



YOUTH WORK TOOLKIT

*INFORMATIONS AND DATA ABOUT
YOUTH WORK IN EUROPE*

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YOUTH WORK

Youth work helps young people to reach their full potential. It encourages personal development, autonomy, initiative and participation in society.

WHAT IS YOUTH WORK?

"Youth work is a broad term covering a wide variety of activities of a social, cultural, educational, environmental and/or political nature by, with and for young people, in groups or individually"

Council of Europe



WHO ARE YOUTH WORKERS?



People working in direct contact with young people, carrying out activities designed for supporting their personal and social development through non-formal and informal learning. Youth workers, in turn, might be professionals or volunteers and be civil servants or work for NGOs.

STAKEHOLDERS

- National governments – through youth policy
- Regional/local governments
- Youth work providers (civil servants, NGOs, etc.)
- Educators and trainers in universities, other basic and further education institutions
- Research institutions



THE PURPOSE OF YOUTH WORK



- Building young people's self-esteem and self-confidence
- Developing young people's ability to manage personal and social relationships
- Creating learning opportunities for young people to develop new skills
- Building the capacity of young people to consider risk, make reasoned decisions and take control
- Helping young people to develop a 'world view' which widens horizons and invites social commitment.

YOUTH WORK ACTIVITIES

- Short-term activities which require little planning and are a great way to encourage social interaction, such as games, arts and crafts
- Longer term activities, projects and events which require more advance planning such as workshops (for example dancing, sports), trips, discos/music events, youth exchanges, and inter-club visits.



Core Principles of Youth Work

There are three basic principles an organization should follow:

- **Voluntary attendance.** Young people will feel much more compelled to take part when it's their choice. They'll feel more invested in activities if they have the opportunity to have fun and socialise
- **Partnership.** Youth work should always be centred around the individual's needs. Furthermore, they should be partners in their development, which means you should work together with, rather than for, them. Doing so helps you understand their personal background and circumstances and helps to build mutual understanding
- **Accessibility.** Most young people can't and won't want to travel long distances, so you should aim to run your events locally. Accessibility refers to more than physical access however. You should have a culture of acceptance for people from all walks of life and accommodate them however you can

Core Values

- **Equity.** Often confused with equality. Equity means that everyone is treated fairly and justly according to their need
- **Diversity.** Respecting the differences in our communities and seeing difference as something which benefits everyone
- **Interdependence.** Interdependence focuses on how different lives interlink. It involves working together for a common good and acknowledging that we are connected and rely on one another

Ethical Principles of Youth Workers

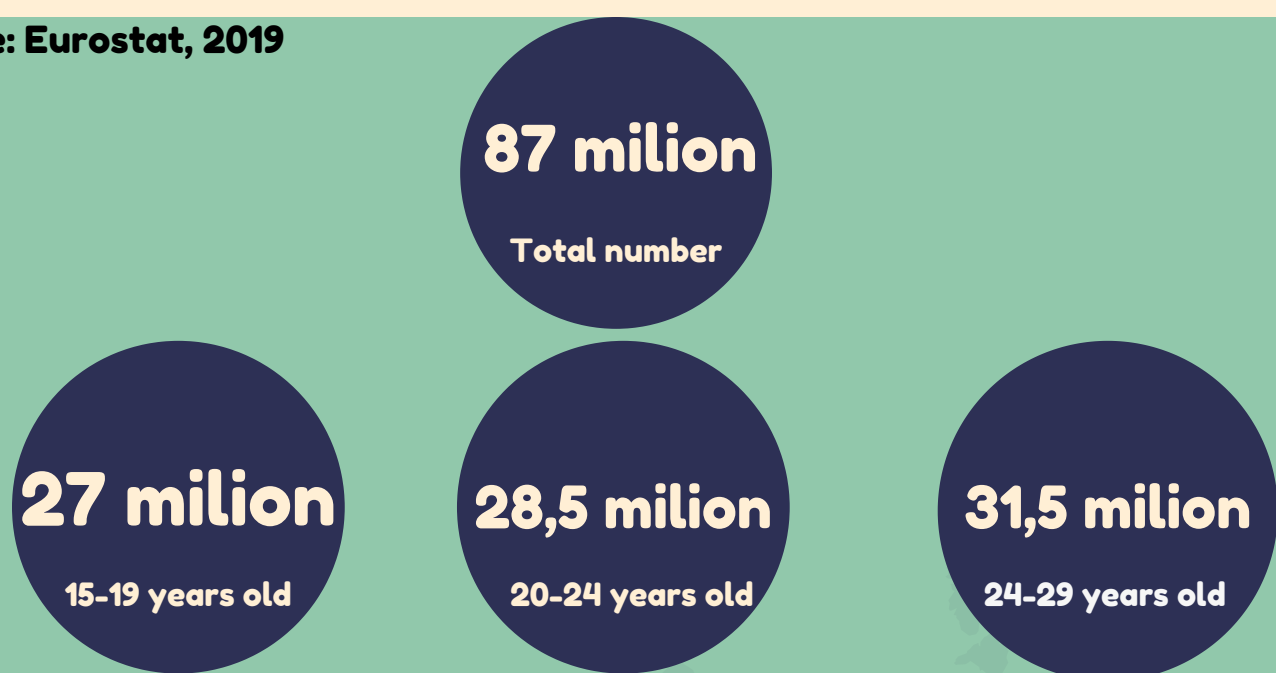
- Treat young people with **respect**, valuing each individual and avoiding discrimination.
- Respect and **promote young people's rights** to make their own decisions and choices, unless the welfare or legitimate interests of themselves or others are seriously threatened.
- **Promote and ensure the welfare and safety** of young people, while permitting them to learn through undertaking challenging educational activities.
- Contribute towards the **promotion of social justice** for young people and in society generally, through encouraging respect for difference and diversity and challenging discrimination.

