

September 2020



# Newsletter of the EU4Youth Programme

## THE NEWSLETTER IS FEATURING THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- ☛ Eastern Partnership Youth Engagement Summit: conclusions
- ☛ Video conference of the Eastern Partnership foreign affairs ministers
- ☛ Call for proposals: grants to support 'DISCO' school project results
- ☛ Youth policy developments in the EaP region
- ☛ EU policy developments
- ☛ Key updates from EU4Youth grantees and Youth Engagement Roadmaps project
- ☛ Recent and upcoming EaP youth events

## EU4Youth at a glance

*EU4Youth fosters the active participation of young people in society and their employability, by developing youth leadership and entrepreneurship through a variety of actions, including capacity building, fellowships, support to policy dialogue, as well as providing grants to organisations active in these areas.*

### The EU4Youth Programme consists of three components:

**Component 1:** ☛ Capacity building – Eastern Partnership Youth Window – Erasmus+ projects

**Component 2:** ☛ Grant scheme – Focus on disadvantaged youth and youth entrepreneurship

**Component 3:** ☛ EU4Youth Coordination and Support

☛ EU4Youth II – Youth Engagement Roadmaps

# Eastern Partnership Youth Engagement Summit: conclusions

The Eastern Partnership Youth Engagement Summit, held online on **2-3 July 2020**, was the first large-scale online-only EU – Eastern Partnership (EaP) youth event. A total of **457 active youth leaders** and youth workers and **33 speakers from 28 countries** engaged in a dialogue amongst themselves and with EU and EaP policymakers on achievements and challenges in the youth field in the Eastern Neighbourhood region.

The overall objective of the EaP Youth Summit was to celebrate and promote past and ongoing cooperation between the EU and its Eastern partners in the field of youth, and to facilitate a dialogue between policymakers and young people. This was especially

important in view of the **New Deal for Youth** announced in the “**Joint Communication: Eastern Partnership policy beyond 2020**” on 18 March. The **New Deal for Youth** is built on the results of the 2017-2020 “Youth and Education Package” and aims to keep EU investment in youth in the focus of the Eastern partner countries.

The Summit **included two panel discussions as well as a series of webinars and workshops** aimed at stimulating dialogue between young people from the Eastern partner countries and policymakers from the EU and the Eastern partner countries.

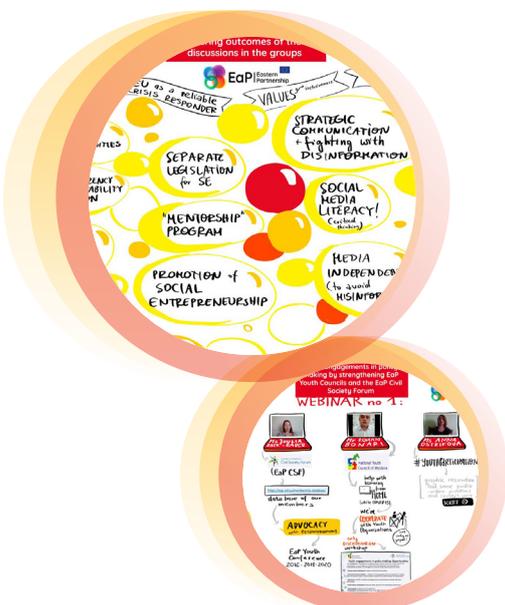
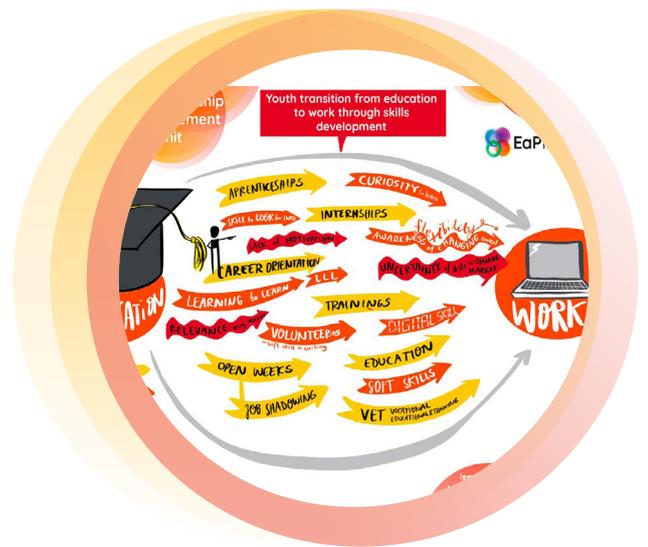
The **first panel discussion** “Future of Youth Policy Dialogues in the EaP” focused on the existing mechanisms of youth policy dialogue in the Eastern Partnership region, as well as future perspectives. The **second panel** “Moving forward on youth employment and entrepreneurship” underlined the crucial importance of youth employment and entrepreneurship.

