



TEXTS ADOPTED

P8_TA(2018)0240

Implementation of the EU Youth Strategy

European Parliament resolution of 31 May 2018 on the implementation of the EU Youth Strategy (2017/2259(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 9, 165 and 166 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and in particular Articles 14, 15, 21, 24 and 32 thereof,
- having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by the EU in 2010,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing ‘Erasmus+’: the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/2008/EC¹,
- having regard to the Council resolution on a European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2016-2018²,
- having regard to the Council recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee³,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 7-8 February 2013 to create a Youth Employment Initiative⁴,
- having regard to the Council resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018)⁵,

¹ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 50.

² OJ C 417, 15.12.2015, p. 1.

³ OJ C 120, 26.4.2013, p. 1.

⁴ EUCO 37/13.

⁵ OJ C 311, 19.12.2009, p. 1.

- having regard to the Commission evaluation of the EU Youth Strategy¹,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (‘ET 2020’)²,
- having regard to its resolution on of 14 September 2017 on the future of the Erasmus+ programme³,
- having regard to its resolution of 2 February 2017 on the implementation of Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing ‘Erasmus+’: the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/2008/EC⁴,
- having regard to the Paris Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education, adopted at the informal meeting of EU education ministers in Paris on 17 March 2015,
- having regard to the 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018), adopted by the Council on 23 November 2015⁵,
- having regard to the Council recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning⁶,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 26 August 2015 entitled ‘Draft 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020) – New priorities for European cooperation in education and training’ (COM(2015)0408),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 3 March 2010 entitled ‘EU 2020: a European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ (COM(2010)2020),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 17 January 2018 entitled ‘Digital Education Action Plan’ (COM(2018)0022),
- having regard to its resolution of 27 October 2016 on the assessment of the EU Youth Strategy 2013-2015⁷,
- having regard to the Council recommendation of 10 March 2014 on a Quality Framework for Traineeships⁸,

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/dgs/education_culture/more_info/evaluations/docs/youth/youth-strategy-2016_en.pdf

² OJ C 119, 28.5.2009, p. 2.

³ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2017)0359.

⁴ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2017)0018.

⁵ OJ C 417, 15.12.2015, p. 17.

⁶ OJ C 398, 22.12.2012, p. 1.

⁷ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0426.

⁸ OJ C 88, 27.3.2014, p. 1.

- having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child,
 - having regard to the Council of Europe resolution of 25 November 2008 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe (CM/Res(2008)23),
 - having regard to the Council of Europe recommendation of 31 May 2017 on youth work (CM/Rec(2017)4),
 - having regard to its resolution of 12 April 2016 on Learning EU at school¹,
 - having regard to its resolution of 8 September 2015 on promoting youth entrepreneurship through education and training²,
 - having regard to the opinion of the European Committee of the Regions — European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018)³,
 - having regard to its resolution of 19 January 2016 on the role of intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and education in promoting EU fundamental values⁴,
 - having regard to the Shadow Report on Youth Policy published by the European Youth Forum,
 - having regard to the resolution of the European Youth Forum on the EU Youth Strategy⁵,
 - having regard to the position paper entitled ‘Engage. Inform. Empower’ of the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA),
 - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure, as well as Article 1(1)(e) of, and Annex 3 to, the decision of the Conference of Presidents of 12 December 2002 on the procedure for granting authorisation to draw up own-initiative reports,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Culture and Education and the opinion of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (A8-0162/2018),
- A. whereas the negative impact of the recession on young people’s prospects for developing their full potential continue to be felt across the European Union;
- B. whereas many Member States, particularly those in Southern Europe, remain some way from achieving their pre-crisis levels on a number of youth indicators, such as employment, welfare and social protection;
- C. whereas narrowing disparities are evident at regional level across the EU; whereas many regions still have employment rates below their pre-crisis levels;
- D. whereas youth unemployment has been gradually decreasing in recent years, although, according to Eurostat, it stood at 16,1 % in January 2018, even exceeding 34 % in some

¹ OJ C 58, 15.2.2018, p. 57.

² OJ C 316, 22.9.2017, p. 76.

³ OJ C 120, 5.4.2016, p. 22.

⁴ OJ C 11, 12.1.2018, p. 16.

