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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0512/2022**

21.11.2022

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the European Year of Youth 2022 legacy  
(2022/2953(RSP))

**Sabine Verheyen, Tomasz Frankowski, Michaela Šojdrová**

on behalf of the PPE Group

**Hélène Fritzon, Petra Kammerevert, Massimiliano Smeriglio**

on behalf of the S&D Group

**Laurence Farreng**

on behalf of the Renew Group

**Diana Riba i Giner**

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**Niyazi Kizilyürek**

on behalf of The Left Group

**B9-0512/2022**

**European Parliament resolution on the European Year of Youth 2022 legacy (2022/2953(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Article 165(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to Articles 165(4) and 166(4) of the TFEU,
- having regard to Decision (EU) 2021/2316 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 December 2021 on a European Year of Youth (2022)<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to the Bratislava Roadmap of 16 September 2016,
- having regard to the Rome Declaration of 25 March 2017,
- having regard to the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan of 4 March 2021,
- having regard to the Council of Europe’s recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 on youth work of 31 May 2017,
- having regard to the Council of Europe’s youth sector strategy 2030 of 23 January 2020,
- having regard to the Council of Europe Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life,
- having regard to the Council of Europe’s recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4 on supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood,
- having regard to the resolution of the Council of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on a framework for European cooperation in the youth field: The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission’s European Education Area action plan of 30 September 2020,
- having regard to the Commission’s Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027),
- having regard to its resolution on shaping digital education policy of 25 March 2021<sup>4</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 202 7.6.2016, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 462, 28.12.2021, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 456, 18.12.2018, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 494, 8.12.2021, p. 2.

- having regard to the Council conclusions on smart youth work of 7 December 2017<sup>5</sup>,
  - having regard to the Council conclusions on young people and the future of work of 5 June 2019<sup>6</sup>,
  - having regard to the Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on Digital Youth Work of 3 October 2019<sup>7</sup>,
  - having regard to the Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the Framework for establishing a European Youth Work Agenda<sup>8</sup> and its implementation through the so-called ‘Bonn Process’,
  - having regard to its resolution of 8 October 2020 on the Youth Guarantee<sup>9</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 17 December 2020 on a strong social Europe for Just Transitions<sup>10</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 10 February 2021 on the impact of Covid-19 on youth and on sport<sup>11</sup>,
  - having regard to the Commission President’s State of the Union address of 15 September 2021,
  - having regard to its position of 18 October 2022 on the proposal for a Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States<sup>12</sup>,
  - having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the EU Youth Test,
  - having regard to the conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe as regards education and youth,
  - having regard to Rule 132(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the European Year of Youth (‘the Year’) was announced by Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in her State of the Union speech on 15 September 2021, emphasising the importance of young Europeans in building a better future – greener, more inclusive, sustainable and digital – and giving them more and better opportunities, by ensuring that their voices are heard and by putting them in the spotlight after the

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<sup>5</sup> OJ C 418, 7.12.2017, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> OJ C 189, 5.6.2019, p. 28.

<sup>7</sup> OJ C 414, 10.12.2019, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> OJ C 415, 1.12.2020, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> OJ C 395, 29.9.2021, p. 101.

<sup>10</sup> OJ C 445, 29.10.2021, p. 75.

<sup>11</sup> OJ C 465, 17.11.2021, p. 82.

<sup>12</sup> Texts adopted, P9\_TA(2022)0359.

COVID-19 pandemic;

- B. whereas the Year was conceived to achieve the four general objectives, namely to renew the positive perspectives for young people and help them overcome the effects of the pandemic on their lives; to support and empower young people to become active and engaged citizens; to better inform young generations about opportunities available to them from public policies at EU, national, regional and local levels; and to mainstream youth policy across all relevant Union policy fields;
- C. whereas these objectives build on a number of EU policy initiatives already in place, from the European Youth Guarantee to the European Youth Strategy and its EU Youth Dialogue, the European Youth Work Agenda and prospects for a European Education Area, among others; whereas these policies have identified much needed and urgent objectives to effectively improve living, learning and working conditions for all young people, yet their implementation remains largely fragmented and incomplete; whereas, therefore, the Year is expected to serve as an accelerator to implement in full these policies, through a coordinated approach, a solid methodology and process, and give young people more and better participation opportunities as change-makers in society;
- D. whereas young people's most common expectation for the Year as regards democracy is for decision-makers to listen more to their demands and act on them (72 %) and to support their personal, social and professional development (71 %) <sup>13</sup>;
- E. whereas youth organisations are among the main vehicles for the participation of young people in public life and for access to development possibilities through mobility and non-formal and informal learning opportunities; whereas the civic space for many youth organisations is shrinking in several EU Member States <sup>2</sup>;
- F. whereas disparities persist between and within Member States, often negatively impacting young people with fewer opportunities from rural or remote areas and those from all types of minorities with regard to opportunities for education, skills acquisition and work; whereas too many young people in Europe find themselves in precarious living conditions and are faced with major financial risks in order to pursue their studies and acquire the skills and experiences they need to have a quality start to their working life;
- G. whereas young people are among the most affected by the economic, psychological and social side effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic and political tensions caused by the war of aggression waged by Russia against Ukraine, including rising bills as a consequence of the devastating energy crisis and the gloomy prospects in view of rising environmental degradation, putting at risk their physical and mental wellbeing;
- H. whereas the existing tools and resources for young people and their inclusion in policy-

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<sup>13</sup> 2022 Youth and Democracy in the European Year of Youth Eurobarometer published 6 May 2022.

