MODULE 4: Policy

LESSON 1: Link research to policy: how to formulate evidence-based policy suggestions
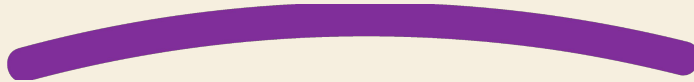
This lesson discusses:

1. **Introduction to Evidence-Based Policy**
2. **Understanding the Policy Context**
3. **Identifying Relevant Research**
4. **Translating Research into Policy: Recommendations**

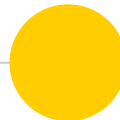# 1. Introduction to Evidence-Based Policy

Definition

Evidence-Based Policy (EBP) is the <u>systematic process of utilising rigorous research methodologies and empirical evidence to inform and guide policy decisions</u>. It emphasises the importance of basing policies on data-driven insights rather than solely on intuition or ideology.
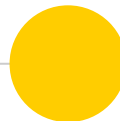
NEXUS

1. Introduction to Evidence-Based Policy

Importance of Evidence: *Why Evidence is Essential?*

- Evidence helps policymakers identify the <u>underlying causes of societal problems, enabling more targeted and effective interventions</u>.
- It allows policymakers <u>to assess potential policy solutions</u>, determining which approaches are most likely to achieve desired outcomes.
- Evidence enables policymakers <u>to evaluate the impact of policy interventions</u>, ensuring resources are allocated efficiently and achieving desired results.

Co-funded by
the European Union

NEXUS

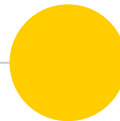# 1. Introduction to Evidence-Based Policy

Decision-Making Framework

A decision-making framework provides a <u>structured approach for making informed choices</u>, particularly in complex situations. It outlines a systematic process that individuals or groups can follow to gather information, evaluate alternatives, and arrive at a well-informed decision. An explanation of the <u>components typically included in a decision-making framework</u> follows.

NEXUS

1. Introduction to Evidence-Based Policy

Decision-Making Framework
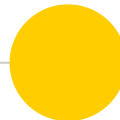
1) Identifying the Decision
2) Gathering Information
3) Analysing Alternatives
4) Making the Decision
5) Implementing the Decision
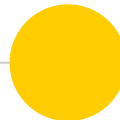6) Monitoring and Evaluating
7) Learning and Iterating

2. Understanding the Policy Context

Now we will move on to explore the multifaceted landscape of policymaking and understand the contextual factors that influence decision-making processes.

NEXUS

2. Understanding the Policy Context

Key Concepts: *Stakeholders in Policymaking*

Stakeholders in policymaking are individuals, groups, organisations, or entities with an interest or stake in the outcome of a particular policy decision or issue. They can have varying degrees of influence and involvement in the policymaking process, depending on factors such as their resources, expertise, and level of advocacy.

Understanding and engaging with stakeholders is essential for policymakers to develop effective policies that address the diverse needs and interests of relevant parties. Below is a list of different types of stakeholders in policymaking.
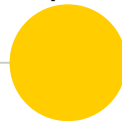
2. Understanding the Policy Context

Key Concepts: *Stakeholders in Policymaking*

1) <u>Government agencies</u> are key stakeholders in policymaking processes, as they are responsible for implementing and enforcing policies within their respective jurisdictions.
2) <u>Civil Society Organizations</u> (CSOs), including non-governmental organisations (NGOs), advocacy groups, and community-based organizations, are stakeholders that represent the interests of specific communities, causes, or issues.
3) <u>Businesses and industry groups</u> are stakeholders with a vested interest in policymaking decisions that affect their operations, profitability, and regulatory environment.
4) <u>Academic and research institutions</u> contribute to policymaking processes by conducting studies, producing research findings, and providing expertise on a wide range of issues.
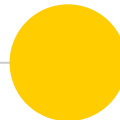
2. Understanding the Policy Context

Key Concepts: *Stakeholders in Policymaking*

5) <u>Media and public opinion</u> play a significant role in shaping policymaking processes by influencing public discourse, raising awareness about issues, and holding policymakers accountable.

6) <u>European and International Organisations and Donors</u>. European International organisations, such as the United Nations, World Bank, and International Monetary Fund, as well as donor agencies and foreign governments, are stakeholders in policymaking processes, particularly in countries receiving international aid or assistance.

7) <u>Individual citizens and communities</u> are stakeholders whose lives and livelihoods are directly affected by policymaking decisions.
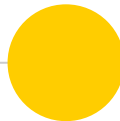
2. Understanding the Policy Context

Key Concepts: *Stakeholders in Policymaking*

Effective stakeholder engagement in policymaking involves <u>identifying relevant stakeholders, understanding their interests and perspectives, and involving them in meaningful ways throughout the policymaking process</u>.
Engaging stakeholders fosters <u>transparency, legitimacy, and accountability in decision-making</u>, ultimately leading to policies that better address the needs and interests of society as a whole.
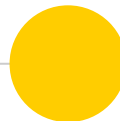
NEXUS

2. Understanding the Policy Context

Key Concepts: *Political, Social, and Economic Factors*

Political, social, and economic factors are critical components of the broader context within which policymaking occurs. These factors shape the landscape in which policymakers operate and significantly influence the development, implementation, and impact of policies. Here's a list of the main factors that influence policymaking ➤
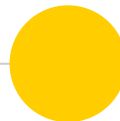
NEXUS

2. Understanding the Policy Context

Key Concepts: *Political, Social, and Economic Factors*

1) <u>Political dynamics</u> encompass the interactions and power struggles among political actors, parties, and institutions within a political system.
2) <u>Societal values</u> reflect the beliefs, norms, and principles that guide the behavior and attitudes of individuals and communities within a society.
3) <u>Economic conditions</u>, including factors such as economic growth, unemployment, inflation, and income inequality, have significant implications for policymaking.
4) <u>Cultural norms</u> encompass the shared beliefs, customs, traditions, and practices that define a society's identity and collective behavior.
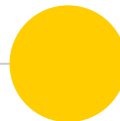
NEXUS

2. Understanding the Policy Context

Key Concepts: *Political, Social, and Economic Factors*

These political, social, and economic factors interact in complex ways to shape policy agendas, priorities, and implementation strategies. <u>Policymakers</u> must navigate these dynamics and <u>consider the interplay of multiple factors</u> when formulating policies to address societal challenges and promote the public good. By <u>taking into consideration</u> ~~how~~ these factors and their potencial <u>influence on policymaking</u>, policymakers can develop more effective and responsive policies that address the needs and aspirations of society while navigating the complexities of the political and socio-economic landscape.
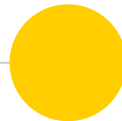
NEXUS

2. Understanding the Policy Context

Key Concepts: *Policy Challenges and Opportunities*

<u>Policymakers face a myriad of challenges</u> when crafting and implementing policies, ranging from competing interests and resource constraints to institutional barriers. However, <u>within these challenges lie opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and policy experimentation</u>. Let's explore some of these aspects.
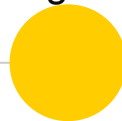
2. Understanding the Policy Context

Key Concepts: *Policy Challenges and Opportunities*

Challenges:
- <u>Competing Interests</u>. Policymaking often involves navigating competing interests from various stakeholders, including government agencies, advocacy groups, businesses, and the general public.
- <u>Resource Constraints</u> – including budgetary limitations, staffing shortages, and infrastructure deficits – which may limit their ability to implement ambitious policy initiatives.
- <u>Institutional Barriers</u> – such as bureaucratic inertia, regulatory red tape, and intergovernmental coordination challenges. They can hinder the formulation and implementation of policies.
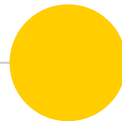
2. Understanding the Policy Context

Key Concepts: *Policy Challenges and Opportunities*

Opportunities:
- Opportunities for <u>Innovation</u>. Policy challenges stimulate innovation by encouraging policymakers to <u>think creatively</u>, experiment with new approaches, and embrace evidence-based practices.
- <u>Collaboration and Partnership</u>. Collaboration and partnership among stakeholders offer opportunities to pool resources, share expertise, and leverage collective efforts to address shared challenges.
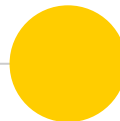
NEXUS

2. Understanding the Policy Context

Key Concepts: *Policy Challenges and Opportunities*

In conclusion, while policymakers confront numerous challenges in the policymaking process, these challenges also present opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and transformative change. By embracing these opportunities and adopting a proactive and adaptive approach, policymakers can navigate complex policy landscapes, overcome obstacles, and develop solutions that drive positive social, economic, and environmental outcomes.

