



Advocacy Strategy

European Scout Region

November 2024



Table of Contents

Introduction	5
General principles	7
What we stand for	14
Who we stand with	20
How we do it	24
Annex 1 - Call to Action for the EU Elections 2024	32
Annex 2 - Policy Statements	41



»»»»Introduction

Introduction

The following document outlines the Advocacy Strategy for the European Scout Region.

Its design was completed building on inputs from different stakeholders the External Representatives, members of staff, and volunteers from the Operational Framework. Its final draft was reviewed and presented to the European Scout Committee for its approval.

Advocacy and campaign work of the World Scout Bureau constitutes a great added value for the membership including access to high-level meetings, consultations, coordinated actions, and democratic engagement opportunities for young people. We envisage a long-term flexible and responsive approach, encompassing a vision of active citizenship in Europe.

The Advocacy Strategy is set for three Triennia, in alignment with the Strategy for Scouting timeframe. Its review will be completed every three years, at the beginning of each Triennium and related Action Plans will be outlined for each year.

The first section focuses on the General Principles, elaborating on the purpose, problem statement, and context. The second section outlines the priorities, and what we stand for. The third section describes who we stand with and the fourth and last section introduces how we do it.

While this Advocacy Strategy is not set in stone, foreseeing a review every three years to align and include the priorities after each World and Regional Conference, it is anticipated that a more operational take is outlined in the form of an Action Plan to be developed every year and running alongside the calendar year.



x
x
x
x

General principles

General principles

The European Scout Region, part of the World Organization of the Scout Movement, operates based on its Mission and Vision to engage with external stakeholders and advocate for Scouting's interests, aiming to create positive societal change. With over 2 million members in 47 Member Organizations across Europe, the European Scout Region plays a crucial role in empowering young people to develop their full social, physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual potential as responsible citizens.

Guided by the European Regional Conference and the European Scout Committee, and supported by dedicated volunteers and professionals, the Region works towards building a better world. Scouting contributes to the education of young people through a value system rooted in the Scout Promise and Law, aiming to foster active citizenship and sustainable development. Advocacy plays a central role in this process, enabling us to collaborate with stakeholders and engage with decision-makers at all levels—local, regional, national, and global.

Through the Operational Framework and in collaboration with Member Organizations, the European Scout Region has made significant progress in advancing youth representation and external engagement. These efforts are part of our larger goal of creating a more accessible, inclusive, and representative Europe for all young people. By strengthening partnerships, increasing resources, and enhancing our advocacy work, we continue to work toward our ultimate objective: Ready for Life.

The World Organization of the Scout Movement believes that education is key to fostering active citizenship and providing young people with the skills needed for strong livelihoods. This strategy outlines the goals of the European Scout Region in advocacy and representation, aiming to influence policy change to benefit young people and society.

Purpose

The purpose of the European Scout Region Advocacy Strategy is to:

- **Impact:** Strengthen the space and mechanisms for an enabling environment of youth civic society;
- **Partnerships:** Increase support and engagement for partnerships and alliance-building with relevant partners;
- **Support:** Strengthen Member Organisations advocacy capacity to deepen the reach of national and regional advocacy efforts;
- **Influence:** Develop organizational influence and policy-development capacities across the region, cementing Scouting's role as a movement of young leaders.

Guided by this purpose, we:

- Build the recognition and brand of Scouting as a global educational Movement of young people;



- Encourage resource mobilization from donors, including the private sector and philanthropic organizations, and cultivate creative and sustainable forms of partnership;
- Foster collaboration and cooperation between different sectors, fields and actors, supporting the needs of young people.

European Landscape and Social Context

The European Scout Region is in a strong and unique position, having a defined responsibility for the development of Scouting networks and organisations within Europe, to realise education and societal development. Scouting is perceived positively across the world and its reputation reflects credibility and results for education for the last 100 years. This gives the organization a recognized European brand across an array of institutions, non-governmental organizations, agencies and individuals.

The European Scout Region has a strong advocacy position based upon years of partnership and relationship development with allied organisations, and the participation of Scouts in the advocacy and policy development processes and structures of partners. Access to the large reach of diverse young people within the Scouting Movement is attractive for potential partner organisations, and regular monitoring and evaluation ensures continued efforts to meet the needs of young people in the region.

