and informal learning helps make the EU visible, relatable, and aspirational.

Many youth admitted they don't understand how EU decisions are made. Workshops and simulation activities — such as Model European Parliament sessions or mock Council meetings — were cited as particularly effective methods to help young people grasp how new laws and policies are developed. Providing educational resources not only to students, but also to teachers, was seen as essential.

Young people are not only asking to be heard — they want to see how their voices shape decisions. Youth consultations and forums are valuable only if there is clear follow-up: What changed as a result? What was taken into account? Participants recommended using social media and short video briefings by MEPs or Commissioners to communicate outcomes. They also emphasized using accessible language — for instance, replacing difficult terms like “participation” with everyday language that resonates.

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Guiding question #5 How can we better use the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes to support young people to become active citizens?

Overall messages

Consultations with young people across various EU contexts indicate that Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) are among the most recognized and appreciated EU programmes. They are widely associated with mobility, intercultural exchange, personal growth, and opportunities for new experiences. However, while these programmes are valued, their potential to foster long-term active citizenship is not always fully realised. To enhance their civic impact, the EU must ensure that Erasmus+ and ESC are more visible, inclusive, and explicitly linked to civic engagement and democratic participation.

Young people described Erasmus+ and ESC as transformative, particularly in terms of personal development, language learning, and gaining confidence. Yet many participants did not initially connect these experiences with broader civic competencies. This signals a need to frame and design these programmes more intentionally as tools for nurturing democratic values, community involvement, and European solidarity. Embedding structured reflection within the programme cycle—before, during, and after mobility—can help participants articulate and internalise their civic learning. For example, participants could be encouraged to set personal goals related to active citizenship at the outset and share their insights through community reporting, storytelling, or local follow-up activities upon return.

Participants also called for better recognition of informal learning outcomes and civic contributions made through Erasmus+ and ESC (e.g., teamwork, leadership, cross-cultural communication, advocacy) could help participants understand and articulate how their experiences relate to active citizenship. Collaboration with local authorities and schools to formally acknowledge these achievements could further strengthen civic links and support young people's engagement in local democratic life.

Moreover, participants suggested that Erasmus+ and ESC projects should more clearly integrate local civic dimensions. While international mobility is central to both programmes, young people expressed interest in opportunities to contribute meaningfully to their home communities either before departure or after returning. Local volunteering, peer mentorship, civic mini-projects, or youth-led campaigns linked to their European experiences could reinforce the idea that civic responsibility is ongoing and rooted both locally and transnationally.

Finally, ongoing engagement mechanisms such as alumni networks, civic incubators, or digital platforms for follow-up action could support continued involvement beyond the programme duration. These platforms should offer opportunities for peer exchange, collaborative projects, and dialogue with EU institutions. In this way, Erasmus+ and ESC can evolve from isolated experiences into long-term catalysts for active citizenship across Europe.

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Guiding question #6 What updates might be needed to the European Youth Goals, as part of revising the EU Youth Strategy?

Overall messages

Please report here a summary of general trends and information coming from young people. (Suggested word limit 500 words).

We did not ask this question explicitly due to time limitations. However, the themes of the European Youth Strategy and the Youth Goals were present throughout almost all events and activities. The most frequently recurring topics were information, participation, and mental health.

The topic of information relates especially to Youth Goal 4: Information and Constructive Dialogue and Youth Goal 1: Connecting EU with Youth. The EU–youth connection is addressed throughout this document, so we just add at this point that the topic of information in general appears to be central in the background of the political, economic and social events of recent years (including the disinformation war) and that young people feel the need to address it. However, Youth Goal 4 has not yet been addressed in any consultations.

Participation was another strong cross-cutting theme across all consultations. While this topic has already been addressed by former Presidency Trios, young people continue to report a lack of opportunities to participate meaningfully – and, importantly, a lack of feedback following their involvement. Youth goal 9 should be adapted to emphasize the importance of feedback and the impact of participation.

Women's health emerged as a distinct and often overlooked issue that young people perceive as insufficiently addressed. We propose including this topic under both Youth Goal 2: Equality for All Genders and Youth Goal 5: Mental Health and Wellbeing.

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