**Notes**

**9th European Steering Group Meeting – 9th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue**

**Trio Presidencies: France, Czech Republic, and Sweden**

**7 December 2022, 9:30-12:00**

**Physical** (Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the EU, Annexed building, Rue du Trône 130, 1050 - Ixelles Bruxelles)

1. **Welcome & Adoption of the agenda and the minutes from the last meeting**

The ESG approved the minutes of the meetings that took place on the 14th of October and the 14th of November.

The Swedish government requested a change in the agenda, to present together its incoming work program and do the handover of its incoming presidency after the exchange of views on the upcoming Council resolution on the 9th cycle. The agenda was approved with this modification.

1. **Grants issues for the upcoming grant period:**

The European Youth Forum informed the ESG about the precarious financial situation of the national youth council in each of the Presidency Member States, suggesting ways for increased support should be explored. They also presented the difficult situation of the INGYOs that do not have received funding for participating in the EUYD process and are using their resources for this purpose. In addition, the European Youth Forum raised the issue of reaching some beneficiaries of the EUYD grants, which is usually because Ministries are the beneficiaries in some Member States instead of the National Youth Councils. They stressed that it’s important to start having a discussion about it to understand what are the possibilities and ways to change the current situation.

The European Commission stated that they know the problem concerning the lack of funds for Presidency National Youth Councils. They explained that it is not possible to change anything before the end of 2024 (the end of the current grant period), but that they were looking into the possibilities of strengthening support to youth councils during the presidencies.

On INGYOs, the Commission agreed that changes need to be made. They stated that there is a need to have a better overview of the INGYOs contribution to the youth dialogue process. They explained that they were studying it, to adapt the funds and avoid doubling them.

The Swedish government supported what the commission said and insisted on the need to have a clear view of what the contributions of the INGYOs are. They suggested having another look at Erasmus+ and other youth programs to see what would be the possibilities to support them.

The European Youth Forum highlighted that the way for INGYOs to receive funding could be to have access to the centralized grants as the NWGs. They also stressed that the quality of the contribution of INGYOs could be improved by providing funding and that this year many of them did not receive operational grants yet participating in the EUYD process.

1. **Exchange of views on the upcoming Council resolution on the 9th cycle under SE Presidency**

The Swedish government thanked all participants for their contribution to the resolution. They announced that the document has been adapted, taking into account some of the ESG comments, and is now being sent out internally within the Swedish administration. They expect some of their ministries to make comments. The document will not be shared now as it is still subject to change in a few days, but they want to finalize it by the end of the year and share it before the 12th of January. When the final document will be sent to the council it will be shared with the ESG as well. The Swedish government has emphasized that nothing has fundamentally changed in the text and the objectives described above. There are only some proposals that underline and clarify the text.

The French National Youth Council asked if the Swedish government already had some first reactions from their ministries.

The Swedish government said that they didn’t have reactions for now and that they don’t expect a lot of comments from the ministries on the resolution since it’s more of a text strongly linked to the youth field. They mentioned that the final text will be completed after the Conference and that the ESG will be able to have a look at it after the conference.

The European Youth Forum stated that including the outcomes of what the young people say at the Conference is a good thing and insisted on the necessity to be transparent with them on how their recommendations will be incorporated into the text.

The Swedish government stated that they were still discussing whether the young people will write directly the recommendations for the text or if it will be the researchers that will phrase it from the participants’ input. The researchers will not formulate it themselves in that case but rather compile the input in a way that is compatible with the resolution.

The National Youth Council of the Czech Republic insisted on the fact that the recommendation should not be drafted on behalf of the young people.

The Swedish presidency stated that the aim is for the final recommendations to be formulated by the young people, however, with the reservation that the recommendations may need to be adapted to the format of the resolution

1. **The work programme of the incoming SE PRES and Handover to the incoming SE PRES**

The Swedish presidency presented the agenda of the Conference. The work on the 5 recommendations that will be written by the young people will be divided into 2 days. On the first day there will be several workshops, two workshops with youth delegates and ministerial delegates and one workshop where youth delegates and decision-makers will work together. Ministerial delegates will not attend that meeting, only the youth delegates, and decision-makers.

On the second day there will be a plenary session/ joint decision-making process. Then the 5 recommendations are going to be finalized. The Swedish government is still discussing how this will take place. The idea is to have these recommendations in the council resolution, not in the annex.

The European Youth Forum suggested changing the terminology of “decision-makers” as it could be confusing for the youth delegates to distinguish decision-makers and ministerial delegates and asked who exactly these decision-makers would be.

The Swedish government stated that they conceived these exchanges as discussions between youth delegates and elected politicians to test how they are perceiving the recommendations and have interactive discussions.

The French National youth council stressed that for many youth delegates the difference between institutional representatives (ministerial delegates) and decision-makers is unclear and invited the ESG to have a discussion about it.

The Swedish government explained that the conference will be a structured rotative discussion with different groups that could help to understand the difference.

The European facilitator raised some concerns about the timing of the Monday morning where the timeslot for the sessions might be too short. She suggested giving more time to the youth delegates to prepare their points and understand the methodology. She pointed out that it is important to be clear with the youth delegates on which decision-maker they will meet and why. She asked for more information on the goal of day 2 and the methodology.

The French National Youth Council shared concerns about the too-short timing.

The Swedish government explained that panel discussions will take place at the beginning of both days and around the closing of the conference. The Swedish government stated that they’ll try to add more time at the beginning of the first day. They explained that the aim is to have 50 precent national and 50 precent international politicians participating as decision-makers.

The European facilitator highlighted the necessity to make sure that policymakers who will participate will be aware of the role of the youth dialogue.