The webinars and workshops were built around four core topics:

- ✓ Youth dialogue and its relevance in the Eastern Neighbourhood region
- ✓ Social entrepreneurship and the role of youth
- ✓ Transition from education to work and the role of skills development in this process
- ✓ Disinformation and the role of youth in proactive communication and tackling disinformation

*Find out more about the Summit, its main outcomes and key messages in the event’s*

**Final Report**



## Video conference of the Eastern Partnership foreign affairs ministers

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A video conference between EU foreign ministers and their counterparts from the six Eastern partner countries took place on 11 June 2020. During this virtual meeting, ministers confirmed the long-term objectives of the Eastern Partnership, including youth policy beyond 2020. The ministerial video conference took place one year after the 10th anniversary of the Eastern Partnership, providing an opportunity to reflect on past achievements and future challenges, as well as following the publication of the [👉 Joint Communication on the future of the Eastern Partnership](#) in March 2020 and the related [👉 Council Conclusions](#).

Josep Borrell, the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, chaired the video conference with the participation of EU Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Olivér Várhelyi. The video conference also provided a platform for ministers to exchange their first views and reaffirm their commitment on the Eastern Partnership's new long-term agenda, which focuses on five main areas: economy and connectivity; accountable institutions and rule of law; green transformation; digital transformation; fair and inclusive societies.

The Joint Communication sets out new EaP policy objectives beyond 2020, which include a [New Deal for Youth](#), with the aim of maintaining a focus on EU investment in youth and stimulating actions for young people's socio-economic empowerment.

More information on the video conference and the materials related to the Eastern Partnership dialogue are available via the [👉 link](#).

## Call for proposals: micro-grants to support development of 'DISCO' school project results

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The European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme "[👉 Democratic and Inclusive School Culture in Operation \(DISCO\)](#)" is now at its 6th cycle and offers micro-grants to selected institutions for the dissemination and/or further development of the resources and publications developed in its [👉 previous cycles](#) (2013-2020).

The [👉 call for proposals](#) is open to all 50 States party to the European Cultural Convention, and the selected projects will actively support the mission of the Programme, that is strengthening education for democratic citizenship and human rights education in Europe and beyond, contributing to democratic societies.

**Project activities** may include translation and adaptation of materials, focus group meetings, workshops, conferences, training activities, testing of tools, materials, and training programmes, peer review activities, peer learning activities, and study visits.

*The total budget under the call is €200,000.*

*Deadline: 11 November 2020.*

## Youth policy developments in the EaP region

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### Georgia

The Youth Agency of Georgia is engaged in substantial reform, including the development of a new strategy, action plan and external communication. The aim of the reform is to better address the needs of young people in Georgia and further promote their participation in all spheres of life.

The previous EU4Youth newsletter reported on the core directions launched under the reform.

*The following progress has since been achieved:*

- ✓ National **Youth Strategy 2025**: the development of the strategy will be finalised in autumn 2020, with the coordination of the Youth Agency, and assistance of the EU Skills4Jobs project and UN Agencies.
- ✓ Supporting municipal institutions to formulate and implement rights-based **municipal youth strategies**: with the assistance of the EU Skills4Jobs Technical Assistance project, research in youth needs assessment, and capacity building training were conducted.
- ✓ **Institutionalising the mechanisms for youth participation** in decision-making processes: a new Youth Council was launched by the Youth Agency of Georgia in August 2020, based on the model recommended by the Council of Europe.
- ✓ **Involvement of regional youth organisations**: Regional Youth Fora were organised in Western and Eastern Georgia to discuss and present their recommendations for the Youth Strategy document. Moreover, 13 youth organisations have received grants from the Youth Fund to implement youth projects in the ten regions of Georgia.
- ✓ Validation of **youth workers profession**: the Educational Quality Enhancement Centre (EQE) verified a short course of vocational education of Youth Work. The first course was launched on 6 September. Starting from September 2020, certified youth workers will start working in Vocational Educational Institutions across Georgia.