<sup>2</sup> [Shrinking space for civil society: its impact on young people and their organisations](#)  
[Resolution on Combating shrinking space with expanding opportunities for youth organisations, national youth councils and international non-governmental youth organisations](#)  
[Voicify: Part of Europe](#)

making are often not made available and visible for all, and as a result many young people and youth-led organisations are not aware of them, or they are not sufficiently consulted or involved by decision-makers in policy-making processes;

- I. whereas, in this respect, the success of the Year should not only be measured against the backdrop of the number of events organised or their attendance, but also on the mechanisms and policies set in motion or advanced to positively impact the position and role of young people in society;
- J. whereas the extremely rushed adoption of the decision has proven very challenging for the EU institutions and the stakeholders to prepare the Year adequately and with the aim of achieving the objectives set; whereas this is all the more regrettable given the pressing needs for improving young people's lives in Europe; whereas in these circumstances, the available time was not sufficient to implement a meaningful and impactful Year; whereas lessons should be learnt from this experience for future European Years;
- K. whereas the Year is already drawing to a close and preparations are under way to ensure its lasting impact;

#### ***Conditions for establishing and deploying European Years***

1. Welcomes the European Year of Youth 2022 as the EU's strong commitment to young and future generations; stresses that during the COVID-19 pandemic, young people were most impacted by the sanitary measures, which affected their access to a social and cultural life and damaged their access to education;
2. Deeply regrets the condition of the launch of the Year, especially the hasty timespan for adopting the regulation, which delayed the implementation and the financing of many projects; regrets, furthermore, that it impacted communication on the Year in Member States and to youth organisations and the young people themselves; calls, in this context, on the Commission to extend the Year until the next Europe Day on 9 May 2023 without prejudice to the start of the European Year of Skills;
3. Deplores the fact that decisions on future European Years may still be subject to late announcements and calls on the Commission to have the relevant institutions and the civil society concerned fully involved well ahead of the starting date of any future European Year, so as to maximise their impact; highlights that announcing Years only a few months prior to their planned commencement cannot become a new norm, as this jeopardises the strength of the whole project; calls on the Commission in the future to ensure that European Years can be prepared in due time for all stakeholders;
4. Welcomes the interinstitutional final conference on the Year entitled 'Claim the future' on 6 December 2022; welcomes also the fact that the content was proposed and co-organised by young people; acknowledges that the chosen topics focused on an inclusive Europe through education, a digital Europe through education, European wellbeing through mainstreaming mental healthcare, and European wellbeing through accessible mental healthcare; calls on the Commission in this respect to include and reflect these topics and conclusions in the legacy of the Year;

5. Calls on the Commission to propose a communication setting out the follow-up to the Year with a view to achieving its four objectives, providing support to new initiatives and allowing them to grow, achieving the full mainstreaming of EU youth policies across all policy fields and launching an assessment and reporting back to Parliament regarding the Year's concrete contribution to the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 and the EU Youth Work Agenda;
6. Highlights that a tangible and concrete legacy should consist on the one hand of the implementation of a methodology on how to involve and listen to young people in the entire EU and on the other hand of the implementation of new European and national policies directly deriving from the Year's outcome;
7. Welcomes the financial contribution and initiatives made by the Commissions' various directorates-general; notes, however, that some of the described activities would have taken place in any case, or have little to do with the objectives of the Year; calls on the Commission to clarify which projects are newly created in the framework of the Year and which already existed and have been relabelled for the purpose of the Year; insists on having a clear picture of the exact financing of the Year by the Commission and the Member States;

***Ensuring meaningful youth engagement and involvement in policy- and decision-making***

8. Highlights that one third of the Conference on the Future of Europe's citizens panel participants were young people aged between 16 and 25; supports the proposals made by the plenary of the Conference on the Future of Europe on 9 May 2022, particularly the ones that directly or indirectly called for the fostering of policies focusing on youth;
9. Calls on the Commission to adopt a fully-fledged 'EU Youth Test' to ensure the meaningful engagement, participation and commitment of young people in the preparation of all EU policies, establish a systematic impact assessment on its proposals to ensure that they promote and reflect the needs of young people and to take mitigation measures if they have a negative impact; believes that such a process is essential in order to take into account young people's opinions, improve the positive impact of EU policies on them and make those clearly visible to them, as the next generation is directly concerned by policies being shaped today; stresses that the EU Youth Test must not merely become a bureaucratic check-list but it should engage people in a holistic way in order to achieve its aim; considers that the Test's outcomes should inform and be connected to already existing processes such as the EU Youth Dialogue;
10. Proposes to follow up on the Year with regular structured dialogue with young people in its Committee on Culture and Education, with the idea of proposing a democratic platform for the open and inclusive participation of young people in the policy-making process at EU level;
11. Reiterates its request to the Commission and the Member States to develop and deploy global and EU citizenship modules in national curricula and learning mobility experiences to contribute to a more active and participatory citizenship, a more youth-inclusive political system and to combat racism in all its forms, discrimination and gender-based violence, with the aim of debunking prejudices and building inclusive societies free of structural racism that promote tolerance, diversity and gender-equality;

calls on the Commission to provide the necessary tools and opportunities for teachers to actively engage in creating an EU common framework on citizenship education, for example through Erasmus+ teaching academies or Jean Monnet Teacher Training;