3. Identifying Relevant Research

Policymakers rely on a <u>wide array of research data and evidence to inform their policy decisions</u>, drawing insights from academic studies, government reports, think tank publications, and more.

In this section, we will explore the diverse sources of research data available and discuss the criteria for assessing the quality and reliability of research.
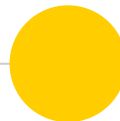
NEXUS

3. Identifying Relevant Research

Sources of Research Data and Evidence

- <u>Academic journals</u> publish peer-reviewed research articles across various disciplines.
- <u>EU and national government agencies</u> often publish <u>reports, statistics, and research findings</u> related to public policy, social issues, and economic trends.
- <u>Think tanks</u> conduct <u>research and analysis</u> on a wide range of policy issues.
- Non-Governmental Organizations (<u>NGOs</u>) often conduct <u>research and collect data</u> related to their areas of focus, such as human rights, environmental conservation, and public health.

NEXUS

3. Identifying Relevant Research

Sources of Research Data and Evidence

- Academic Conferences and Proceedings proceedings provide access to cutting-edge research presented at academic conferences.
- Databases and Repositories, including *online* databases and repositories, aggregate research data, datasets, and publications from multiple sources.
- Library Catalogs. University and public libraries maintain catalogs that allow users to search for books, journals, and other resources available in their collections.
- Professional associations often publish research findings, industry reports, and best practices related to their respective fields.
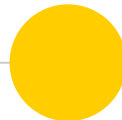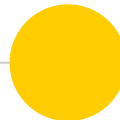
3. Identifying Relevant Research

Criteria for Assessing Quality and Reliability

In the "sea" of sources, it is crucial to discern <u>credible and relevant evidence for informed decision-making in the policymaking process</u>. Therefore, we will delve into the <u>essential criteria for assessing the quality and reliability of research</u>, encompassing factors such as methodology, sample size, peer review, publication reputation, and potential biases.

3. Identifying Relevant Research

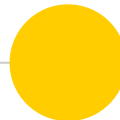## Criteria for Assessing Quality and Reliability

Publication Source and Reputation: Consider the reputation and credibility of the publication source where the research is published.

Peer Review: Determine whether the research has undergone peer review by experts in the field.

Conflict of Interest: Consider potential conflicts of interest that may bias the research findings.

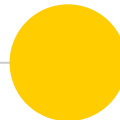# 3. Identifying Relevant Research

Criteria for Assessing Quality and Reliability

Methodology: If possible, evaluate the research design and methodology used in the study. Consider whether the methods employed are appropriate for addressing the research questions and objectives.

Sample Size and Sampling Methods: Consider the sample size of the study population and whether it is sufficient to draw meaningful conclusions.

Data Collection and Measurement: If possible, assess the validity and reliability of data collection instruments and measurement tools used in the study.
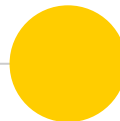
3. Identifying Relevant Research

Types of Research and Their Utility

Understanding the different types of research methodologies is crucial for policymakers when evaluating evidence and making informed decisions. They include qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. Each type of research methodology has its strengths and limitations, and the choice of methodology depends on the research question, objectives, and context.

3. Identifying Relevant Research

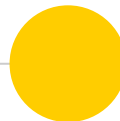## Types of Research and Their Utility

Quantitative Research involves <u>collecting numerical data and analysing it using statistical methods</u>. It aims to <u>measure phenomena and establish relationships between variables</u>.

Examples of Utility:

- <u>Surveys</u> collect data from a sample population using standardised questionnaires, enabling policymakers to quantify attitudes, behaviours, and opinions on various issues.
- <u>Controlled experiments</u> manipulate variables to determine causality and measure the effects of interventions or policy changes. They provide rigorous evidence for evaluating the effectiveness of policies.
- <u>Statistical techniques</u> such as regression analysis, hypothesis testing, and trend analysis help policymakers identify patterns, correlations, and trends in data, informing decision-making processes.

NEXUS

3. Identifying Relevant Research

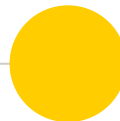## Types of Research and Their Utility

Qualitative Research focuses on <u>understanding complex phenomena through in-depth exploration and interpretation of non-numerical data</u>. It provides insights into the meanings, perspectives, and contexts surrounding social phenomena.

Examples of Utility:
- <u>In-depth interviews</u> with stakeholders, experts, or affected individuals provide rich qualitative data on their experiences, perceptions, and attitudes towards policies.
- <u>Focus groups</u> bring together a diverse group of participants to discuss specific topics or issues, generating insights into shared beliefs, values, and concerns.
- <u>Case studies</u> examine specific cases or instances in detail, offering contextually rich insights into the complexities of real-world situations and policy challenges.

3. Identifying Relevant Research

## Types of Research and Their Utility

Mixed Methods Research <u>combines quantitative and qualitative approaches</u> to provide a comprehensive understanding of research questions. It integrates the strengths of both methodologies, enhancing the validity and depth of findings.

Examples of Utility:

- <u>Sequential Explanatory Design</u> involves collecting quantitative data first, followed by qualitative data to further explore or explain quantitative findings. It helps policymakers understand the "why" behind statistical relationships.
- In <u>Convergent Design</u> quantitative and qualitative data are collected concurrently and analysed separately, then integrated to provide complementary insights. It offers a holistic understanding of complex issues from multiple perspectives.

Co-funded by
the European Union

NEXUS
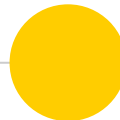
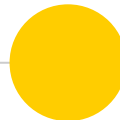# 4. Translating Research into Policy Recommendations

Translating research into policy recommendations is a crucial step in the policymaking process. It involves underlined synthesising evidence from research studies and transforming it into actionable strategies and guidelines that policymakers can use to address societal challenges.

Now we will explore the key steps involved in translating research into policy recommendations and discuss strategies for ensuring the relevance, feasibility, and impact of policy recommendations.

NEXUS

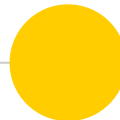# 4. Translating Research into Policy Recommendations

1) Reviewing Research Findings
- Begin by thoroughly <u>reviewing the research findings, identifying key insights, trends, and implications</u> relevant to the policy area under consideration.
- <u>Evaluate the strength of evidence and assess the credibility and reliability</u> of the research studies.

2) Identifying Policy Objectives
- <u>Clarify the policy objectives and goals</u> that the recommendations aim to achieve.
- <u>Align the policy objectives with the research findings</u> to ensure that the recommendations are evidence-based and targeted towards addressing specific policy challenges.

NEXUS

4. Translating Research into Policy Recommendations
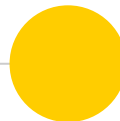
3) Formulating Policy Recommendations
- Based on the research findings and policy objectives, <u>develop clear and actionable policy recommendations</u>.
- <u>Ensure that the recommendations are feasible, realistic, and contextually appropriate</u>, considering factors such as available resources, political feasibility, and stakeholder interests.

4) Tailoring Recommendations to the Audience
- <u>Customise the language and format</u> of the recommendations to suit the needs and preferences of the target audience, such as policymakers, government officials, advocacy groups, or community stakeholders.
- <u>Present the recommendations in a clear, concise, and compelling manner</u>, using evidence and examples to support the proposed strategies.

NEXUS

4. Translating Research into Policy Recommendations

5) Engaging Stakeholders
- <u>Seek input and feedback</u> from relevant stakeholders throughout the process of developing policy recommendations.
- <u>Engage</u> with policymakers, experts, community leaders, and affected stakeholders to ensure that the recommendations reflect diverse perspectives and address the needs of the target population.

6) Advocating for Implementation
- <u>Advocate for the adoption and implementation</u> of the policy recommendations through targeted communication and advocacy efforts.
- <u>Build coalitions, mobilise support, and leverage partnerships</u> to advance the policy agenda and overcome potential barriers to implementation.
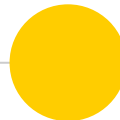
Co-funded by
the European Union

NEXUS

4. Translating Research into Policy Recommendations

7) Monitoring and Evaluation
- <u>Establish mechanisms for monitoring the implementation</u> of the policy recommendations and <u>assessing their impact</u> over time.
- Continuously <u>evaluate the effectiveness of the policies</u> in achieving the desired outcomes, <u>making adjustments and refinements</u> as needed based on feedback and evaluation findings.