Through engagement with partners, the European Scout Region has relatively easy access to timely information from policy makers and policy development organisations, and a strong voice to engage with individuals and organisations who hold power over our strategic priorities in Europe.

In recent years, Europe has undergone significant social, political, and economic changes that directly affect young people and the civil society organizations that represent them. The European Scout Region recognizes that these changes offer both challenges and opportunities for youth advocacy and engagement. This section outlines the trends and context that shape the Region's advocacy efforts. Understanding this evolving landscape is crucial to ensuring that advocacy efforts remain relevant and effective.

This section should be reviewed on a regular basis supported by a selection of sources and reports.

Political Landscape

- **Rise of Populism and Nationalism:** In several European countries, the rise of populist and nationalist movements has created a more polarized political environment. This shift has often resulted in restrictive policies toward migration, diversity, and civil liberties. For young people, these trends can hinder efforts toward inclusion, intercultural dialogue, and peacebuilding. Advocacy in this space is essential to ensure that youth voices are heard in policy debates about democratic freedoms and human rights.
- **Youth Disenfranchisement:** Despite a general increase in youth voter turnout in some elections, many young people still feel disconnected



from traditional political processes. This feeling of political disenfranchisement is exacerbated by economic and social challenges, as well as by the fact that decision-making bodies often lack adequate representation of young voices. As a result, young people are turning to alternative forms of political engagement, such as activism, social movements, and digital advocacy.

Social and Demographic Trends

- **Aging Population vs. Youth Empowerment:** Europe is experiencing a demographic shift with an aging population. This shift puts pressure on social services, and in some cases, youth issues are deprioritized in favor of elderly care. However, with young people making up a significant proportion of the population in many European countries, it is crucial to advocate for balanced policies that address the needs of both older and younger generations, particularly in areas such as employment, education, and healthcare.
- **Increased Diversity and Migration:** The influx of migrants and refugees, particularly following crises in the Middle East and Africa, has significantly altered the demographic makeup of many European countries. While diversity presents opportunities for cultural exchange and innovation, it has also led to challenges in integration and social cohesion. Discrimination and exclusion remain prevalent, particularly among young migrants, Roma communities, and other marginalized groups. Advocacy efforts must focus on ensuring equal opportunities, combating discrimination, and promoting social inclusion for all young people, regardless of their background.

Economic Realities

- **Youth Unemployment and NEET (Not in Employment, Education, or Training):** Although Europe's economy has gradually recovered from the 2008 financial crisis and more recently the COVID-19 pandemic, youth unemployment remains a significant issue. Young people, especially those in disadvantaged communities, continue to face challenges in accessing stable employment. The NEET rate remains high, and many young people feel uncertain about their future career prospects. This economic uncertainty makes it essential for advocacy efforts to focus on improving access to education, training, and employment opportunities, as well as promoting quality non-formal education.
- **Economic Inequality:** The gap between wealthier and poorer regions of Europe is widening, leading to unequal opportunities for young people. This disparity can be seen in access to education, healthcare, and social services. Young people from less affluent areas face greater obstacles to their personal and professional development. Advocacy efforts in this area should promote policies that reduce inequality and create a more level playing field for young people across Europe.

Environmental and Climate Challenges

- **Climate Crisis:** Environmental sustainability and climate justice are among



the most pressing issues for young people today. Europe has seen the rise of youth-led climate movements, such as Fridays for Future, which have mobilized millions of young people to demand more ambitious climate action. Despite growing awareness, many governments and institutions have been slow to implement policies that meet the demands of young climate activists. The European Green Deal and other policy initiatives are steps in the right direction, but youth advocacy is needed to push for more urgent and comprehensive action on climate change, particularly in areas like renewable energy, biodiversity protection, and the transition to a low-carbon economy.