⁵ <https://www.youthforum.org/resolution-eu-youth-strategy-0>

Member States; whereas if we compare the figures from 2008 (15,6 %) we can see that the rate has increased; whereas these figures prevent a one-size-fits-all solution if we are to realise young people's full potential; whereas there are worryingly high rates of youth unemployment in the outermost regions, with some of those regions registering rates of over 50 %, as in the case of Mayotte;

- E. whereas disadvantaged groups, such as ethnic minorities, people with special needs, women, LGBTIQ, migrants and refugees – who are facing barriers to enter the labour market and access culture, social services and education – are those most affected by the socio-economic crisis;
- F. whereas education helps in minimising the effect of socio-economic inequalities, providing skills and competences that are necessary for reducing the intergenerational transmission of disadvantages;
- G. whereas the overall lack of investment in young people and young people's rights will prevent young people from claiming, exercising and defending their rights, and will contribute to the aggravation of phenomena such as declining populations, early school leaving, lack of professional and vocational qualifications, late entry into the labour market, lack of financial independence, potential malfunctioning of social security systems, widespread job insecurity and social exclusion;
- H. whereas the problems that young people face in employment, education and training, as well as in social and political engagement, are not uniform, with some groups being affected disproportionately more than others; whereas more effort is needed to support those who are furthest from the labour market or entirely detached from it;
- I. whereas safeguarding local schools and educational establishments in all European regions is vital if the aim is to improve education for young people and if the EU is to offer the regions its full support in meeting this challenge;
- J. whereas education, intercultural dialogue, strategic communication and closer cooperation between Member States in particular have a key role to play in preventing the marginalisation and radicalisation of young people and increasing their resilience;
- K. whereas young people should be actively involved in the planning, development, implementation, monitoring and assessment of all policies impacting young people; whereas 57 % of youth organisations in the EU consider that their expertise is not taken into account in the process of formulating youth policies¹;
- L. whereas it is important that youth organisations guarantee an adequate level of representativeness and inclusiveness of young people in order to be fully legitimate;
- M. whereas although the EU Youth Strategy is an ongoing strategy that is continually being refined, its objectives are still very broad and ambitious; whereas there is a lack of duly established parameters of reference;
- N. whereas the 2010-2018 EU Youth Strategy (EYS) emphasises the need for a structured dialogue between young people and decision makers;

¹ Shadow Report on Youth Policy published by the European Youth Forum.

- O. whereas the ultimate objective of the EYS is to increase the number of opportunities and ensure equality of opportunity for all young Europeans;
- P. whereas young people should be helped and empowered to address the serious problems they are currently facing and to tackle the challenges they will face in the future through more relevant, effective and better coordinated youth policies, improved and accessible education and the targeted use of economic, employment and social policies at local, regional, national and EU levels;
- Q. whereas in recent years the EU has launched a number of initiatives such as the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) and the Youth Guarantee in the framework of its Youth Strategy, with the objectives of creating more and equal opportunities for all young people in education and in the labour market, and promoting young people's inclusion, empowerment and active participation in society;
- R. whereas there is a need to mainstream EU action in the field of youth through the inclusion of a youth dimension in current and future policies and funding programmes, in particular in all key policy areas, such as the economy, employment and social affairs, cohesion, health, women, co-determination, migration, culture, the media and education;
- S. whereas there is a need for coordination of the implementation of the future EYS across different policy sectors and institutions;
- T. whereas a gender perspective must be included in decision-making on youth policies which takes into account the specific challenges and circumstances faced by young women and girls in particular, from different cultural and religious backgrounds; whereas specific gender-sensitive measures should be included in youth policy, such as prevention of violence against women and girls, education on gender equality and sex education; whereas women are 1,4 times more likely not to be in education, employment or training (NEET) than men on average¹ and continued efforts are needed to increase participation levels in the labour market among young women – particularly after maternity leave and for single mothers – and those who have dropped out of school, the low-skilled, young people with disabilities and all youngsters at risk of discrimination;
- U. whereas sustained efforts are needed to increase the participation of young people in society, particularly for people with disabilities, migrants, refugees, NEETs and those at risk of social exclusion;
- V. whereas education is a key factor in combating social exclusion and investing in skills and competences is therefore crucial to tackling the high unemployment rate, especially among NEETs;
- W. whereas Article 9 TFEU establishes that the Union, in defining and implementing its policies and activities, shall take into account requirements linked to the promotion of a high level of employment, social protection, the fight against social exclusion, and a high level of education, training and protection of human health;

¹ Society at a Glance 2016 – OECD Social Indicators.