Professional principles of Youth Workers

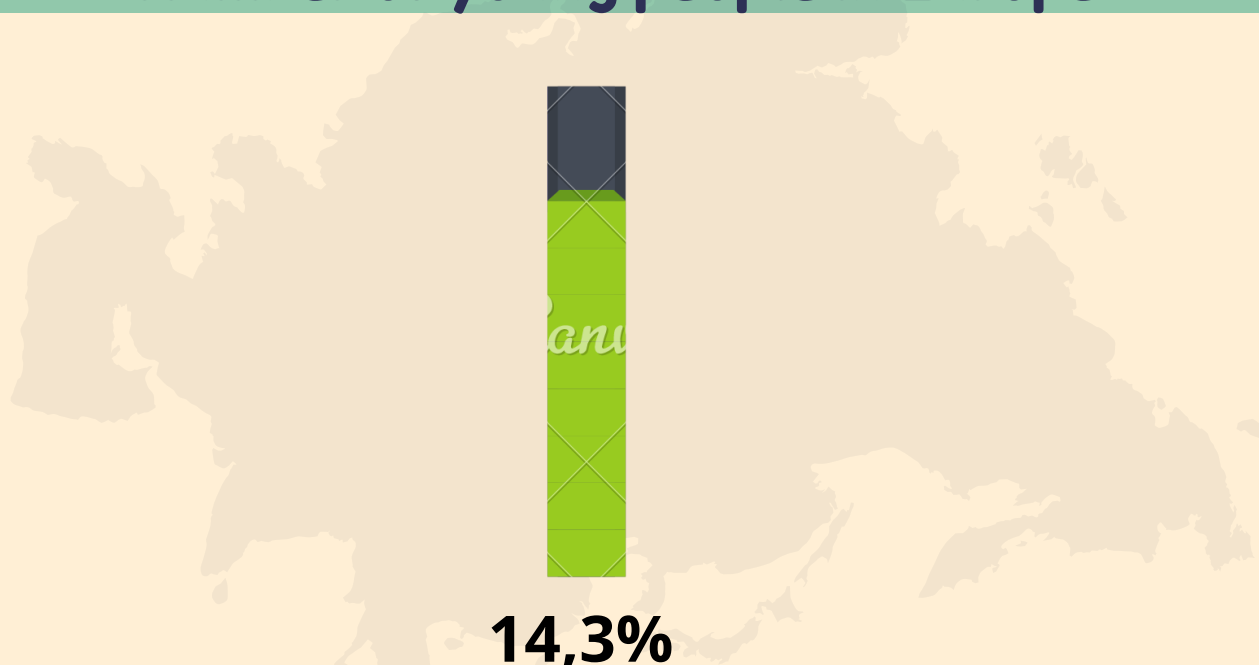
- Recognise the **boundaries** between personal and professional life and be aware of the need to balance a caring and supportive relationship with young people with appropriate professional distance.
- Recognise the need to be accountable to young people, their parents or guardians, colleagues, funders, wider society and others with a relevant interest in the work, and that these accountabilities may be in conflict.
- Develop and maintain the required skills and competence to do the job.