NEXUS

Materials produced during the project include:

Co-funded by the European Union

EMBLEM

Oganisations can downlod the official emblems and disclaimere (translated in different languages) here: https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/about-eacea/visual-identity/visual-identity-programming-period-2021-2027/european-flag-emblem-and-multilingual-disclaimer_en

Materials should include the translated versions according to the language in use

DISCLAIMER

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

NEXUS

Thank YOU

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

MODULE 4: Policy

LESSON 2: Policy Concepts and Definitions of Youth Rights at EU and International Level
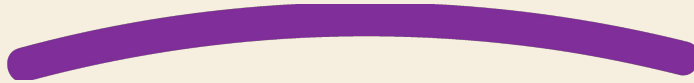
This lesson discusses:

1. Introduction to Youth Rights
2. International Instruments on Youth Rights
3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies
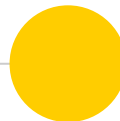
1. Introduction to Youth Rights

What is it?

Although human rights apply to everyone, certain groups of people face particular barriers in accessing and enjoying their rights. To address such barriers, countries have developed international instruments dedicated to the rights of certain groups including women, children and persons with disabilities, for example.
<u>Youth rights refer to the fundamental freedoms, entitlements, and protections that are specifically afforded to young people based on their age, identity, and status as members of society</u>. These rights encompass a broad range of civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights, aimed at ensuring the well-being, development, and participation of young individuals in society.

NEXUS

1. Introduction to Youth Rights
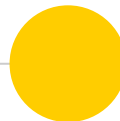
Importance of Youth Rights

The importance of youth rights lies in <u>recognising and safeguarding the unique needs</u>, <u>perspectives, and potential of young people as valuable members of society</u>. Here are several key reasons why youth rights are essential:

- <u>To empower young people to participate actively in society</u>, shaping decisions that affect their live
- <u>Promoting and protecting the inherent dignity and worth</u> of every young person
- <u>Investment in Future Generations</u>
- <u>Prevention of Exploitation and Abuse</u>

Can you think of other reasons?
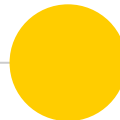
1. Introduction to Youth Rights

Intersectionality of Youth Rights

The <u>intersectionality</u> of youth rights acknowledges that young people's experiences and identities are shaped by <u>multiple intersecting factors</u>, such as ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, socio-economic status, and geographic location. Understanding and addressing these intersecting dimensions is crucial for promoting inclusive and equitable youth rights.
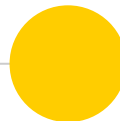
1. Introduction to Youth Rights

Role of Youth in Advocating for Their Rights

The role of youth in advocating for their rights is critical in <u>promoting social change, advancing justice, and fostering inclusive societies</u>. Youth must be empowered to:

- <u>Recognise their agency and role in advocating</u> for their own rights and the rights of their peers.
- <u>Realise the importance of meaningful participation</u> in decision-making processes, policy development, and implementation, ensuring that their voices are heard, valued, and acted upon.

1. Introduction to Youth Rights

Distinction between youth rights and other (policy) concepts

Youth Rights: Refer to the <u>fundamental entitlements and freedoms</u> that <u>young people possess as individuals</u>
- **Youth Development:** Focuses on the <u>holistic growth and well-being of young people</u>, encompassing physical, cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions
- **Youth Participation:** Refers to the <u>active engagement</u> of young people in social, political, economic, and community processes.
- **Youth Empowerment:** Involves <u>equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, resources, and support</u> necessary to assert their rights, make informed choices, and take control of their lives
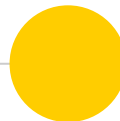
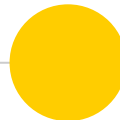# 2. International Instruments on Youth Rights

What human rights do young people have?

The existing human rights frameworks apply to young people just as they apply to everyone else. Additionally, young people who fall into any of the categories for which there are dedicated international instruments, such as young people with disabilities and young women, are also protected by these instruments. <u>States</u> bear the primary responsibility to ensure young people have full access to all their rights without any barriers; as such they <u>are 'duty-bearers'</u>, and can be held accountable when they fail to fulfill their obligations.

There is a discrepancy between the rights young people have according to the law and the extent to which they are able to enjoy those rights in practice.
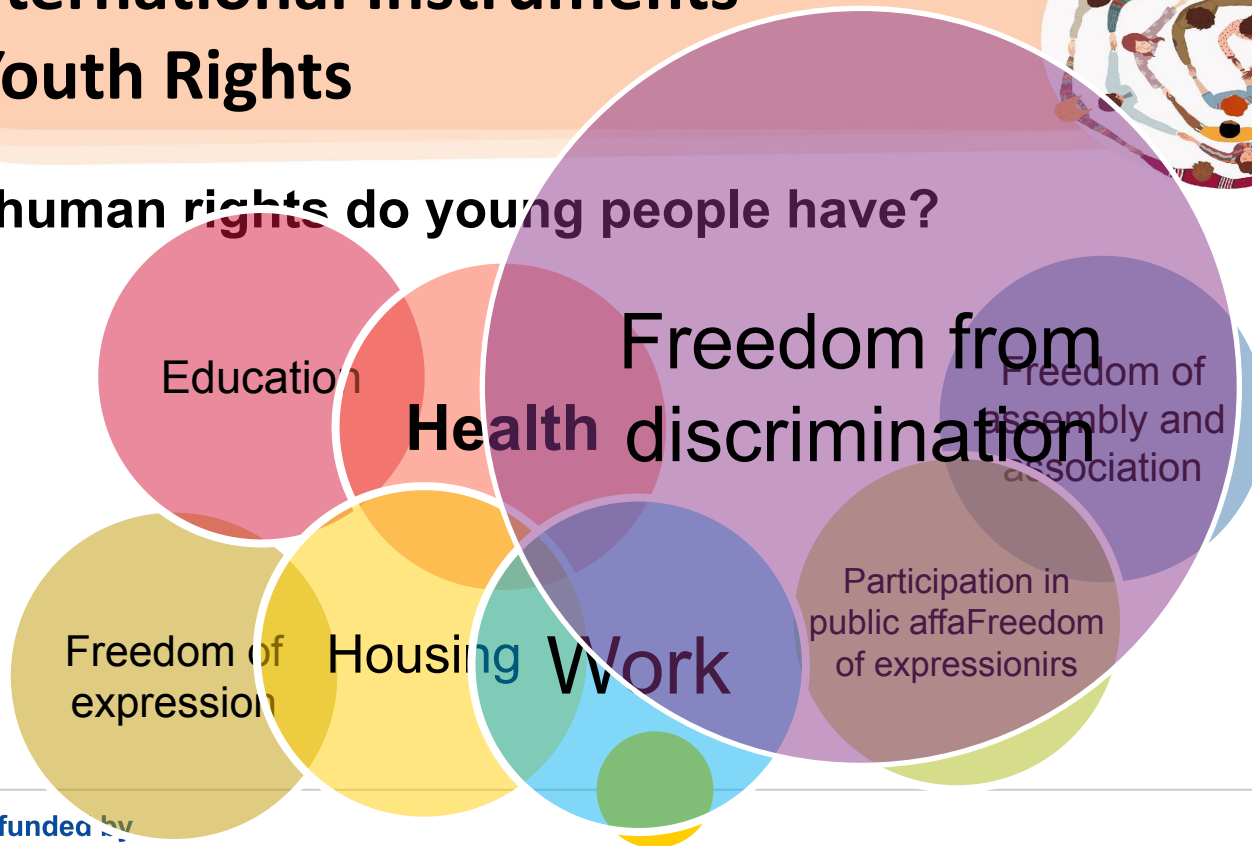
2. International Instruments on Youth Rights

What human rights do young people have?

Education

Health

Freedom from discrimination

Freedom of assembly and association

Freedom of expression

Housing

Work

Participation in public affaFreedom of expressionirs
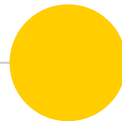
NEXUS

2. International Instruments on Youth Rights

The work of the United Nations (UN) on youth

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (**UNCRC**): adopted in 1989, it is a comprehensive treaty that sets out the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of children under the age of 18. It covers a wide range of rights, including the right to education, health, protection from abuse and exploitation, and participation in decisions that affect them.

In 1996 the UN General Assembly adopted the World Programme of Action on Youth (**WPAY**). It outlines 15 priority areas of action and every two years the General Assembly negotiates a resolution on youth as a follow-up to the WPAY. While it can be used as an advocacy tool, monitoring and implementation is significantly lacking and given its non-binding nature it has had little effect in practice.