- X. whereas the EYS established a good base for fruitful and meaningful cooperation in the field of youth;
- Y. whereas the achievement of the objectives of the last three-year cycle of the EYS (2010-2018) cannot be duly and precisely assessed and the comparison of the respective situations of the different Member States is very difficult to evaluate, owing to a lack of benchmarks and indicators, and to overlapping implementation instruments;
- Z. whereas career orientation and access to information on employment opportunities and educational paths are essential for future educational development and transition in to the labour market;
- AA. whereas in establishing the objectives of this strategy and implementing and evaluating it, the EU must work in close partnership with national, regional and local authorities;

Youth challenges and lessons from the current EU youth-related policymaking process

1. Notes with regret that long-term austerity measures, notably cuts in funding for education, culture, and youth policies, have had a negative impact on young people and their living conditions; warns that young people, especially the most disadvantaged, such as young people with disabilities, young women, minorities, those with special needs, are greatly affected by rising inequality, the risk of exclusion, insecurity and discrimination;
2. Welcomes the achievements of European cooperation in the field of youth, which has demonstrated its ability to tackle the problems faced by most Europeans and to support national policymakers, providing them with expertise, recommendations and legitimacy, and successfully mobilising more EU funding;
3. Views the open method of coordination as appropriate, but still insufficient as a means for framing youth policies that needs to be complemented by other measures; reiterates its call for closer cooperation and exchange of best practices on youth issues at local, regional, national and EU level; urges the Member States to agree on clear indicators and benchmarks in order to allow for monitoring of the progress made;
4. Acknowledges the positive achievements of the EYS though the development of cross-sector work and the implementation of structured dialogue in order to ensure the participation of young people, and believes that the general level of awareness of the objectives and instruments of the EYS on the part of relevant actors and stakeholders needs to be improved; notes, in particular, that the bottom-up approach used for structured dialogue represents added value and should be preserved; calls on the Commission and the Member States, therefore, to take into account the results of the VI Cycle of the structured dialogue that focuses on the future EYS when developing the new strategy;
5. Suggests involving local and regional authorities in the area of youth policy, especially in those Member States where they have competence in this area;
6. Welcomes the policy initiatives aimed at supporting the EU's youth, in particular Investing in Europe's Youth, the European Solidarity Corps and the YEI; believes, however, that these instruments should be better connected to the EYS and follow a bottom-up approach; calls on the Commission, therefore, to systematically link all

policy proposals pertaining to young people to the overarching strategy and to involve all the relevant stakeholders, such as social partners and civil society, by taking a holistic, long-term approach with well-defined horizontal objectives;

7. Urges the Commission to establish a cross-sectoral working group for the coordination of future EYS implementation, with the participation of the EU institutions, including Parliament, the Member States and civil society, in particular trade unions and youth organisations;
8. Calls on the Commission to set up effective inter-service coordination tools and to assign the responsibility for youth mainstreaming as a cluster to a Commission vice-president;
9. Encourages the Member States to use the European Pillar of Social Rights as a basis for drafting legislation for young people;
10. Stresses the importance of promoting healthy lifestyles to prevent disease and considers it necessary to provide young people with correct information on and assistance with serious mental health problems such as tobacco, alcohol and drug use and addiction;
11. Highlights the importance of the Commission's evaluation of the implementation of the EYS in the Member States with a view to enabling increased checks and monitoring on the ground; urges the Commission to establish objectives for the EYS that can be qualitatively and quantitatively assessed, taking into account the specificities of each Member State or region; calls on the Commission to increase funding for programmes and actions preparing young people for the world of work;

Giving a voice to young people in the EYS

12. Recommends that the future EYS should be participatory and centred around young people and improving well-being, reflecting the needs, ambitions and diversity, of all young people in Europe, while widening their access to creative tools involving new technologies;
13. Believes that the EU should express solidarity with young people and continue to empower them to participate in society by developing specific measures, such as mainstreaming volunteering, supporting youth work, developing new tools – especially those involving new technologies – and promoting exchanges based on solidarity, community engagement, free space and democratic dialogue; recognises, therefore, the importance of youth associations as a space enabling young people to grow and to develop a sense of active citizenship; calls on Member States to facilitate the active involvement of young people in voluntary organisations; stresses that the increased social participation of young people can, apart from being an important achievement in its own right, act as a stepping stone towards increased political participation;
14. Highlights in this regard the important role of non-formal and informal learning, as well as participation in sport and volunteering activities, in stimulating the development of civic, social and intercultural competences and skills among young Europeans;
15. Calls on the Member States to provide for national legal frameworks and adequate financial resources for voluntary work;