SOME DATA ON YOUTH PEOPLE IN EUROPE

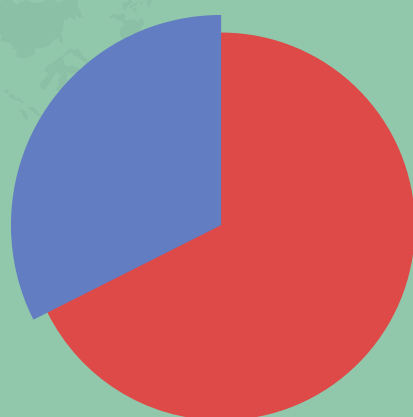
Source: Eurostat, 2019



Number of young people in Europe



Youth unemployment rate



53% of Europe's young people are involved in organised activities as sports club (29%), youth or leisure-time club (20%) and cultural organisation (15%)

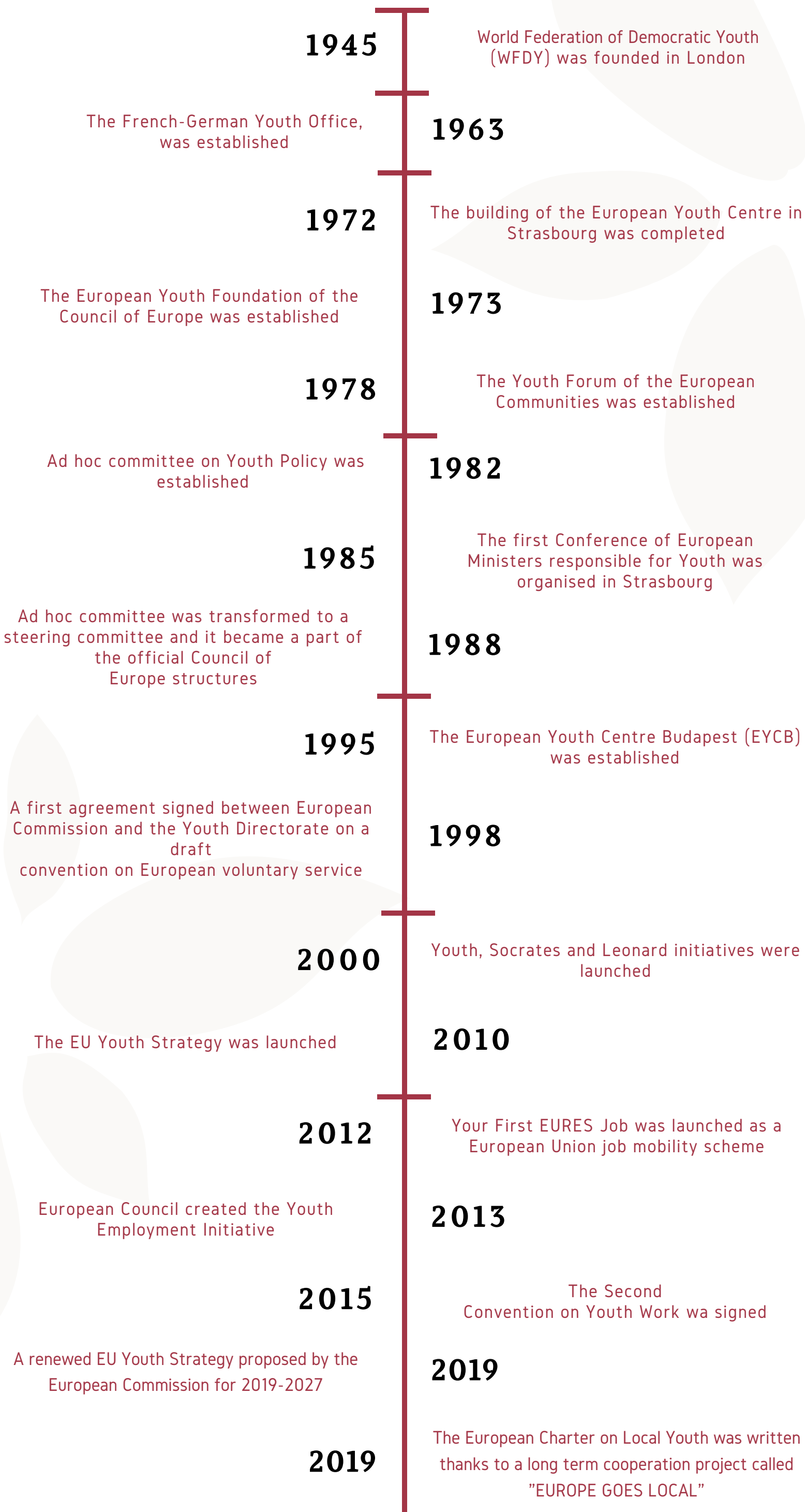


26,3%

Young people at risk of poverty or social exclusion

KEY DATES

A BRIEF HISTORY OF YOUTH WORK IN EUROPE



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