Co-funded by
the European Union

NEXUS

2. International Instruments on Youth Rights

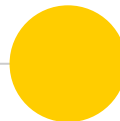## The work of the United Nations (UN) on youth

The **Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth** was established in 2013 with a mandate to highlight issues specifically relevant to young people, enhance the UN response to the needs of young people, and advocate for the promotion and protection of their needs and rights, as well as to bring the UN's work on youth closer to young people.

Booklet-*The Human Rights Treating Bodies*:
https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/TB/TB_booklet_en.pdf

2. International Instruments on Youth Rights

The Council of Europe and Youth Rights

Human rights, democracy and the rule of law form the three key focus areas of the Council of Europe (**CoE**). The CoE was founded in 1949 following the atrocities of the early 20th century and today brings together 47 Member States with a combined population of over 800 million citizens.

The two main human rights instruments of the Council of Europe are the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter.

Youth is also a prominent part of the Council of Europe's decision-making and working structure, through the Joint Council on Youth and the Youth Department.

2. International Instruments on Youth Rights

The Council of Europe and Youth Rights

The <u>Joint Council on Youth</u> brings together <u>representatives of governments and young people</u> in a co-decision mechanism that deals with topics and policies directly affecting young people. The <u>youth representatives form the Advisory Council on Youth</u>, to promote the interests of young people through a participatory decision-making structure. The Advisory Council has prioritised youth rights and access to rights over the past few years, co-drafting and strongly advocating in favour of the Committee of Ministers Recommendation on Young People's Access to Rights.

NEXUS
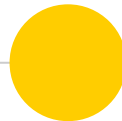
2. International Instruments on Youth Rights

The Council of Europe and Youth Rights

The Council of Europe's Youth Department is responsible for developing guidelines, programmes and legal instruments for better youth policies, while it also supports international youth activities that promote citizenship, mobility, human rights, democracy and cultural pluralism among young people.
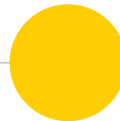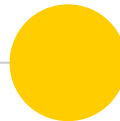
3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies

Recognising and upholding youth rights at the European Union (EU) and international levels carries significant policy implications, requiring legislative reforms, effective policy implementation, and robust monitoring mechanisms.

NEXUS

3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies

Policy Implications: Policy Implementation

- <u>Youth rights</u> should be <u>mainstreamed into various policy areas</u> such as education, employment, social inclusion, and health to ensure that they are adequately addressed in decision-making processes.
- <u>Adequate resources must be allocated</u> to support the implementation of youth rights policies and programs, including funding for youth-led initiatives, support services, and capacity-building activities.
- <u>Governments, civil society organizations, youth representatives, and other stakeholders should collaborate</u> closely in the design, implementation, and evaluation of youth rights policies to ensure their effectiveness and relevance.

Co-funded by
the European Union

NEXUS

3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies

Policy Implications: Legislative Reforms

- EU countries should align their national legislation with international standards on youth rights to ensure consistency and coherence across member states.
- Development of Specific Legislation: in some cases, there may be a need to develop or amend specific laws to address emerging issues or gaps related to youth rights, such as laws concerning education, employment, health, and participation.
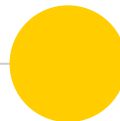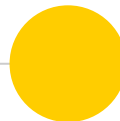
3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies

Policy Implications: Monitoring Mechanisms

- <u>Independent monitoring bodies or mechanisms</u> established at the EU and national levels to <u>assess compliance</u> with youth rights standards, <u>receive complaints</u>, and <u>provide remedies</u> in cases of violations.
- <u>Robust data collection systems</u> and <u>research initiatives</u> are essential for <u>tracking progress, identifying challenges, and informing evidence-based policymaking</u> in the field of youth rights.
- <u>Governments should</u> regularly <u>report</u> on their efforts to promote and protect youth rights, including progress made, challenges encountered, and measures taken to address shortcomings. These reports should be subject to <u>review by international bodies</u> and <u>scrutiny</u> by civil society organisations and youth representatives.
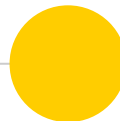
NEXUS

3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies

Policy Implications: Capacity Building and Awareness-Raising

- Independent monitoring bodies or mechanisms established at the EU and national levels to assess compliance with youth rights standards, receive complaints, and provide remedies in cases of violations.
- Robust data collection systems and research initiatives are essential for tracking progress, identifying challenges, and informing evidence-based policymaking in the field of youth rights.
- Governments should regularly report on their efforts to promote and protect youth rights, including progress made, challenges encountered, and measures taken to address shortcomings. These reports should be subject to review by international bodies and scrutiny by civil society organisations and youth representatives.

3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies

Policy Implications: Capacity Building and Awareness-Raising

- Training programs should be provided to policymakers, public officials, and relevant stakeholders to enhance their understanding of youth rights principles and their ability to integrate these principles into their work.

- Public awareness campaigns should be conducted to inform young people about their rights, how to exercise them, and where to seek assistance in case of violations. These campaigns should also aim to challenge stereotypes and prejudices about young people and promote positive attitudes towards youth empowerment and participation.

NEXUS

3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies

Advocacy Strategies

Advocating for the rights of young people involves a multi-faceted approach that includes various strategies to raise awareness, mobilise support, and influence policymakers and stakeholders.
Now we will discuss some effective strategies.

NEXUS
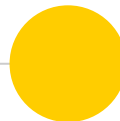
3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies

Grassroots Mobilisation

- <u>Community Organising</u>. Empowering young people and local communities to <u>organise grassroots movements around specific youth rights issues</u>, such as education, employment, health care, or civic participation.
- <u>Youth-Led Initiatives</u>. <u>Encouraging young people to take the lead in organising</u> campaigns, events, and projects aimed at promoting and defending their rights. <u>Providing them with the necessary resources, training, and support</u> to amplify their voices and mobilise their peers.

Co-funded by
the European Union

NEXUS

3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies

Coalition Building

- <u>Forging alliances</u> with NGOs, youth organisations, advocacy groups, and other civil society actors working on related issues <u>to amplify advocacy efforts, share resources, and build collective power</u>.
- <u>Collaborating with stakeholders</u> from diverse sectors such as education, health, labor, and human rights <u>to address the intersecting challenges faced by young people and advocate for holistic solutions</u>.

NEXUS

3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies

Media Campaigns

- Utilising social media platforms to raise awareness, mobilise support, and engage with a wider audience on youth rights issues. Developing compelling content, hashtags, and online campaigns to spark conversations, share stories, and inspire action.
- Working with journalists, media outlets, and influencers to generate media coverage and public attention around youth rights issues through press releases, op-eds, interviews, and feature stories.

3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies

Engagement with Policymakers and Stakeholders

- <u>Advocating for legislative reforms, policy changes, and budget allocations</u> that uphold and advance youth rights at the local, national, and international levels. <u>Lobbying</u> policymakers, lawmakers, and government officials through meetings, petitions, letters, and public hearings.
- <u>Advocating for meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes</u> by ensuring that young people have a seat at the table in policy discussions, advisory bodies, and governance structures.
- <u>Fostering open and constructive dialogue between young people, policymakers, and stakeholders</u> to identify priorities, address concerns, and co-create solutions that reflect the needs and perspectives of young people.

3. Policy Implications and Advocacy Strategies

Capacity Building and Training

- Organising workshops, trainings, and capacity-building sessions to equip young people with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to advocate for their rights effectively, including communication, leadership, and advocacy skills.
- Producing evidence-based policy briefs, reports, and research studies to inform advocacy efforts, raise awareness about youth rights issues, and influence decision-making processes.

Thank
YOU

**Co-funded by
the European Union**

G.A. N° 2022-2-IE01-KA220-YOU-883F8363

MODULE 4: Policy

LESSON 3: Policy scopes and goals at national and EU level relevant for youth
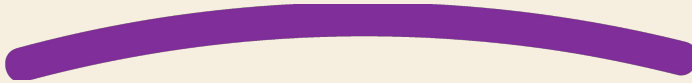
This lesson discusses:

1. The role of the EU in Youth Policy
2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights
3. National Policies for Youth

1. The role of the EU in Youth Policy
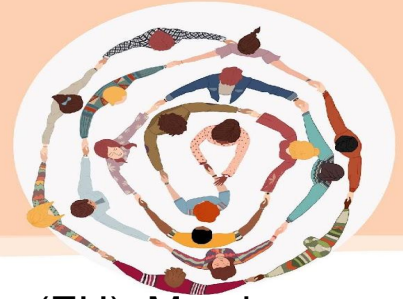
Youth policy is primarily the responsibility of European Union (EU) Member States.