16. Strongly urges the Commission and the Member States to encourage young people, particularly those with fewer opportunities and those outside formal organisational structures, to play an active and critical role in public life, and to adopt a participatory approach to policymaking in order to enable young people to influence decisions that impact their lives by offering them online and offline democracy tools, while taking into account the limitations and risks of social media, and by involving the relevant stakeholders, such as social partners, civil society and youth organisations, in the development, implementation, monitoring and assessment of youth policies;
17. Calls on the Member States to encourage young people to participate fully in the electoral process;
18. Expresses the need to continue the structured dialogue between young people and decision-makers under the next European cooperation framework in the field of youth; believes that the structured dialogue process should systematically increase the number and diversity of the groups of young people to which it reaches out, and notes that sufficient financial support for national and European working groups should be provided to ensure this; calls on the Member States to encourage the participation of national, regional and local decision-makers in the structured dialogue with young people;
19. Urges the Member States to uphold transparency in submitting their accounts and using funds earmarked for boosting sustainable employment opportunities for young people; reiterates the importance, consequently, of the Member States submitting detailed information on the situation of their young people when requested;
20. Highlights the lack of systematic updates and reliable data on the implementation of the EYS; urges the Member States and the Commission, therefore, to promote closer cooperation between national and regional statistics services when it comes to submitting relevant and up-to-date statistics on youth, which are important for assessing the level of success of the strategy being implemented; considers that the triannual reports submitted must be accompanied by these statistics;
21. Recalls that there is a tendency of declining youth participation in national and local elections and that young people need political commitment and to be able to see the result of their contribution; recalls that opportunities to experience political participation in their own environment and local communities from an early age is a crucial step towards an increased feeling of European citizenship and for young people to become active citizens; calls on the Commission and the Member States, therefore, to encourage regional and local authorities to ensure that young people and youth organisations are able to fully and effectively participate and be involved in decision-making and electoral processes;
22. Calls on the Member States to incorporate the youth national councils in the monitoring and implementation committees of the EYS;
23. Stresses the potential of technology for connecting with young people and calls on the EU to strengthen their capacity to participate in society through e-platforms;
24. Notes with regret that despite the continuous efforts of the Commission to communicate the opportunities for young people that are supported by the various Union programmes,

many young people still believe that they have limited access to them; urges the Commission to improve its communication tools;

Equal opportunities for securing sustainable inclusion in the labour market

25. Is highly concerned at the persistent high rates of youth unemployment throughout the EU, especially in Southern Europe; recalls that quality job creation and employment should be guaranteed and remain key commitments towards young people and calls in this respect for measures to facilitate the transition of young people from education to work by ensuring quality internships and apprenticeships; calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote structural reforms of the labour market, fair working conditions and remuneration in order to ensure that young people are not discriminated against when it comes to accessing the world of work; stresses the importance of defining social rights for new forms of employment, fair professional traineeships and ensuring social dialogue;
26. Underlines the importance of moves by national, regional and local authorities to adopt tailored measures and to provide personalised support in order to reach all NEETs; recalls the need to involve local stakeholders such as social partners, trade unions, civil society and youth organisations;
27. Argues that special measures should be taken to tackle the precarious situation of young women in the labour market, with special attention to the gender pay gap and their over-representation in atypical forms of employment which lack social protection;
28. Underlines the need to promote fair working conditions and the adequate social protection of workers in the so-called new forms of employment, where young people are overrepresented;
29. Believes that measures should also be taken to integrate young migrants in the labour market in full respect of the principle of equal treatment;
30. Stresses that an inclusive youth policy should defend and promote social programmes facilitating political and cultural participation; further believes that decent and regulated work, grounded in collective labour agreements, with non-precarious labour relations, adequate salaries and wages, and high-quality, universal public services are important for young people's societal well-being; calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote fair working conditions and adequate social protection, including with regard to new forms of employment;
31. Recalls that employment and entrepreneurship constitute one of the eight priorities identified in the EYS (2010-2018); stresses that youth work and non-formal learning, particularly as developed in youth organisations, play a vital role in developing young people's potential, including entrepreneurial skills, allowing them to develop a broad set of competences which can increase their opportunities on the labour market;
32. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to encourage cross-border professional and vocational opportunities, to expand and increase investment in the VET sector and to present it as an appealing educational choice;
33. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to support regional and local authorities and to invest in new life opportunities for young people, in order to develop