### Ukraine

- ✓ Ukraine is in the process of implementing a major reform of the youth sector, and has begun consultations on a new policy document. The draft of the new ‘Youth Law’, which was registered on 23 June 2020 and passed the first reading in July 2020, contains conditions to reform youth policy of Ukraine, including recognition of youth workers and youth work, support for the capacity development of youth NGOs, development of a three-level youth centre system, and the establishment of the Ukrainian Youth Fund responsible for supporting youth projects and NGOs in participatory approaches.
- ✓ The Association of Youth Workers of Ukraine was established on 29 July 2020. It is an all-Ukrainian national platform which unites people working with young people in different fields of youth work - volunteering, non-formal education, career guidance, etc.
- ✓ The Association of Youth Councils of Ukraine was established on 12-13 September 2020. It aims to unite and to advocate the interests of regional and city youth councils from all regions of Ukraine.

## EU policy developments

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Even though these policy developments mainly affect EU Member States, some of the topics are relevant to the issues addressed by the EU4Youth Programme.

On 1 July, the European Commission launched a  **Youth Employment Support package** including a commitment for a renewed **Youth Guarantee** and recommendations for **Vocational Education and Training**, as well as the  **European Skills Agenda** and several new policy documents. This initiative can be seen as part of an ambitious agenda to guide the EU's Covid-19 recovery efforts in the fields of employment and social policy.

### Communication on the future of the Youth Guarantee

The EU launched the Youth Guarantee back in 2013 with a commitment by Member States to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. Under the title  **Youth Employment Support: a Bridge to Jobs for the Next Generation**, the European Commission has now published a new Communication, accompanied with a  **proposal for a Council Recommendation** to replace the 2013 Recommendations on establishing the Youth Guarantee.

### Communication on the European Skills Agenda and proposal for Council Recommendations on Vocational Education and Training

Also on 1 July, the European Commission published the  **European Skills Agenda for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience**. It sets ambitious, quantitative objectives for upskilling and reskilling to be achieved within the next five years. Its 12 actions focus on skills for jobs by partnering up with Member States, companies and social partners to work together for change, by empowering people to embark on lifelong learning, and by using the EU budget as a catalyst to unlock public and private investment in people's skills. Together with the Skills Agenda, the Commission also published a **proposal for Recommendation on Vocational Education and Training**, which, once adopted by the EU Member States, will provide the framework for further developments in this area.

### Council Conclusions on Youth in external action

Another important recent policy development was the adoption on 5 June 2020 of the  **Council Conclusions on Youth in external action**. The Council, the EU body representing the EU's 27 Member States, stressed the contribution of young generations to building stronger, more legitimate, peaceful and democratic societies, in which human rights and the rule of law are respected and no one is left behind. The Council also emphasised the fact that young people are change makers and essential partners in the implementation of the European Consensus on Development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

# Key updates from EU4Youth grantees and Youth Engagement Roadmaps project

## EU4Youth grantees

EU4Youth mentors will help young Belarusians find employment or start their own business. A youth employability mentorship institute has opened its doors in the Homiel region of Belarus as part of the **EU4Youth project 'Fostering potential for greater employability'**.

[👉 Read more](#)

The EU4Youth project helped Yurii from Ukraine to run a successful poultry farm: a grant allowed him to purchase a brand new incubator that can hatch up to 1,000 eggs at a time. The support was provided in the framework of the **EU4Youth - Enhancing Youth Education, Employment and Participation in Conflict-affected Areas in Georgia and Ukraine** project.

[👉 Read more](#)

EU helps establish legal framework for social entrepreneurs in Ukraine: the EU4Youth project **'Unlocking the potential of young social entrepreneurs in Moldova and Ukraine'** has recently launched work on its legal component, partnering with several relevant initiatives led by the Ukrainian Parliament, local government and civil society.

[👉 Read more](#)

From an inclusive coffee shop to sugar-free sweets: ten business ideas won EU4Youth funding in Belarus during the third grant competition held in Belarus to support vulnerable young people in starting a new business as part of the **EU4Youth Employability and Stability** project.

