

# EU YOUTH CONFERENCE

2-5 March 2025 | LUBLIN



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## How to conduct a successful dialogue with policy-makers

At the EU Youth Conference (EUYC) in Lublin, you will have the chance to meet and have a discussion with policy-makers, who are responsible for making strategically important decisions and learn from their experiences, ideas and opinions.

Policy-makers and experts are invited to the Conference on the second working day (4.03.2025, 11:30–13:00 CET) to answer questions and engage in discussions with conference participants. During this session, they will review and discuss the developments and proposals put forward by the working groups. At the same time, they bring their perspectives, drawing on expertise, to enrich the conversation. The organising team of EUYC has gathered some useful information that we would like to share with you in order to best utilise the potential of this conversation.

### Purpose of the dialogue with decision makers

**Youth policy influences a great variety of policy fields.** Approaching various sectors through the "goggles" of youth policy can be a challenging but rewarding experience for both you and policy-makers.

It is a great opportunity to actively work together with policy-makers on youth-related topics and receive some feedback and ideas on your work. It's an **excellent option to collaborate actively on issues pertaining to youth** and get suggestions and feedback on your work. You get the outstanding chance to increase your knowledge and widen your horizons because the policy-makers can offer unique ideas, insights and experiences regarding the suggestions of the working group and current youth policy.

**One of the main goals of the EUYC is to empower the youth delegates.** Youth policy enables young people to become engaged and responsible citizens and creates opportunities to cooperate with different generations. By involving the policy-makers, the organising team aims to create a safe space for the young people to share their opinion and get feedback from a policy-maker.

## What can you get out of the dialogue process?

- **Ask the policy-maker about their personal experiences** - they were your age, too! You will get the most unique insight and feedback about your ideas if you strive to understand where they come from and how their experiences and professional background shape the sector they work in.
- **Don't be afraid to ask questions** - if you have a valuable contribution, take the initiative to voice it. They are there to have a conversation with you, so do not be afraid to bring up anything about your Working Group's topic/area that has not been discussed yet. They are experts of the policy field of your Working Group, so they can provide insights at best within the given theme.
- **Present solutions not just problems** - policy-makers appreciate young people as competent contributors! When raising an issue, you can also try to pair it with a realistic, well-thought-out solution. Showing that you have considered how to address the problem demonstrates your commitment to making progress and can make it easier to reach consensus. You will get more insightful responses if you ask about specific ideas, solutions as opposed to broad problems.
- **Be mindful of their political or policy background** - respect the barriers, and be aware that they are here as representatives of a certain country and a policy sector. Their professional guidance is based on their experiences and current work, not their political engagement.
- **Be respectful** - note that it is a safe space, where everybody can make comments and ask questions in a respectful manner. Make sure that you are listening to and considering the perspectives of others in the group, including the political decision makers. Please remain respectful towards everyone, even if you disagree with their opinions or answers. Respect for diversity is the core of EU Youth Dialogue and we cannot all have the same views about everything.
- **Aim for a dialogue, not for a debate** - dialogue is rather about sharing and understanding, while a debate is about arguing and persuading. Make sure to listen actively and allow everyone to finish their thought or question.

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- **The outcome of the whole process takes time** - be patient and do not expect decision makers to make promises of immediate actions because they will not be able to deliver on them in an instant. Consider that it is a process often involving cross-sectoral cooperation, therefore proposals need time to be achieved. Sometimes with patience you may get results which might exceed your expectations.
- **Know the boundaries of youth policy** - bear in mind that in different Member States responsibility and competences regarding youth policy differ. It can be local, regional, or national competence or, in some cases, the EU-level can be relevant too. Some solutions might not be in the hands of the policy-maker you are liaising with.
- **Be appreciative of each other's time** - policy-makers are extremely busy people so make sure to respect their presence and stay engaged and focused. In return, expect them to also be present and engage with your questions.
- **Enjoy the discussion** - most importantly have fun, this is a great opportunity to have your voice heard!



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