Under Article 165(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), EU action in this field aims at 'encouraging the development of youth exchanges and of exchanges of socio-educational instructors, and encouraging the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe'.

Article 166 TFEU entrusts the EU with the task of facilitating access to vocational training and encouraging the mobility of instructors and trainees, particularly young people.

Member States have cooperated in the youth field since 2002.

Co-funded by the European Union

NEXUS

1. The role of the EU in Youth Policy

EU youth strategy (2019-2027)

The current framework, the <u>EU youth strategy</u> (2019-2027), seeks to foster <u>youth participation in democratic life</u> and also <u>supports social and civic engagement</u> with the aim of ensuring that all young people have the necessary resources to take part in society.

It has <u>11 goals</u>, which identify cross-sectoral areas that affect young people's lives and relate to challenges they may face.

Co-funded by
the European Union
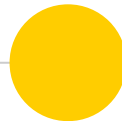
1. The role of the EU in Youth Policy

EU youth strategy (2019-2027): Goals

- Connecting EU with youth;
- equality of all genders;
- inclusive societies;
- information and constructive dialogue;
- mental health and well being;
- moving rural youth forward;
- quality employment for all;
- quality learning;

- space and participation for all;
- sustainable green Europe;
- youth organisations and European programmes.

NEXUS

1. The role of the EU in Youth Policy

The EU funds a series of programmes offering opportunities to young people, such as Erasmus+ (including DiscoverEU), the European Solidarity Corps and Erasmus+ virtual exchange. These help young people expand their horizons and build bridges across Europe and beyond.

Further information is available from the European Youth Portal, which shares EU and national information and opportunities that are of interest to young people.
https://youth.europa.eu/home_en

NEXUS
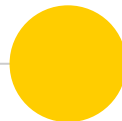
1. The role of the EU in Youth Policy

What else?

- **European Pact for Youth**: The European Commission and business leaders launched the 'European Pact for Youth' to <u>improve partnerships between business and education</u> to boost the chances of young people getting jobs. The Pact, initiated by The European Business Network for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR Europe), is an appeal to all business, social partners, education and training providers other stakeholders to <u>develop or consolidate partnerships in support of youth employability and inclusion</u>.
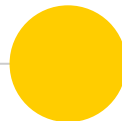
1. The role of the EU in Youth Policy

What else?

- **Youth Employment Initiative (YEI**): it was one of the main EU financial resources to support the <u>implementation of Youth Guarantee schemes</u> until 2023. The EU launched it in 2013 to provide support to young people living in regions where youth unemployment was higher than 25%. For the period 2021-2027, for simplification, the EU institutions integrated the Youth Employment Initiative into the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), while preserving the focus on youth employment.

NEXUS

2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights
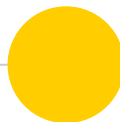
The <u>Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union</u> and the <u>Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU</u> both explicitly <u>prohibit discrimination on the grounds of age</u>.

The Charter is legally binding on EU institutions as well as Member States when they are implementing European law at the national level. The Charter can be used to ensure compliance of European law with certain aspects of youth rights.

The EU also has a range of <u>anti-discrimination legislation</u> in the form of <u>Directives</u>, which are fully applicable to the youth and legally binding on Member States, namely...

2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

- <u>Employment Equality Directive</u> (2000/78/EC), which promotes equal treatment on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in employment and occupation.
- <u>Race Equality Directive</u> (2000/43/EC), which bans discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin in the labour market, education, social protection (including social security and healthcare), social advantages, access to and supply of goods and services (including housing), and membership of and involvement in an organisation of workers or employers.
- <u>Directives 2004/113/EC and 2006/54/EC</u>, which provide a framework for equal treatment between men and women in access to and supply of goods and services and in matters of employment and occupation, respectively.
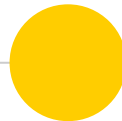
2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child (2021-24)

It is <u>a major EU policy initiatives</u> to better protect all children, to help them fulfil their rights and to place them right at the centre of EU policy making. It pools all existing and future initiatives on children's rights under <u>one coherent policy framework</u>.

Useful links:
<u>EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child</u>
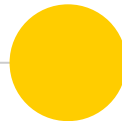
NEXUS

2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU strategy on the rights of the child (2021-24): *Thematic areas*

Children's participation
Everyone will understand that children have a
right to a say and put it into practice

Included in society
Children will be able to get good education and healthcare, and families will have enough money to meet children's needs

Safe from harm
Children will be kept safe from violence and children who are harmed will get the help they need

NEXUS

2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU strategy on the rights of the child (2021-24): *Thematic areas*

Child-friendly justice
The police, lawyers and judges will treat children fairly, listen to them and meet their needs.

Digital world
All children will be able to get access to and stay safe in the digital world.

Helping children across the world
All children in the world will enjoy their rights, even when there is war, famine or disease
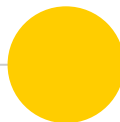
2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU strategy on the rights of the child (2021-24): *Monitoring*

The Commission <u>monitors how Member States address child poverty or social exclusion</u> in the European Semester process and, where necessary, <u>propose</u> relevant country <u>specific recommendations</u>.
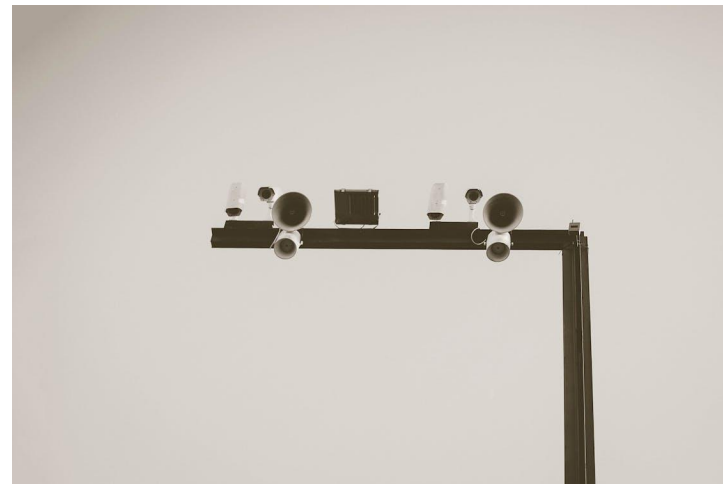
NEXUS

2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU strategy on the rights of the child (2021-24): *Monitoring*

What is the European Semester? – An annual process resulting in the European Commission's publishing of "Country-Specific Recommendations" to the Member States on how to improve pressing socio-economic issues they are facing. Member States are obliged to report to the Commission on how they are addressing the recommendations, and it is supposed to give guidance to how they use their EU funding.

Useful link: The European Semester explained
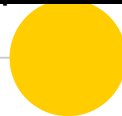
2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU Child Guarantee

- It complements the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child.

- It was preceded by a <u>feasibility study</u> focussed on <u>4 specific groups of socially vulnerable children</u>: 1) children in residential care, 2) children with disabilities, 3) children with a migrant background (including refugee children) and 4) children living in a precarious family situation.

- Legal instrument – a <u>Council recommendation</u> – offers guidance on how to implement the European Child Guarantee, while also allowing Member States the flexibility to design and implement measures, according to their national practices. Adopted on 14 June 2021.

NEXUS

2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU Child Guarantee: *Where are the Young Carers?*

In Vulnerable Group 4) Children living in a precarious family situation

Precariousness related to household composition: children living in single-adult households; 'left-behind' children of EU-mobile citizens; teenage mothers; children living in households consisting of two adults and three or more children; children who are caring for sick or disabled household member(s) (young carers); children with imprisoned parents; etc.

NEXUS

2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

European **Child Guarantee**

#EUChildGuarantee #EUChildRights

ADOPTED

Member States should guarantee

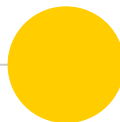**Free and effective access** for children in need to:

- early childhood education and care
- education and school-based activities
- at least one healthy meal each school day
- healthcare

Effective access for children in need to:

- healthy nutrition
- adequate housing

European Commission

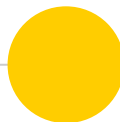# 2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU Child Guarantee: *Implementation*

National Child Guarantee Coordinators

Nominate a national Child Guarantee Coordinator, equipped with adequate resources and mandate enabling the effective coordination and monitoring of the implementation of this Recommendation.

