

Local youth work and democracy

A European conference under the upcoming Belgian Presidency
of the Council of the European Union in 2024

20-23 February 2024

At The EGG (Rue Bara 175, 1070 Brussels)

Call for inspiring practices

The upcoming Belgian EU Presidency (1/1/2024 – 30/6/2024) foresees to organize the European conference 'Local youth work and democracy', with the aim of contributing to the goals of the Belgian EU Presidency in the youth and youth work policy area. The event will take place on 20-23 February 2024. The main aim of the conference is to discuss the role of local youth work in enhancing youth engagement and participation in local communities. This event builds on the synergies deriving from the Strategic National Agency Cooperation projects, Europe Goes Local (coordinated by JINT vzw) and Democracy Reloading (coordinated by BIJ).

The organizing team is looking for inspiring practices to be presented at the conference.

Background information

The Belgian EU presidency (1/1/2024 – 30/6/2024) foresees furthering European Youth (work) policy as one of the priorities on its agenda. New inputs for youth work in the European Union, with a focus on the local level, should be developed, building on the first EU resolution on youth work from 2010, the first Council of Europe recommendation on youth work from 2017 and the resolution on the framework for setting a European youth work agenda from 2020.

The inputs for youth work(development) will also be in line with the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 and will take into account the major impact on youth and youth work of recent developments, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the climate crisis, the war in Ukraine, the ongoing inflation, the migration crisis, et cetera, as well as future developments in the field of youth work in Europe. Additionally, close cooperation with the European Strategic Network Cooperations Europe Goes Local and Democracy reloading is foreseen.

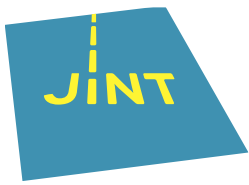
The conference 'Local youth work and democracy' – as a flagship event of the Belgian EU Presidency – will contribute to this political process.

The objectives of the event

- Take stock of what has been achieved in local youth work and youth participation
- Discuss the prerequisites and components of the basic youth work offer, paying special attention to the links between this offer, youth participation and social inclusion in the local communities
- Explore how youth work can be approached as a continuum, involving and addressing young people already from their early age
- Engage young people in a European discussion on local democracy
- Discuss the role and tasks of local and regional authorities in the provision of quality youth work and youth participation in decision-making

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- Explore the needs of local and regional authorities for the provision of quality youth work and youth participation in municipal decision making
- Highlight inspiring practices

Thematic areas

- Youth work and participation from childhood:
 - Youth work as a continuum contributing to the personal and social development of young people through non-formal and informal learning from childhood through adolescence until young adulthood
 - Youth work as a promoter of play and playful methods and a domain which brings an added value and joy to the life of young people through participatory methods and structures
- Quality local youthwork:
 - Frameworks for local youth work: local autonomy, allocation of resources, lobbying for youth work and advocating for youth participation
 - Frameworks, structures and methods for knowledge-based youth work
- Reach out and inclusive youth work:
 - The role of local youth work in enhancing inclusivity and providing equal opportunities for young people to participate in their local communities
- Participatory environments and spaces to participate:
 - Participatory culture and environment in the local community and youth work that enables young people to become active citizens
 - Sustainable structures, frameworks and meaningful mechanisms of local youth participation
- Information, critical thinking and active citizenship:
 - The role of youth work in promoting critical thinking, human rights and active citizenship
- Roles and needs of municipalities:
 - in supporting local youth work and enhancing youth participation and local democracy
 - for the implementation of key youth policy areas on local level.

Participants

Number of participants: 350 people from all member states of the European Union and the Council of Europe

Participants will be invited as:

- National delegations, which include:
 - Young people active in local youth work, in youth councils or NGOs (15-20 y.o. age group)
 - Representatives of local and regional authorities (both administrative staff and elected politicians)
 - Youth workers engaged directly with young people in local youth work or representing umbrella organisations of local youth work
 - Decision-makers at the national level who have influence on youth work and youth policy making as well as on providing the means and frameworks of local youth work provision

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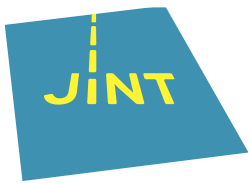
Vlaanderen
verbeelding werkt

Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.



EUROPEAN
SOLIDARITY
CORPS





- National Agencies of the Erasmus+ youth programme and the European Solidarity Corps
- Representatives of European institutions/organisations
- **Presenters of inspiring inputs: the selected presenters of inspiring inputs (about 50 people) will be invited directly by the organiser of the event. The selected input providers will be welcome (not obligated) to stay for the whole duration of the event and fully participate in every session.**

Costs and fees

- All costs of travel (2nd class), board and lodging incurred in relation to the event will be covered by the organisers for the selected input providers. A presenter fee may also be offered, depending on the status of the presenter.

Application procedure

The practices we are looking for:

- Initiatives that have an impact on local youth work and youth participation, implemented by a European, national or local organisation, institution or authority
- They belong to the areas of policy, practice or research in thematic fields the conference will tackle (see Thematic areas)
- They showcase the use and/or development of concrete tools, frameworks, structures, practices, methods or projects that can inspire the participants of the event when they wish to strive for quality in their work

Does your organisation or institution have an inspiring practice to share at the flagship conference of the upcoming Belgian EU Presidency? Please, submit your application through the forms that you can find on the website of Europe Goes Local (<https://europegoeslocal.eu/good-practice-form/>) or Democracy Reloading. (<https://democracy-reloading.eu/practices-and-stories/>). Applications will be evaluated and treated the same way regardless the website of submission. It's up to you which platform you choose to submit your practice.

Deadline for applications: 10 September 2023 (inclusive).

Selection procedure:

The conference will be run by a team of facilitators and rapporteurs. This team will select the inspiring inputs for the event by the 25th of September. Each applicant will be notified by the 30th of September.

All selected inspiring practices will be displayed on the website of Europe Goes Local or Democracy Reloading (depending on which platform is used for the submission).

Both projects aim at promoting good practices through their media channels. Europe Goes Local also creates in-depth interviews about inspiring practices. The providers of selected practices will be contacted for an interview by the media team of the project.

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