- **Post-COVID Green Recovery:** As Europe rebuilds its economy post-COVID, there is an opportunity to ensure that recovery efforts are green and sustainable. Young people have a vested interest in ensuring that this recovery not only addresses economic challenges but also creates a more sustainable future. Advocacy in this space should aim to influence recovery plans to ensure they prioritize environmental protection and the well-being of future generations.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

- **Mental Health and Wellbeing:** The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on young people's mental health and well-being. Lockdowns, school closures, and the disruption of social activities created feelings of isolation and anxiety for many. Although there has been some recovery, youth mental health continues to lag behind other age groups. Advocacy should focus on ensuring that mental health services and support systems are prioritized in the post-pandemic recovery, with a particular focus on the needs of young people.
- **Education and Digital Divide:** The pandemic exposed and exacerbated inequalities in access to education, particularly during periods of remote learning. Many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds struggled with limited access to technology and the internet, creating a "digital divide" that hindered their ability to participate fully in education. Post-pandemic, there is an urgent need to advocate for policies that close this digital gap and ensure that all young people have access to the tools and resources needed for learning in a rapidly digitizing world.

Problem Statements

The European landscape presents both challenges and opportunities for young people to engage in shaping a more inclusive and sustainable future. The European Scout Region, with its emphasis on non-formal education and active citizenship, is well-positioned to advocate for policies that address these evolving needs. The following problem statements highlight barriers young people face and guide the advocacy priorities of the European Scout Region moving forward.

Youth Participation and Engagement

- European democracy is strengthened when citizens actively participate in political and civic life. Young people (aged 15-29 years) make up 16.3%



of the EU's total population in 2021. The huge increase in voter turnout in recent European elections has been driven by a rise in votes among young people. However, many young people are not included at the tables where decisions affecting them are made, and feel they do not have much influence or power over important decisions. (European Union data, 2023)

- Multiple cuts to youth participation funding have occurred over recent years, with proposals and threats still existing for the Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe programmes. Throughout the review of the 2025-2027 period of the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), it is essential these programmes retain their current funding. (Erasmus+ Coalition, 2024)

Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

- The 'youth' have long been identified as perpetrators of violence and a threat to security and stability. Young people are actually the most affected in terms of social and economic discrimination by Governments and intergovernmental organisations policies. Involving young people in peacebuilding and conflict resolution is fundamental for achieving international sustainable development. (ECDPM, 2021)
- 18% of young people say they experience discrimination from public services and Institutions because of their age, 16% because of gender, 7.2% because of ethnic origin etc. 95% of Roma youth have observed and encountered discriminatory words, behaviours and gestures. Access to public services became harder during the COVID-19 pandemic and young people became the highest risk group for poverty and social exclusion. (European Youth Forum, 2021)

Quality Non-formal Education

- Two-thirds of students in Europe have reported learning loss during the pandemic due to online/distance learning. Many were forced to quit University or studies, moving back home and losing autonomy and independence. (Eurocities, 2022)
- The COVID-19 pandemic represented a period in which young people were the hardest hit by job loss and insecurity and optimism about the future. The rate of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) increased to 13.7% (9.8 million) in 2020 and the economic loss to the EU of youth disengagement was estimated at over €142 billion a year in 2015. (Eurofound, 2024)

Environmental Sustainability and Climate Justice

- Nine out of ten of young Europeans believe climate change and environmental breakdown are the most serious threats facing the world today and 84% are fairly, very or extremely worried about the future. Young people are deeply concerned about the impact the climate crisis, pollution, loss of biodiversity and deforestation are having on communities and the planet. (ActionAid, 2021)



- Air pollution causes over 1,200 premature deaths per year in people under the age of 18 in Europe and significantly increases the risk of disease later in life. Many European countries have air pollution levels that are far above World Health Organization guidelines, with children and adolescents being the most vulnerable to its effects. (EEA, 2023)
- There are concerns regarding the European Commission's ambition to reduce carbon emission within the EU. The EU's commitment of 90% CO2 reduction by 2040 falls short of more ambitious targets called for by young people in Europe. (European Youth Forum, 2024)

Safeguarding and Wellbeing

- The COVID-19 crisis had a disproportionate impact on young people's life satisfaction and mental well-being compared to older groups. Restrictions, school and youth group closures contribute to a decrease in life satisfaction and mental well-being where nearly two-thirds of young people were at risk of depression. Since the pandemic, youth mental well-being improved, albeit to a lesser extent than among older populations. (Eurofound, 2024)





**What we
stand for**

What we stand for

Through advocacy and partnerships, we aim to ensure that young people are active participants in shaping a more inclusive, sustainable, and peaceful future. From promoting meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes to advocating for environmental sustainability and safeguarding youth well-being, these principles form the foundation of our advocacy strategy.