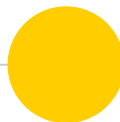# 2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU Child Guarantee: *Implementation*

Identifying children in need

With a view of most effective targeting of measures to children in need and taking into account national, regional and local organisations and circumstances, involve relevant stakeholders in underlined identifying children in need and barriers they face in accessing and taking up the services covered by this Recommendation.

NEXUS

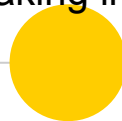# 2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU Child Guarantee: *Member States*

National action plans

Within 6 months from the adoption of this Recommendation, submit to the Commission an action plan, covering the period until 2030, taking into account national, regional and local circumstances. The action plan should include in particular:

i. the targeted categories of children in need to be reached by corresponding integrated measures.
ii. Quantitative and qualitative targets to be achieved in terms of children in need to be reached by corresponding measures, taking into account regional and local disparities.
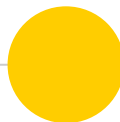
NEXUS

2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU Child Guarantee: *Member States*

National action plans

iii.   <u>Measures</u> planned or taken in <u>implementing this Recommendation</u>, including at regional and local level, and the necessary <u>financial resources and timelines</u>.

iv.   Other <u>measures</u> planned or taken to <u>address child social exclusion</u> and <u>break intergenerational cycles of disadvantage</u>.

v.   A <u>national framework</u> for data collection, monitoring and evaluation of this Recommendation.

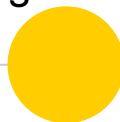# 2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

Child Guarantee: *Member States*

Outreach: Develop <u>effective outreach measures</u> towards children in need and their families, at regional and local level and through educational establishments, trained mediators, family-support services, civil society and social economy organisations.

Involvement of stakeholders: Ensure the <u>participation</u> of regional, local and other <u>relevant authorities, children and relevant stakeholders</u> representing civil society, non-governmental organisations, educational establishments, etc., throughout the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the action plan.

NEXUS

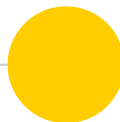# 2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

Child Guarantee: *Member States*

Reporting to the Commission: <u>Report every 2 years</u> to the Commission on the progress in implementing this Recommendation, in line with the national action plan.

Co-funded by
the European Union

2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU Child Guarantee: *European Commission*

- Monitor progress in implementing the Recommendation, including its outcomes and the impact on children in need, in the context of the European Semester, and propose, where appropriate, country-specific recommendations to Member States.

- Work jointly with Member States, the national Child Guarantee Coordinators and the Social Protection Committee to facilitate mutual learning, share experiences, exchange good practices and follow up on the actions taken in response to this Recommendation as set out in the relevant national action plans.

Co-funded by
the European Union

NEXUS
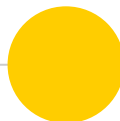
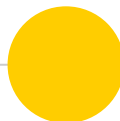# 2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU Youth Guarantee

Youth Guarantee established in 2013 by a Council Recommendation.

Member States committed to ensuring that <u>young people under the age of 25 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within 4 months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education</u>.

NEXUS

2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

EU Youth Guarantee: *Reinforced*

Reinforced Youth Guarantee – by a Council Recommendation of October 2020

Member States to ensure that all young people under the age of 30 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship, traineeship within a period of 4 months of becoming unemployed or leaving education.

Acknowledges that <u>young women are more likely than young men to become inactive due to caring responsibilities</u>, such as looking after children or dependent adults, or other personal or family responsibilities.

Where to register for the Youth Guarantee? <u>Contact points for enrolling</u>

Useful link: <u>National Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans</u>

# 2. EU Legal and Policy Framework on Youth Rights

Equality bodies

Under EU law, Member States are obliged to set up Equality Bodies that monitor and report on issues of discrimination, assist victims of discrimination, and promote equality.

The EU Fundamental Rights Agency exists since 2007 and has the mandate to collect and analyse data on fundamental rights. The Agency does not provide direct support to individuals. However, it is developing an interactive tool that will direct EU citizens towards the relevant national bodies in case they feel their fundamental rights have been violated.
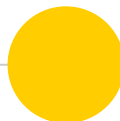
NEXUS
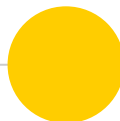
3. National Policies for Youth

National Human Rights Institutions

In addition to Equality Bodies that exist in all EU and some non-EU countries, UN Member States are encouraged to have <u>National Human Rights Institutions</u> (NHRIs). NHRIs are State-mandated bodies that are independent of government and are responsible for protecting and promoting human rights at the national level. NHRIs serve various functions including monitoring the human rights situation on the ground and reporting to international monitoring bodies.

Furthermore, NHRIs provide support to individuals and ensure compliance of national laws with international human rights standards.
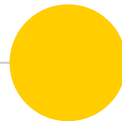
3. National Policies for Youth

National Human Rights Institutions

NHRIs provide a useful link between civil society organisations and the State, as well as between the national and international arena.

A list of NHRIs by country is available here: **https://ennhri.org/**
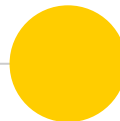
3. National Policies for Youth

Greece

Constitutional Protections: The Greek Constitution guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms for all citizens, including young people. Article 21 of the Constitution emphasizes the state's obligation to protect the rights of children and youth, ensuring their physical, mental, and moral development.

Legislation: Greece has enacted laws and regulations that address specific aspects of youth rights, including education, employment, health care, social welfare, and participation in decision-making processes. These laws aim to ensure equal opportunities and protections for young people.

National Youth Strategy: Greece has developed a National Youth Strategy to guide policies and actions related to youth issues. The strategy focuses on areas such as education, employment, entrepreneurship, health, social inclusion, and youth participation. It aims to address the needs and aspirations of young people and promote their active engagement in society.
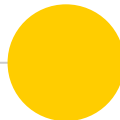
3. National Policies for Youth

Greece

Youth Participation: Greece recognises the importance of youth participation in decision-making processes at all levels. The government, along with youth organisations and civil society, promotes mechanisms for young people to voice their opinions, contribute to policy development, and participate in democratic processes.

Youth Organisations: Greece has a vibrant civil society with numerous youth organisations and associations working on various issues affecting young people. These organisations play a vital role in advocating for youth rights, providing support and services, and empowering young people to become active citizens and leaders in their communities.

NEXUS

3. National Policies for Youth

Ireland

Constitutional Protections: The Irish Constitution guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms for all citizens, including young people. While there is no specific provision addressing youth rights, several constitutional provisions safeguard individual rights and liberties, which apply to young people as well.

Legislation: Ireland has enacted laws and regulations that directly or indirectly address youth rights. These laws cover areas such as education, employment, health care, social welfare, and participation in decision-making processes. Examples include the Education Act, the Employment Equality Act, and the Children Act.

National Youth Strategy: In 2023 Ireland has launched 'Young Ireland: the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People', setting out the policy direction and key priorities for cross government action in respect of children and young people to the end of 2028.
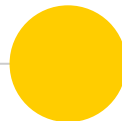
3. National Policies for Youth

Italy

Constitutional Protections: The Italian Constitution guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms for all citizens, including young people. Article 3 of the Constitution emphasises equality before the law and prohibits discrimination based on various factors, including age. Additionally, Article 34 recognises the right to education and mandates the state to ensure access to education for all citizens.

Legislation: Italy has enacted laws and regulations that directly address youth rights and issues. These laws cover various areas such as education, employment, health care, social welfare, and participation in decision-making processes. Examples include the Youth Guarantee scheme, which aims to reduce youth unemployment, and laws promoting access to education and training opportunities for young people.

3. National Policies for Youth

Italy

National Youth Strategy: Italy has developed national youth policies to address the specific needs and challenges facing young people. These policies outline objectives and measures in areas such as education, employment, health, social inclusion, and civic participation. They aim to support the development and empowerment of young people and promote their active engagement in society.
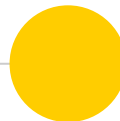
NEXUS
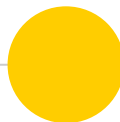
3. National Policies for Youth

As a members of the European Union, <u>all EU Member States participate in EU youth policies and initiatives</u> aimed at promoting mobility, education, employment, and social inclusion among young people.