12. Sees high potential in having decentralised events to bring the EU closer to young people and proposes to set up a yearly EU festival of culture and ideas fostering local debates and cultural activities on all topical issues of young people's choosing around the symbolic date of 9 May;

### ***Stepping up measures catering for young people's wellbeing***

13. Underlines the link between young people's wellbeing and the learning and working opportunities and capacities, as well as standard of living, available for them in their country of residence; notes with concern that young people are experiencing increasing anxiety and mental distress caused by, among other things, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the increased cost of living and energy poverty and the climate emergency;
14. Reiterates its call for the Commission and Member States to draft a European Plan for mental health protection in education and training, including informal and non-formal learning, in order to care for our younger generation's wellbeing in all its forms; insists on the importance of providing regular psychological support for learners, teachers and educators as part of the education system; encourages the intensification of links between educational institutions and cultural, youth and sport organisations as well as networks of psychological counsellors to provide extra-curricular activities in order to increase youth social commitment;
15. Is concerned by the severe impact of inflation, surging housing and utility prices and the scarcity of accommodation in some destination countries on youth mobility, impeding especially those with fewer opportunities; highlights the importance of ensuring that EU programmes provide sufficient financial support to young people and youth-led organisations to undertake mobility experiences, be they for learning, training or solidarity purposes; in this regard, calls on the Commission and the Member States to diligently adapt the level of financial support provided to young people for mobility experiences to ensure the socially inclusive dimension of EU programmes;

### ***Combating precariousness among young people and providing a quality start to working life***

16. Reiterates its calls on Member States to implement the Child Guarantee to ensure that every child in need has access to free and effective early childhood education and care, quality education including school-based activities, healthcare, and effective access to healthy nutrition and decent housing; calls, furthermore, on Member States to implement the reinforced Youth Guarantee ensuring that every young person receives a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeships and traineeships according to their needs; welcomes the Commission's actions to facilitate the exchange of good practices and the coordination of national action plans in this respect, and encourages it to keep up efforts until the objectives are fully achieved;
17. Insists on the essential role of youth work to address the challenges young people face,

in particular when it comes to its contribution to personal development, wellbeing and self-realisation; calls on the Member States to better recognise the value of youth work and to sustainably reconstruct and strengthen the structures of youth work wherever needed;

18. Calls on the Commission and Member States to propose a common legal framework to ensure fair remuneration for traineeships and apprenticeships; insists that decent working conditions and fair remuneration should be guaranteed to all trainees in order to avoid exploitative practices;
19. Stresses that school-to-work transition depends very much on the recognition of young people's degrees, qualifications or learning periods acquired abroad; regrets that hurdles persist in this area and urges the Commission and the Member States to render such recognition automatic, leveraging in particular the possibilities offered by digitalisation; encourages the Member States to also validate and recognise the competences and skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning experiences and youth work alongside formal education throughout the Union and outside the EU; reiterates that this should not undermine the right to high-quality higher education;

#### *Investing in the next generation through education*

20. Highlights that investing in youth learning opportunities has a direct impact not only on young people's future lives as individuals, but also on the economic health and cohesion of society as a whole; emphasises the need to address the challenges young people who are discriminated against or have fewer opportunities are facing in accessing different levels of formal, informal and non-formal educational frameworks, among others young women, young members of the LGBTIQ+ communities, young migrants, young asylum seekers and refugees and learners with disabilities and impairments; calls, therefore, on the Member States to significantly increase public spending on education, including digital education, vocational and educational training, upskilling and reskilling; calls on the Commission to foster common indicators in order to assess the impact of investment, including NextGenerationEU, and reforms in advancing dedicated youth and education policies;
21. Reiterates its call on the Member States to fully implement the European Education Area by 2025; welcomes, therefore, the progress that had been already achieved in certain Member States; calls on the Member States to take the adequate measures needed to reinforce their digital infrastructure, connectivity and educational curricula and to adequately train teachers and educators and to provide guidelines to foster digital literacy in order to enhance new teaching methods and equip young people to effectively access information, debunk disinformation and address online violence such as incitement to hatred, racism, online child sexual abuse, gender-based violence, cyberbullying and ghosting; recalls the existing educational gender gap in science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics (STEAM) and the need for corrective measures to fill this gap; looks forward to the Commission's mid-term review of the Digital Education Action Plan (2012-2027);

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22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.