

Local youth work and democracy

**A European conference under the upcoming Belgian Presidency
of the Council of the European Union in 2024
19-22 February 2024**

Call for theme rapporteurs

The upcoming Belgian EU Presidency (1/1/2024 – 30/6/2024) foresees to organize the European conference 'Local youth work and democracy', with the aim of contributing to the goals of the Belgian EU Presidency in the youth and youth work policy area. The event will take place on 19-22 February 2024. The main aim of the conference is to discuss the role of local youth work in enhancing youth engagement and participation in local communities. This event builds on the synergies deriving from the Strategic National Agency Cooperation projects, Europe Goes Local (coordinated by JINT vzw) and Democracy Reloading (coordinated by BIJ).

JINT vzw is looking for 6 theme rapporteurs to report on the outcome of the break-out sessions of the event.

JINT vzw is the Flemish knowledge centre for international youth mobility and international youth policy and is the National Agency in Flanders, Belgium, for the Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps programmes of the European Union. JINT has been assigned to support the upcoming Belgian EU Presidency and its activities.

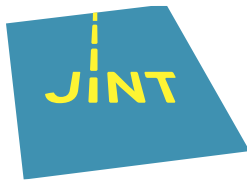
Background information

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

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

JINT vzw | Grétrystraat 26, 1000 Brussel | 02 209 07 20 | jint@jint.be | www.jint.be
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The conference 'Local youth work and democracy' – as a flagship event of the Belgian EU Presidency – will contribute to this political process.

The objectives of the event

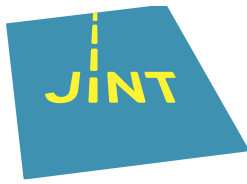
- Take stock of what has been achieved in local youth work and youth participation
- Discuss the prerequisites and components of the basic youth work offer, paying special attention to the links between this offer, youth participation and social inclusion in the local communities
- Explore how youth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

Thematic areas

The event will be built around six thematic areas:

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

for the implementation of key youth policy areas on local level.



The role of digital tools

The use of digital tools and platforms is expected during the event. The purpose of the digital tools is to enable participants to connect with each other before, during and after the event; to communicate the agenda of the event, share information about the different sessions and to harvest the outcomes of the sessions.

Digital tools shall also support and enhance the dynamics of the sessions (using games, polls etc) and ensure the connectivity for speakers who eventually cannot participate in person.

Europe Goes Local has created an on-line community for local youth work stakeholders with introducing an on-line platform. The use of this platform is to be organically integrated in the flow of the event, starting from the preparation through the event until the follow-up. Other digital tools can also be used if they can improve the implementation of the event.

The use of digital tools does not exclude the application of traditional, paper-based methods. A good balance between the use of different media is crucial for the success of the event.

Participants

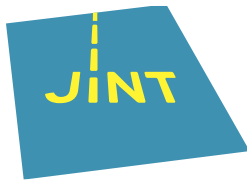
Number of participants: 350 people from all member states of the European Union and the Council of Europe

Participants will be invited as:

- National delegations, which include:
 - o Young people active in local youth work, in youth councils or NGOs
 - o Representatives of local and regional authorities (both administrative staff and elected politicians)
 - o Youth workers engaged directly with young people in local youth work or representing umbrella organisations of local youth work
 - o Decision-makers at the national level who have influence on youth work and youth policy making as well as on providing the means and frameworks of local youth work provision
 - o National Agencies of the Erasmus+ youth programme and the European Solidarity Corps
- Representatives of European institutions/organisations
- Presenters of inspiring inputs

Profile of the theme rapporteurs

6 theme rapporteurs are foreseen for this assignment, one rapporteur for each **thematic area**. Essential skills and experience:



- Extensive knowledge of youth (work) policy in Europe, most especially in the chosen theme (see **Thematic areas**);
- Familiarity with the youth sector in Europe, awareness of the role of different stakeholders and the current discussions in the field;
- Being acquainted with policy making on local level;
- Proficiency in drafting policy or analytical papers;
- Experience in writing analytical event reports;
- Good to excellent command of the English language (the facilitation will be conducted in English)
- Experience with Europe Goes Local and Democracy Reloading can be an advantage.

Tasks of the theme rapporteurs

- Attend the necessary preparatory meeting(s):
 - 19-21 September 2023: in-person meeting for the whole team in Belgium to prepare the draft agenda of the event
 - 19 February 2024: in-person meeting for the whole team right before the event (arrival day for the team: 18 February (Sunday) 2024)
- ;
- Take part in selecting the inputs and inspiring practices for the parallel sessions;
- Follow the sessions of the conference and take stock of them according to the Thematic area, compile and analyse the outputs of the discussions as well as the different inputs;
- Write an analytical report of 2-3 pages as an output of the conference in the respective Thematic area;
- Support the policy process of the Belgian EU Presidency via highlighting the key-outcomes of the discussions of the respective Thematic area in the report;
- Work in close cooperation with the facilitators (including the digital facilitator), the general rapporteur as well as the organising and communication team of event.

Fees and costs

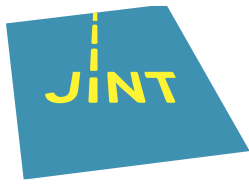
- The theme rapporteurs will receive 360 €/day for 10 working days, 3600 € in total.
- All costs of travel (2nd class), board and lodging incurred in relation to the meetings and events will be covered by the organisers.
- All necessary facilitation materials and on-line tools are provided by the organiser on demand by the facilitator.

Application procedure

Deadline for applications: 30 June 2023 (inclusive).

Please send the following documents to judit.balogh@jint.be:

- your CV or a link to your SALTO-TOY profile;
 - a short description of past experience of a similar nature
 - the confirmation of your availability for the preparatory meeting (19-21 September 2021 and for the whole duration of the event, including the preparatory day: 18-22 February 2024)
- All applicants will be notified by the 10th of July 2023.



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