European Year of Youth 2022

2021/0328(COD) - 14/10/2021 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to designate 2022 as the European Year of Youth.

PROPOSED ACT: Decision of the European Parliament and the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: the EU Youth Strategy is the framework for EU youth policy cooperation for 2019-2027, based on the Council Resolution of 26 November 2018.

The Strategy recognises that young people are architects of their own lives, contribute to positive change in society and enrich the EU's ambitions, and that youth policy can contribute to create a space where young people can seize opportunities and relate to European values.

The **COVID-19 pandemic** has had an unprecedented – and uneven – impact on education, employment, social inclusion and mental health of the young people. The economic crisis provoked by lockdowns has hit young Europeans in particular. However, young people have shown intergenerational solidarity and have also managed to show great resilience and have been involved in the mitigation of the pandemic's impact.

On 15 September 2021, President von der Leyen announced in her State of the Union Address that the European Commission will propose to make 2022 the European Year of Youth.

In its resolution on the impact of COVID-19 on youth and on sport, the European Parliament underlined the particularly acute impact the current pandemic has had on young people not in education, employment, or training (NEETs) and highlighted the need to tackle the problems faced by young people from vulnerable groups. It urged the Commission and the Member States to take all the necessary measures to counter the disastrous effects on youth employment and stressed the role of volunteering in developing life and work skills for young people.

CONTENT: the Commission proposes to make **2022 the European Year of Youth**.

Objective

The objectives of the European Year of Youth are to encourage and support the efforts of the Union, the Member States, regional and local authorities to **honour youth in a post-pandemic perspective**. It is an occasion to raise awareness on European opportunities ahead for young people.

During the European Year of Youth, the Commission, in cooperation with the European Parliament, Member States, regional and local authorities, stakeholders and young people themselves, will:

- highlight how the **green and digital transitions** offer a renewed perspective for the future and opportunities to counter negative impact of the pandemic on young people and on the society at large;

- draw inspiration from the actions, vision and insights of young people to **further strengthen and invigorate the common European Union project** and listening to young people, taking into account their concerns and supporting them in developing concrete, inclusive opportunities, while making an optimal use of Union instruments;

- encourage all young people, especially young people with fewer opportunities, from disadvantaged backgrounds or belonging to vulnerable groups to **become active and engaged citizens** as well as actors of change, inspired by a European sense of belonging. This includes additional efforts at building capacity for youth participation and civic engagement among young people from diverse backgrounds in key consultation processes, such as the Conference on the Future of Europe;

- promote opportunities for young people arising from the public policies at EU, national, regional level and local level in order to support their personal, social and professional development in a green, digital and inclusive world.

The European Year of Youth seeks to:

- be implemented using existing EU programmes and delivery mechanisms already in place and the drive provided by NextGenerationEU;

- give a unique impetus to the creation of a European Education Area by creating a genuine European space of learning by 2025;

- contribute to the European Climate Pact, the updated Digital Education Action Plan and the HealthyLifestyle4all initiative;

- support the EU's efforts to expanding employment opportunities for youth in the post-pandemic recovery as stated in the European Parliament Resolution on the Youth Guarantee.

Actions, measures and funding

Measures will include **information and promotion campaigns, events and initiatives** at European, national, regional and local level to convey key messages and disseminate information about examples of good practice, including the role of the EU in promoting shared solutions. This will lead to active participation and learning in key policy areas such as climate change.

The organisation of participation in the European Year at national level will be a responsibility of the Member States. The Commission will convene meetings of the national coordinators to coordinate the running of the European Year.

Without prejudice to the powers of the budgetary authority, the aim should be to provide funding for the implementation of this Decision of at least **EUR 8 million**.