The French National Youth Council recommended repeating the instructions and the description of the process several times to the young delegates and ensuring that, during the panel session, the space is organized in a way to include all young people and policymakers in the discussion.

The Swedish government stated that they are working to get Commissioner Gabriel to participate in the conference.

The Youth researcher highlighted that it will be important to tell the youth delegates why the process will take so long, to make it a positive sign of democracy, and to remind them that the conference is an advisory event, not a decision-making one.

The European Youth forum mentioned that it would be good to have some MEPs among the decision-makers invited so the European level is also connected besides the local, regional and national. They also mentioned that it could be good to have the preparatory document as early as possible to give delegates the time to have a look at it.

The Swedish presidency plans to send the information 4 weeks ahead of the events and 2 weeks before the EU Youth Conference organize a preparatory meeting,

The European Youth Forum recalled that they are also available to support the work on the preparatory meeting.

The Youth researcher highlighted the necessity for the youth delegates to have proper time to draft the recommendations. He also mentioned that knowing early who will participate in the event could facilitate the work on the recommendations allowing youth delegates to work on it before the conference. They suggested the organization of a preparatory working group.

The Swedish presidency stated that the youth will not have to start writing the recommendations from scratch and that the implementation report could be a point to start the work.

The European Youth Forum suggested the Swedish Presidency provide as detailed information to the participants as possible to ensure a good understanding of the methodology and the organization. They recommended not splitting the conference into 2 thematic parts to give the possibility for the youth delegates to give recommendations throughout the conference both on the youth goals implementation and the EUYD process as a whole.

The Czech government highlighted 3 points: (1) The current pattern of participation in the EU Youth Conference doesn’t work well, because it is outdated. (2) The current cycle should prepare something about lessons learned for the incoming trio presidencies. (3) It is necessary to pay attention to the hierarchy as well as the internal political dynamics when inviting the policy-makers.

The Youth researcher recommended looking outside of the box and finding synergies with other already existing sources (e.g. Eurobarometer).

**The ESG agreed that the European Youth Forum will already inform its members on Basecamp about the date of the Conference and the logistics from Copenhagen airport.**

The Swedish government informed the ESG that due to the government change the working title of the Presidency changed slightly and they have a larger emphasis on the social aspects.

1. **Handover to the 10th cycle (planning) and the communication with the upcoming ESG**

The Czech National Youth Council raised the question of the way this cycle will be handed over to the next cycle. They proposed to start organizing some meetings to exchange experience and give the new cycle some space for questions.

The European Youth Forum mentioned that the next cycle started ahead of time and is already drafting its explanatory note. They recalled how the handover was organized by the Slovenia Presidency (as the outgoing Presidency) during the previous cycle as well as the necessity to update the handover documents that already exist. The European Youth Forum suggested that the Swedish Presidency propose a handover process.

The Swedish government proposed that different parts of the ESG meet together with the next cycle flexibly in order to avoid big and inefficient meetings. In addition to this, they are looking at how to complement the physical handover with the other meetings.

The Czech National Youth Council proposed to invite the next cycle to the Swedish conference and meet sometime before or after it.

The European Youth Forum warned of the fact that in this case, there might be some overlapping of people invited (as youth delegates and as members of the ESG). The European Youth Forum will have a talk with the next cycle about it.

The ESG concluded that more discussion about the handover process will follow at the next meetings.

1. **Summary and evaluation of ESG cooperation during CZ PRES and Legacy for the future ESGs**

The Czech National Youth Council thanked each member of the ESG for the last 6-month work and asked for some feedback on their work.

The Czech Government thanked everyone and the Czech youth council for their cooperation.

The Swedish government thanked the Czech presidency and congratulated them for their work.

The Commission thanked the current presidency and congratulated them for their work.

**The European Commission left the meeting.**

The European Youth Forum thanked and congratulated the cycle of ESG.

The French thanked the Czech for their good cooperation with the trio.

The European Youth Forum mentioned that they will share access to social media with the Swedish presidency.

The Swedish government asked for recommendations on who should deal with social media.

The French National Youth Council recommended having someone dedicated to it.

The Czech National Youth council explained that in their case the National Agency was responsible for it because they didn’t have the capacity to do so.

1. **AOB**

The European Youth Forum reported on its recent meeting with INGYOs concerning their participation in the EU Youth Dialogue. The conclusion of the meeting was that it is difficult for the INGYOs to understand their role and how they could contribute to the process. The INGYOs have expertise and knowledge of inclusion that could be used more, but they also are representing young people while they do not receive resources for their participation. The document from the meeting will be shared with the ESG.

**The meeting was closed.**

**Annex: List of Participants**

| **Czech Presidency Team** |  |
| --- | --- |
| Martina Kotasova (Co-Chair) | Government |
| Sarka Dolezalova | Government |
| Zdenka Maskova | Government |
| Michaela Dolezalova | National Youth Council |
| Zuzana Wildova (Co-Chair) | National Youth Council |
| **Swedish Presidency Team** |  |
| Julia Bergström | Government |
| Emilia Segerlind | Government |
| Tobias Adolfsson | Government |
| Anders Lindholm | Government |
| Johan Gebo  | National Youth Council |
| **French Presidency Team** |  |
| Christophe Devette | Government |
| Désirée Ristorto | National Youth Council |
| **European Commission (EC)** |  |
| Jasna Maric Krajacic | DG EAC |
| **European Youth Forum (YFJ)** |  |
| Kristof Papp | European Youth Forum |
| Manon Gaham | European Youth Forum |
| **Youth researcher** |  |
|  Ondrej Barta | Youth researcher |
| **European facilitator**  |  |
| Clara Drammeh |  |