By working alongside partners, policymakers, and other stakeholders, we aim to create a tangible, lasting impact on the issues that matter most to young people. The following sections detail our priorities and commitments, outlining practical steps to ensure young people can contribute to and benefit from a society that values, protects, and supports them.

Youth participation and engagement

Meaningful youth participation and young people's inclusion in decision-making processes are essential because young people often feel disconnected from these processes. By involving them, stakeholders can offer fresh perspectives, and innovative ideas and learn from a first-hand perspective of what it is that's concerning their future citizens. On another note, the possibility of becoming and feeling part of these processes will foster in young people a sense of ownership over their future, thus addressing the question of why young voices aren't heard. This active involvement of youth is crucial for building a sustainable future, and the European Scout Movement, as one of the largest youth-led organizations, can not miss the opportunity of enhancing their members to access this opportunity, while supporting them in the achievement of their goals and personal development opportunities.

The European Scout Region will:

- Encourage meaningful youth participation in decision-making processes at all levels of governance, from local to European.
- Recognise and support for youth work as a valuable contribution to society's development.

Funding for Youth Organisations

Sustainable funding for youth organizations is vital because it ensures that these organizations can continue to provide essential services, advocacy, and development opportunities for young people. Often, youth organizations struggle with limited financial resources, which impacts their ability to engage in long-term projects and reach more young people. By securing stable funding, these organizations can expand their efforts, provide leadership training, and create spaces where young people can learn and grow. Furthermore, adequate funding enables them to advocate more effectively for youth issues and influence policy changes. This financial support not only empowers youth organizations to achieve their goals but also strengthens their role as key contributors to society's development and progress. As one of the largest youth movements, the European Scout Region must ensure that its member organizations have access to sufficient resources to foster positive change



and build leadership capacities within their communities.

The European Scout Region will:

- Ensure sustainable financial support for member organizations to continue their essential work.
- Advocate for increased funding and resource mobilization for youth-led initiatives at local, regional, and international levels.
- Participate actively in the decision-making of funding applications through the CoE Programming Committee on Youth through the European Youth Foundation (where WOSM is a key beneficiary)

Recognition of Volunteering and Volunteer Work

Recognizing volunteering and volunteer work is crucial because it highlights the immense value that volunteers contribute to society, often without any financial compensation. Volunteers play a key role in addressing social challenges, fostering community cohesion, and supporting causes that improve lives. Despite this, volunteer contributions are frequently undervalued or overlooked in policy and decision-making processes. Proper recognition not only acknowledges the hard work and dedication of volunteers but also motivates more people to engage in volunteerism, enhancing community engagement and social responsibility. It also fosters a culture of appreciation, where volunteering is seen as a legitimate and respected form of contribution, essential for personal development and societal well-being. The European Scout Region, with its vast network of volunteers, must lead by example in championing the importance of recognizing volunteer efforts at all levels.

The European Scout Region will:

- Promote the recognition of volunteer contributions at local, regional, and international levels.
- Advocate for policy measures that formally acknowledge volunteer work as a key driver of community and societal development.

Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

Peace education is vital for embracing diverse cultures, challenging stereotypes, and promoting cultural inclusivity, this has been specifically demonstrated since 2022 in the European Region. Through peace education, we can help to prevent conflicts and provide the space to foster global understanding and cooperation. There are many projects in the Region currently taking place that are a testament to the ESR's dedication to promoting peace and harmony. This objective needs to continue and to be mainstreamed across all of our working areas, not only program, but also communications, advocacy, partnerships, or strategy. We need to seek programs and campaigns that foster peace learning opportunities and cultural exchange; projects that bring together scouts from different countries and backgrounds, contributing to a more peaceful and inclusive society.

The European Scout Region will:

- Foster a culture of respect, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence among diverse communities.



- Promote initiatives that encourage intercultural understanding, respect, and dialogue among diverse youth communities.
- Promote diversity, combat discrimination, and ensure equal opportunities for all young people, regardless of their background or identity.