Materials produced during the project include:

Co-funded by the European Union

EMBLEM

Oganisations can downlod the official emblems and disclaimere (translated in different languages) here: https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/about-eacea/visual-identity/visual-identity-programming-period-2021-2027/european-flag-emblem-and-multilingual-disclaimer_en

Materials should include the translated versions according to the language in use

DISCLAIMER

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.
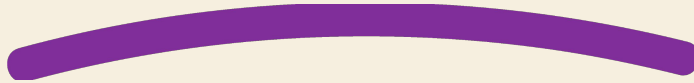
NEXUS

Thank
YOU

Co-funded by
the European Union

G.A. N° 2022-2-IE01-KA220-YOU-883F8363

MODULE 4: Policy

LESSON 4: Actors of European policy on youth

This lesson discusses:

1. EU actors
2. European Commission
3. European Parliament
4. European Council
5. Council of the European Union

1. EU actors

The <u>support systems in place to aid YCs varies significantly across EU</u> <mark>MSs</mark> but it is a matter of fact that public policies impacting on YCs intersect with several different policy domains, such as health care, social care, economic support, education, child protection, digital environment, etc.

Therefore, <u>different actors play a role in European policy on youth</u>, depending on their competence and expertise in various policy domains. Let's explore the competence of different EU actors in different policy domains.
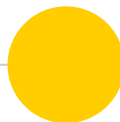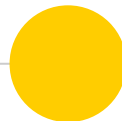
1. EU actors

The European Union's institutional set-up is unique and its decision-making system is constantly evolving.

The 7 European institutions, 7 EU bodies and over 30 decentralised agencies are spread across the EU. They work together to address the common interests of the EU and European people.

In terms of administration, there are a further 20 EU agencies and organisations which carry out specific legal functions and 4 interinstitutional services which support the institutions.
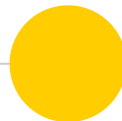
1. EU actors

There are <u>4 main decision-making institutions</u> which lead the EU's administration. These institutions collectively provide the EU with <u>policy direction</u> and play different roles in the <u>law-making process</u>:

- the <u>European Parliament</u> (Brussels/Strasbourg/Luxembourg)
- the <u>European Council</u> (Brussels)
- the <u>Council of the European Union</u> (Brussels/Luxembourg)
- the <u>European Commission</u> (Brussels/Luxembourg/Representations across the EU)
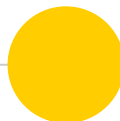
1. EU actors

Their work is complemented by other institutions and bodies, which include:

- the Court of Justice of the European Union (Luxembourg)
- the European Central Bank (Frankfurt)
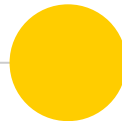- the European Court of Auditors (Luxembourg)

1. EU actors

The powers, responsibilities and procedures of the EU's institutions are laid down in the founding treaties of the EU: the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (1957) and the Treaty on European Union (1992). More recently, the Lisbon Treaty (2007) introduced certain amendments and additions to their competencies.

The 4 main EU institutions, with their distinct functions, work together closely to set the EU's agenda and initiate and coordinate EU law-making.

2. European Commission

Role: Promotes the <u>general interest of the EU</u> by proposing and enforcing legislation as well as by implementing policies and the EU budget

Members: A team or <u>'College' of Commissioners</u>, 1 from each EU country
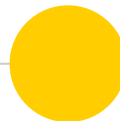
President: Ursula von der Leyen (next elections 6-9 June 2024)

Year established: 1958

Location: Brussels (Belgium)

NEXUS

2. European Commission: What does it do?

Proposes new laws

The Commission is <u>the sole EU institution tabling laws for adoption by the Parliament and the Council</u> that:

- <u>protect the interests of the EU and its citizens</u> on issues that can't be dealt with effectively at national level

- <u>get technical details right</u> by consulting experts and the public

NEXUS
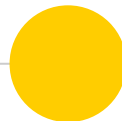
2. European Commission: What does it do?

Manages EU policies & allocates EU funding

- sets EU spending priorities, together with the Council and Parliament

- draws up annual budgets for approval by the Parliament and Council

- supervises how the money is spent, under scrutiny by the Court of Auditors
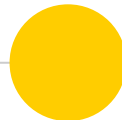
2. European Commission: What does it do?

Enforces EU law

- together with the Court of Justice, <u>ensures that EU law is properly applied in all the member countries</u>

Represents the EU internationally

- <u>speaks on behalf of all EU countries in international bodies</u>, in particular in areas of trade policy and humanitarian aid

- <u>negotiates international agreements</u> for the EU
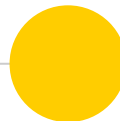
NEXUS

2. European Commission: Composition

Political leadership is provided by a team of 27 Commissioners (one from each EU country) – led by the Commission President, who decides who is responsible for which policy area.

The day-to-day running of Commission business is performed by its staff (lawyers, economists, etc.), organised into departments known as Directorates-General (DGs), each responsible for a specific policy area.

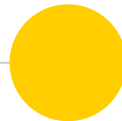# 2. European Commission: How does it work?

Strategic planning

The <u>President</u> defines the <u>policy direction for the Commission</u>, which enables the Commissioners together to <u>decide strategic objectives</u>, and produce the <u>annual work programme</u>.
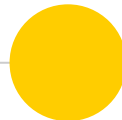
2. European Commission: How does it work?

Collective decision making

Decisions are taken based on <u>collective responsibility</u>. All <u>Commissioners</u> are equal in the decision-making process and equally accountable for these decisions. They <u>do not have any individual decision-making powers</u>, except when authorised in certain situations.

In general, <u>decisions are made by consensus</u>, but <u>votes can also take place</u>. In this case, decisions are taken by <u>simple majority</u>, where every Commissioner has one vote.
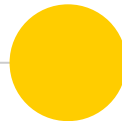
2. European Commission: How does it work?

The relevant <u>Directorate-General</u> (headed by a Director-General, answerable to the relevant Commissioner) then takes up the subject. This is usually done in the form of <u>draft legislative proposals</u>.

These are <u>then resubmitted to the Commissioners</u> for adoption at their weekly meeting, after which they become official, and <u>are sent to the Council and the Parliament</u> for the next stage in the EU legislative process.

NEXUS

2. European Commission: How does it work?

DID YOU KNOW?

The day-to-day work of the Commission is carried out by its <u>administrative staff, experts, translators, interpreters and assistants</u>. Commission officials – like the staff of other EU institutions – are recruited via the European Personnel Selection Office (**epso.europa.eu**).

These <u>officials are citizens of the EU countries</u>, selected by recruitment competitions. Around 32 000 people work for the Commission. That may sound like a lot, but it is in fact fewer than the number of staff employed by most large city councils in the EU.

If this sounds like a career you might be interested in, <u>you can apply for an **EU traineeship**</u> with any of the EU institutions.

NEXUS
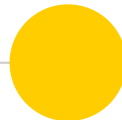
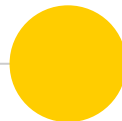# 2. The European Commission and you

If you want to <u>give your views</u> on EU policies or suggest changes or new policies, you have various options:

- send a <u>response to a Commission public consultation</u> on an issue that concerns you
- launch a <u>European Citizens' Initiative</u>
- make a <u>formal complaint</u> if you think EU law is not being applied properly in your case

NEXUS

3. European Parliament

Role: <u>Directly-elected EU body with legislative, supervisory, and budgetary responsibilities</u>

Members: 705 MEPs (Members of the European Parliament)

**President**: Roberta Metsola

Established in: 1952 as Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community, 1962 as European Parliament, first direct elections in 1979

Location: Strasbourg (France), Brussels (Belgium), Luxembourg

Elections: The European Parliament is the <u>EU's law-making body</u>. It is <u>directly elected by EU voters every 5 years</u>. Next elections - 6-9 June 2024

NEXUS
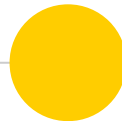
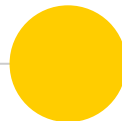# 3. European Parliament: What does it do?

The Parliament has <u>3 main roles</u>:

Legislative

- <u>Passing EU laws</u>, together with the Council of the EU, based on European Commission proposals

- <u>Deciding on international agreements</u>

- <u>Deciding on</u> <u>enlargements</u>

- <u>Reviewing the Commission's work programme and asking it to propose legislation</u>

Co-funded by
the European Union

NEXUS

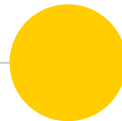# 3. European Parliament: What does it do?