[👉 Read more](#)

The EU4Youth project is supporting youth activities in Georgia with scholarships: 17-year-old Mariam won a 1,000 GEL CENN Green Scholarship for contributing to green entrepreneurship within the framework of the **EU4Youth - Social Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Development (SEED) project**.

[👉 Read more](#)



In July, a team from the **EU4Youth Social Entrepreneurship in Armenia and Georgia (SEAG) project** arranged meetings with young entrepreneurs, including ethnic minority young women entrepreneurs in Georgia. During the meetings, young people had the opportunity to ask questions and get comprehensive answers about project activities. The main aim of meetings was to encourage young people to attend an introductory training on social entrepreneurship.

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The **EU4Youth SAY YES Skills for Jobs** project launched a series of talks with regional youth in Armenia. The virtual meetings, “My road to success”, bring together young people with successful professionals to discuss professional developments in a number of job fields. The meetings took place each Friday until the end of September.

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EU4Youth opens new horizons in rural tourism: in August, a hands-on ‘Rural tourism through village school’ lab took place in Belarus in the framework of the **EU4Youth School Garden for Agricultural Entrepreneurship** project.

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## Youth Engagement Roadmaps project

### EaP Youth Survey Launch

To ensure an integrated approach to youth participation and youth employment development, the **EU4Youth – Youth Engagement Roadmaps project** will launch a Youth Survey in all the Eastern partner countries in October-November 2020.

The Youth Survey will aim to identify key trends, developments and youth challenges and assess constraints that hinder youth employability, young people’s participation in policy formulation and evidence-based decision-making, and active participation in policy implementation on the local, regional and national levels. The survey will help to determine the kind of support required by young people to become economically active, capable of changing jobs or profession, or pursuing entrepreneurial activities of their interest. The results of the survey will, among others, feed into the formulation of the future structured EU dialogue with EaP youth and will serve to provide more tailored support to youth specific needs, youth approaches in learning and adapting to labour market needs.

### Youth policy framework in Ukraine

In the framework of the **EU4Youth – Youth Engagement Roadmaps project**, targeted assistance requested by the Ukrainian government on the draft Youth Law will be provided by supporting the creation of adequate legislation that will provide a solid framework for governing all youth-related activities in Ukraine and ensure a greater alignment of standards with those of the European Union and the Council of Europe.

## Recent and upcoming EaP youth events

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### “Youth for Environment”: Eastern Partnership Youth Conference

The online Eastern Partnership Youth Conference, “Youth for Environment”, which took place on **24-26 September 2020**, provided young people with the possibility to discover methods, strategies and tools to foster environmental behaviour and knowledge, advancing environmental education and activism among peers in the Eastern Partnership region. Participants from the selected countries got equipped with tools to enable them to tackle environmental problems through quality education, advocacy, and youth work, in order to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy and restore biodiversity and cut pollution.

Organised by the EaP Civil Society Forum and with the support of the German EU presidency, the conference gathered around 130 participants, including 90 young people from the Eastern partner countries, EU member states and Russia.

 [Find out more](#)

### Roundtable ‘Youth in Georgia – Strengthening young people’s employment, entrepreneurship and participation’ (21-22 October 2020, Tbilisi, Georgia)

The EU4Youth Programme, in partnership with the EU Delegation and Youth Agency in Georgia, will convene a two-day roundtable meeting, which will bring together local, national and international stakeholders in youth work and youth policy.

The first in a series of country roundtables, it aims to raise awareness about current trends and challenges in the fields of youth employment, entrepreneurship and participation in Georgia, to exchange best practices and explore new possibilities, and to identify opportunities for further cooperation on priority topics.

The roundtable will bring together around 40 participants representing public institutions dealing with youth issues, youth organisations, the National Youth Council, selected youth and education practitioners, representatives from the EU Delegation, selected EU Member State representatives, youth policy experts and researchers, EU4Youth grant holders and related EU bilateral and regional projects, as well as selected international development partners.

The first day of the meeting will inform and raise awareness among participants about the future Eastern Partnership structured dialogue with youth and introduce the main provisions of the EU Youth Guarantee scheme as a key support measure for youth employment.

The second day will focus on Youth Social Entrepreneurship, discussing needs and challenges in Georgia as well as good practices and opportunities for further cooperation.

The roundtable will be organised face-to-face for those available to attend in Tbilisi, with the remaining participants joining online.