

Background to the Charter

The idea of a Charter on local youth work was first launched at the 2nd Youth Work Convention, held in Brussels 2015. In its **closing declaration**, it was stated that “The Convention is asking for more awareness of this local level responsibility and to agree with the local and regional authorities on a European Charter for youth work at local level.” The idea was to create a common ground for youth work.

In 2017, 22 Erasmus+ Youth National Agencies together with their partners, the **InterCity Youth** network, the **POYWE** network, the **European Youth Forum** and the **Partnership** between the EU and the Council of Europe launched the Erasmus+ cooperation project Europe Goes Local¹ (EGL). Starting from the declaration of the 2nd Youth Work Convention and in line with the newly (2017) adopted Council of Europe **recommendation on youth work**, the Steering Group of the project set the aim of creating a European Charter on Local Youth Work.

A first draft of the Charter was then developed by the Steering Group with the support of researchers from the **Pool of European Youth Researchers**. To achieve a broad consensus and create ownership of the Charter, a Europe-wide consultation process was implemented. It was coordinated by the National Agencies and with the participation of the EGL National Working Groups that were set up to implement the project in the participating countries.

This process was done in two rounds engaging a wide range of stakeholders at all levels including governments, municipalities, NGOs, youth organisations and councils, umbrella organisations and many more. The first round was guided by a questionnaire focusing mainly on the text of the Charter. It was implemented in 22 countries and brought together about 70 stakeholder groups.

The outcomes were presented to the participants of the 2nd European EGL event (5-7 June 2018, Cascais). They examined the most burning and/or controversial topics and gave their suggestions on how to solve the open questions.

All this information was collected and analysed by an expert group and was then used as the basis for a second draft. This second draft was, in the autumn of 2018, sent out for a second round of consultations. In this consultation the stakeholders were asked to express their consent or to suggest modifications in relation to each bullet point of the Charter.

40 stakeholder groups took part in this consultation and gave their answers regarding 36 bullet points, which made a total of 1440 possible agreements or disagreements. Out of these, 1346 answers (93%) said Yes! 86 answers (6%) contained suggestions for modifications. When the different suggestions were considered and integrated into the Charter, it stood clear that there was an almost total (99,45%) consensus around the text.

The final version of the Charter was presented and celebrated at the 3rd European EGL event in Brussels in June 2019. The Charter is, thus, created and owned by the European youth work community and concerns everyone, from policy makers to youth workers and young people who is engaged in youth work and wants to improve it.

To support the use of the Charter, the Steering Group also decided to develop this Changemakers Kit.

¹ The project is funded in the frame of Transnational Cooperation Activities of the Erasmus+ program.