Supervisory

- Democratic scrutiny of all EU institutions

- Electing the Commission President and approving the Commission as a body. Possibility of voting a motion of censure, obliging the Commission to resign

- Granting discharge, i.e. approving the way EU budgets have been spent

- Examining citizens' petitions and setting up inquiries

- Discussing monetary policy with the European Central Bank

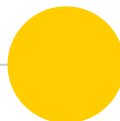- Questioning Commission and Council

NEXUS

3. European Parliament: What does it do?

Budgetary

- <u>Establishing the EU budget</u>, together with the Council

- <u>Approving the EU's long-term budget</u>, the "Multiannual Financial Framework "
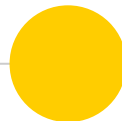 <mark>Election observations</mark>

3. European Parliament: Composition

The <u>number of MEPs for each country</u> is roughly proportionate to its population, but this is by <u>degressive proportionality</u>: no country can have fewer than 6 or more than 96 MEPs and the total number cannot exceed 705 (704 plus the President).

<u>MEPs are grouped by political affiliation</u>, not by nationality.

<u>The President represents Parliament to other EU institutions</u> and the outside world and <u>gives the final go-ahead to the EU budget</u>.

NEXUS

3. European Parliament: How does it work?

Parliament's work comprises two main stages:

- **Committees – to prepare legislation**

The Parliament numbers 20 committees and three subcommittees, each handling a particular policy area. The committees examine proposals for legislation, and MEPs and political groups can put forward amendments or propose to reject a bill. These issues are also debated within the political groups

- **Plenary sessions – to pass legislation**

This is when all the MEPs gather in the chamber to give a final vote on the proposed legislation and the proposed amendments. Normally held in Strasbourg for four days a month, but sometimes there are additional sessions in Brussels

3. The Parliament and you

If you want to ask the Parliament to act on a certain issue, you can **petition** it (either by post or online).
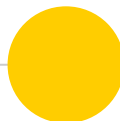
Petitions can cover any subject which comes under the EU's remit.

To submit a petition, you must be a citizen of an EU member state or be resident in the EU. Companies or other organisations must be based here.

Other ways of getting in touch with Parliament include contacting your local MEP or the European Parliament Information Office in your country

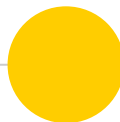# 3. The Parliament and you

DID YOU KNOW?

Young people – between 15 and 30 years old – are the most pro-European of all the generations. In 2019, over 70% of them said they had a positive view of the EU

4. European Council

Role: Defines the general political direction and priorities of the European Union

Members: Heads of state or government of EU countries, European Council President, European Commission President
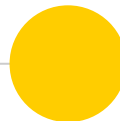
President: Charles Michel

Established in: 1974 (informal forum), 1992 (formal status), 2009 (official EU institution)

Location: Brussels (Belgium)

NEXUS

4. European Council: What does it do?

- <u>Decides on the EU's overall direction and political priorities</u> – but does not pass laws

- <u>Deals with complex or sensitive issues</u> that cannot be resolved at lower levels of intergovernmental cooperation

- <u>Sets the EU's common foreign & security policy</u>, taking into account EU strategic interests and defence implications

- <u>Nominates and appoints candidates to certain high profile EU level roles</u>, such as the ECB and the Commission

On each issue, the European Council can:

- <u>ask the European Commission to make a proposal</u> to address it

- <u>pass it on to the Council of the EU</u> to deal with

4. European Council: Composition

- The European Council is made up of the <u>heads of state or government</u> of all EU countries, the <u>European Council President</u>, and the <u>European Commission President</u>

- It is <u>convened and chaired by its President</u>, who is elected by the European Council itself for a once-renewable two-and-a-half-year term. Among other things, the President represents the EU to the outside world

NEXUS
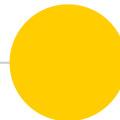
4. European Council: How does it work?

- It usually <u>meets 4 times a year</u> – but the President can convene additional meetings to address urgent issues

- It generally <u>decides issues by consensus</u> – but by unanimity or qualified majority in some cases. Only the heads of state/government can vote
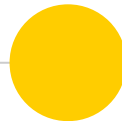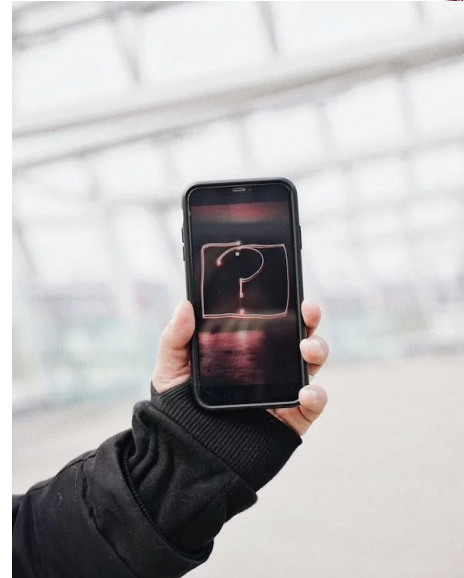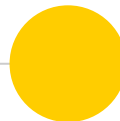
4. The European Council and you

You can put <u>general questions</u> about the European Council's work to its Public Information Service:

<u>https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/contact/general-enquiries/</u>

NEXUS

5. Council of the European Union

Role: Voice of <u>EU member governments</u>, adopting EU laws and coordinating EU policies

Members: <u>Government ministers</u> from each EU country, according to the policy area to be discussed
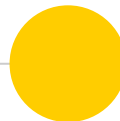
President: Each EU country holds the presidency on a <u>6-month rotating basis</u>

Established in: 1958 (as Council of the European Economic Community)

Location: Brussels (Belgium)

NEXUS
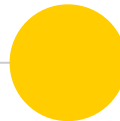
5. Council of the European Union

Not to be confused with:

- <u>European Council</u> – quarterly summits, where EU leaders meet to set the broad direction of EU policy making

- <u>Council of Europe</u> – not an EU body at all

Co-funded by
the European Union

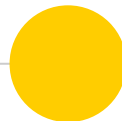# 5. Council of the European Union: What does it do?

- Negotiates and adopts EU laws, together with the European Parliament, based on proposals from the European Commission

- Coordinates <u>EU countries' policies</u>

- Develops the EU's <u>foreign & security policy</u>, based on European Council guidelines

- Concludes <u>agreements between the EU and other countries or international organisations</u>

- Adopts the <u>annual EU budget</u> – jointly with the European Parliament

NEXUS
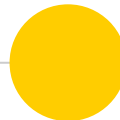
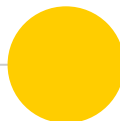# 5. Council of the European Union: Composition

- <u>There are no fixed members of the EU Council</u>. Instead, the Council meets in <u>10 different configurations</u>, each corresponding to the policy area being discussed. Depending on the configuration, each country sends their minister responsible for that policy area

- For example, when the Council meeting on economic and financial affairs (the "Ecofin Council") is held, it is attended by each country's finance minister

Co-funded by
the European Union

5. Council of the European Union: How does it work?

- <u>EU ministers meet in public when they discuss or vote</u> on draft legislative acts

- To be passed, <u>decisions usually require a qualified majority</u>:

  – 55% of countries (with 27 current members, this means 15 countries)

  – representing at least 65 % of total EU population

- You can <u>watch the Council's public sessions live</u> in all EU languages. When a Council meeting is public, so are its <u>minutes</u> and <u>votes</u>

5. Council of the European Union: How does it work?

DID YOU KNOW?

The Council <u>votes unanimously</u> on:

- most common foreign and security policy issues
- citizenship (the granting of new rights to EU citizens)
- EU membership
- harmonisation of national legislation on indirect taxation
- EU finances
- certain justice and home affairs issues (e.g. family law, police cooperation)
- harmonisation of national legislation on social security and social protection

Under unanimous voting, abstention does not prevent a decision from being taken

5. The Council and you

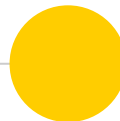You can put general questions to the <u>Council's public information service</u>
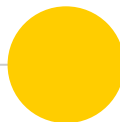
DID YOU KNOW?

DID YOU KNOW?

You can visit the European institutions!

Take a tour around the **European Parliament**, the Council, the **European Council** and the **European Commission** in person or online.

Co-funded by
the European Union

Materials produced during the project include:

EMBLEM

DISCLAIMER

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Oganisations can downlod the official emblems and disclaimere (translated in different languages) here: https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/about-eacea/visual-identity/visual-identity-programming-period-2021-2027/european-flag-emblem-and-multilingual-disclaimer_en
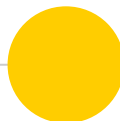
Materials should include the translated versions according to the language in use

Thank
YOU

Co-funded by
the European Union

G.A. N° 2022-2-IE01-KA220-YOU-883F8363