their creativity and full potential, to support youth entrepreneurship and to foster the social inclusion of young people for the benefit of their communities;

34. Urges the Commission and the Member States to adopt a rights-based approach to youth and employment; calls on the Member States to ensure that young people have access to quality internships and jobs that uphold their rights, including the right to a stable job that offers a living wage, social protection and secures a life of dignity and autonomy;
35. Urges the Commission and the Member States to supervise establishments that repeatedly offer consecutive internships without following them up with jobs, in order to ensure that jobs are not replaced with so-called internships;
36. Welcomes the fact that YEI measures have provided support for more than 1,6 million young people¹; stresses that more efforts and financial commitments are necessary; emphasises the need to improve outreach to young people in NEET situations who face multiple barriers and to improve the quality of offers under the Youth Guarantee, by defining clear quality criteria and standards including access to social protection, minimum income and employment rights; calls on the Member States to effectively improve their monitoring, reporting and performance systems and to ensure that YEI funds are used as a supplement to national funding and not as a replacement;
37. Further stresses the need to address quality in terms of mentoring and coaching, the quality and adequacy of actual individual training, traineeships or jobs, as well as the quality of the outcome according to the fixed objectives; underlines in this respect the necessity to ensure the application of existing quality frameworks, such as the European Quality Framework, under the YEI; is of the opinion that young people should be also involved in the monitoring of the quality of offers;
38. Recalls that measures that foster the integration of young people not in employment, education or training into the labour market, including quality paid internships, traineeships or apprenticeships, must be financially supported by the YEI or future European tools, avoiding any form of job substitution or abuse of youth workers;
39. Notes that fostering an entrepreneurial mindset among young people is a priority and that the formal and non-formal education systems are most effective interventions for promoting youth entrepreneurship; underlines that entrepreneurship is a tool to combat youth unemployment and social exclusion and stimulate innovation; believes, therefore, that the EYS should support the creation of a suitable environment for youth entrepreneurship;
40. Recalls that the main objective of the YEI is to reach out to NEETS and therefore urges the Member States to invest greater effort in identifying and targeting the NEET population, especially the most vulnerable young people, such as those with disabilities, taking into account their specific needs;
41. Invites the Member States and the Commission to establish innovative and flexible grants for nurturing talent and artistic and sporting ability in the field of education and

¹ European Parliament resolution of 18 January 2018 on the implementation of the Youth Employment Initiative in the Member States (P8_TA(2018)0018).

training; supports those Member States that are seeking to introduce scholarship schemes for students with proven educational, sporting and artistic ability;

42. Underlines that 38 % of young people have difficulty accessing information; highlights the importance of ensuring a collective approach to guiding, supporting and informing young people about their rights and opportunities;
43. Further stresses the necessity for the YEI to focus not only on highly educated young NEETs, but also on those who are low-skilled, inactive and unregistered with the public employment services;
44. Stresses that, despite high unemployment rates, labour mobility within the EU remains limited; draws attention, therefore, to the importance of worker mobility for a competitive labour market; calls on the Commission and the Member States to encourage cross-border professional and vocational opportunities to this end;
45. Reiterates the importance of adults over the age of 55 in training young people in the workplace; argues, together with the Commission, in favour of the creation of programmes that allow the gradual departure of these people from the labour market up to retirement age, more specifically transitioning first to part-time work, during which they also train young people and help them to gradually integrate into the workplace;
46. Points out the important role of enterprises in matters related to skill acquisition and the creation of jobs for young people; notes that education and training in areas related to the promotion of entrepreneurship may contribute to the achievement of long-term development, the promotion of European competitiveness and the fight against unemployment;
47. Urges the Member States to indicate the hoped-for impact of the measures to be adopted in their action plans; emphasises, therefore, the importance of the Member States providing guarantees that the measures put in place have effectively boosted employment; reiterates the need to gauge the sustainability of the policies to be implemented;

Sustainable development: the future for young people

48. Strongly believes that quality formal, non-formal and informal education and quality training is a fundamental right; considers, therefore, that access to all levels of quality education should be guaranteed for all Europeans, regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnicity or gender, physical or cognitive disabilities; underlines the important role played by formal, non-formal and informal education in providing young people with the knowledge, skills and competences to become committed citizens and take part in the European project; calls, therefore, on Member States to develop specific policies and encourages, in this regard, the equal consideration of artistic and creative education with scientific and technological subjects (STEM) in school curricula;
49. Underlines the importance of modernising education; calls on the Commission and the Member States to stimulate the inclusion of new skills and competences in education, such as citizenship, critical thinking and entrepreneurial spirit, and to promote the development of new educational tools that increase the participation in and the accessibility of education;

50. Is deeply concerned at the particularly acute problem of child poverty, which affects up to 25 million children in the EU (more than 26,4 % of all Europeans aged under 18) from families that suffer every day from a lack of sufficient income and basic services; believes that youth policies could contribute to areas like child and family policy;
51. Is deeply concerned by the phenomenon of early school leaving and calls therefore for appropriate solutions to tackle it, in view of achieving the Europe 2020 targets;
52. Encourages the Commission to support initiatives which aim to foster active and critical citizenship, respect, tolerance, values and intercultural learning, and highlights in this respect the crucial role of EU programmes such as Erasmus+, Creative Europe and Europe for citizens; calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote spaces for dialogue with young people on a range of themes, such as sex, gender, policy, solidarity and the environment, law, history and culture;
53. Strongly believes that literacy, including digital and media literacy, numeracy, as well as the basic skills which act as a key vehicle to secure autonomy and a promising future for young people, must be a priority at the European, national and local levels; urges the Commission and the Member States, therefore, to step up their efforts at providing basic learning skills and competences for all;
54. Calls on the Commission to encourage initiatives with formal education and informal learning to support young people's innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship and to promote cohesion and understanding between young people of different groups;
55. Notes with great concern, in this regard, the persistently high number of European citizens with poor literacy skills or literacy difficulties, including functional, digital and media illiteracy, which pose grave concerns in terms of adequate participation in public life and the labour market;
56. Recalls that the first principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights declares that everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable all to participate fully in society and successfully manage transitions in the labour market; stresses, consequently, the importance of prioritising and ensuring social investment in education and training in the new programming period of the MFF for 2021-2027;
57. Strongly believes that the social scoreboard, which was introduced within the framework of the European Pillar of Social Rights, should be used to monitor the EYS; calls on the Commission to adopt a specific set of indicators to monitor the EYS, such as education, skills and lifelong learning, gender equality in the labour market, healthcare, digital access, living conditions and poverty;
58. Stresses the key role of the family and teachers in supporting young people who experience bullying at school and cyberbullying; urges the Commission and the Member States to take action to address these kinds of behaviour, which affect the mental well-being of young people, in particular by developing appropriate digital skills starting from primary school, as provided for in the Digital Education Action Plan;
59. Argues that in order to increase the effectiveness of actions in the fields of education, youth and sport, joint objectives and instruments must be developed to measure the

impact of policy, based on international studies;

60. Underlines the harmful impact of stress on young people's well-being at school, in training, on the labour market and in their personal lives; calls on the Commission and the Member States to invest in mental health programmes and to encourage the relevant actors to help young people in this regard;
61. Underlines the importance of ensuring the mental and physical well-being of young Europeans; calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote extra-curricular sporting activities and to raise awareness through nutrition campaigns;
62. Underlines the importance of promoting intercultural dialogue in sport, including by creating platforms involving young people, refugees and migrants;
63. Believes that in view of the complexity of youth policies and their impact, research collaboration must be stimulated in order to develop empirically justified responses and intervention and preventative solutions that will further young people's wellbeing and resilience;
64. Highlights the importance of culture not only in combating violence, racism, radicalisation and intolerance, but also in developing a European identity; calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote and invest in culture and to ensure equal access;
65. Emphasises that youth organisations play a crucial role for young people's participation and inclusion in society; calls, therefore, on the Member States to support youth organisations and to recognise their role in the development of competences and social inclusion, and support the establishment of youth councils at all levels, working together with young people;
66. Insists on the importance of validating non-formal and informal learning to empower learners, as it is essential to the development of a society based on social justice and equal opportunities, and contributes to the development of citizenship skills and individual fulfilment; regrets that employers and formal education providers do not sufficiently recognise the value and relevance of skills, competences and knowledge acquired through non-formal and informal learning; points out that the insufficient degree of comparability and coherence between the validation approaches of EU countries represents an additional barrier; calls on the Member States to continue their efforts to implement a national recognition and validation system and ensure adequate funding for competences acquired through non-formal education, recalling the Council recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning;

Stronger alignment and support from funding instruments for the EYS

67. Believes that the EYS should follow the MFF and comply with the Sustainable Development Goals and all relevant flagship initiatives, programmes and policy strategies, setting up systematic dialogue between the respective bodies, defining clear goals and targets and establishing a relevant coordination mechanism;
68. Recalls that in the area of youth, the EU can only carry out actions to support,

coordinate and supplement the actions of the Member States in line with the principle of subsidiarity, notes the importance of coherence of EU and national funding and therefore calls on the Commission to facilitate synergies with national, regional and local initiatives to avoid the duplication, overlapping or repetition of activities;

69. Urges Member States and the Commission to increase public investment in education and youth related issues;
70. Strongly believes that the funds available to support various youth-related initiatives and policies such as the Erasmus+ programme, the YEI and the Europe for Citizens programme should be significantly increased in the next MFF to give more opportunities to youths and avoid exclusion;
71. Welcomes the European Solidarity Corps – a programme to foster solidarity among young Europeans, volunteering and the development of inclusive citizenship; recalls Parliament’s position to properly finance the new initiative by means of fresh resources and not to use the programme as an option for tackling youth unemployment;
72. Firmly believes that the Europe for Citizens programme should continue to stimulate active citizenship, civic education and dialogue and engender a sense of European identity; notes the low success rate of the programme due to a lack of funding; calls for a substantial increase in its funding allocation;
73. Urges the Commission to keep the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme; encourages the Member States and the Commission to invest in promoting this programme together, along with chambers of commerce, companies and young people, while not neglecting their main areas of activity;
74. Reiterates its support for strengthening the Creative Europe programme, which provides specific mobility schemes for young artists and professionals working in the cultural and creative sectors;
75. Highlights the importance of Erasmus+: an essential tool to create active and committed young citizens; strongly believes that Erasmus+ should target all young people, including those with fewer opportunities, and that the greater aspirations for the next Erasmus+ programming period must be matched by significant additional funding to unlock the programme’s full potential, and to provide for a simplification of procedures through the establishment of electronic systems for access to cross-border services and to student data, such as the ‘e-card’ project;
76. Calls for a better alignment between the EYS and Erasmus+, aligning the timeframes for implementation, amending the Erasmus+ Regulation to clearly support the objectives of the Strategy through common ‘youth goals’ and defining Key Action 3 as the Strategy’s main implementation tools;
77. Stresses that the YEI budget is not sufficient to ensure that the programme reaches its targets; calls, therefore, for a significant increase in the YEI allocation under the next MFF and for the Member States to make provisions for youth employment schemes in their national budgets; further underlines the need to extend the eligible age limit from 25 to 29 in order to better reflect the reality that many recent graduates and labour market entrants are in their late twenties;

78. Argues for the harmonisation, without prejudice to the principle of subsidiarity, of the concept of young person, setting an age limit applicable across the EU; encourages all the Member States to contribute to this harmonisation, eliminating obstacles to the gauging of progress and establishing measures to be put in place;
79. Encourages the promotion of the future EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation for the development of integrated, evidence-based responses, intervention and prevention solutions that promote the well-being and resilience of young people;
80. Notes the findings and risks suggesting that actions managed by the Commission (including student exchange programmes) are considered by the national authorities to fulfil the requirements of the Youth Strategy, and that some Member States are withdrawing their resources from policy areas which are supported from the EU budget¹;

o

o o

81. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

¹ [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/615645/EPRS_STU\(2018\)615645_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/615645/EPRS_STU(2018)615645_EN.pdf)