[Peace Education in Scouting paper \(ESR\)](#)

The Peace Education approach includes:

- **Safe From Harm** - Underpinned by the World Organisation of the Scout Movements Policy, Safe From Harm reaffirms everyone's responsibility to create a safe environment for all, enabling the self-development of young people through positive and healthy interpersonal relationships.
- **Diversity & Inclusion** - A principle for the European Region and the commitment to adapt to meet the evolving needs, expectations, and aspirations of young people in different social contexts. Enabling them to thrive in a dynamic and multicultural world, where we respect and value differences.
- **Dialogue** - Dialogue is an essential tool in conflict resolution and in building cohesive societies. It prompts inclusivity, ensures mutual understanding and can actively engage youth as peacebuilders.
- **Advocacy** - By engaging in advocacy, young individuals can actively shape decisions within political, economic, and social institutions, advocating for both their own rights and those of others. Fundamentally, it enables young people to embrace their roles as active citizens, to value and to participate in a democratic society.
- **Human Rights Education** - Human Rights Education plays a pivotal role in Peace Education by fostering a human rights-based approach that centres on the fundamental concepts of human dignity and universality. HRE is an essential and preventative measure that empowers Scouts of all ages to be critical citizens able to speak out against rights violations in their community.
- **Humanitarian Action** - By developing understanding, tolerance, conflict resolution skills, preparedness for disaster relief and intervention initiatives, and dialogue, we are assuring greater future prevention and preparedness in Humanitarian action, contributing to a great culture of peace.

Quality Non-formal Education

Education, well-being, and learning opportunities for all are paramount for active citizenship and personal development. Advocating for a comprehensive and adaptable learning system that focuses on well-being and ensures that young people are equipped with the necessary competencies is something that needs to have a proper space in the decision-making sphere; knowledge is the key to personal development and constructive collaboration in the building of a peaceful world. The European Scout Region as representatives of the value of non-formal education is a key stakeholder in promoting this topic in all of its circles and networks.

The European Scout Region will:

- Ensure accessible, quality education that equips young people with the



relevant competencies needed for personal and professional growth.

- Ensure quality employment opportunities and providing young people with the skills needed for a rapidly changing job market.
- Raise awareness about mental health, reducing stigma, and ensuring access to adequate support and resources for young people.

Environment Sustainability and Climate Justice

Sustainability and environmental responsibility are urgent global concerns that require long-term advocacy and action. The European Scout Region recognizes that environmental education must remain a core part of its identity and initiatives. By educating young people on environmental impacts and equipping them with the skills to drive change, the Region can play a significant role in ensuring a sustainable future for all.

The European Scout Region will:

- Advocate for environmentally responsible practices and policies to address climate change, protect ecosystems, and ensure a sustainable future;
- Raise awareness and educate young people about their environmental impacts, ensuring young people are equipped with the skills and tools needed to change or adapt.

Safeguarding and Wellbeing

The safety, health, and well-being of young people are central to the mission of Scouting. Safeguarding is not just a policy but a commitment to creating safe spaces where all individuals—children, young people, and adults—can thrive. Through the Regional Scout Plan and the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) Services, the European Scout Region is dedicated to supporting Member Organizations (MOs) in maintaining Safe from Harm standards and ensuring that well-being is a priority in all Scouting activities.

The European Scout Region will:

- Support MOs in conducting Safe from Harm compliance assessments and addressing areas of non-compliance.
- Raise awareness of the importance of organizational review and build capacity to support MOs in implementing safeguarding practices.
- Provide networking opportunities for MOs to further promote Safe from Harm compliance across the Region.

The Region's previous work, including partnerships with organizations such as HREYN and the development of resources like the Safer Scouting Pack, demonstrates a longstanding commitment to safeguarding and well-being. The Region will continue to prioritize the protection of young people through proactive policies and by adopting a zero-tolerance approach to harm in all forms.

The safety of all participants is our priority at any Scout event. Keeping children and young people Safe from Harm is at the heart of our Scouting mission. It is a core policy of the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) that young people and adults are protected. We always aim to keep



people physically safe and healthy during activities and around the campsite. It is equally important to keep them safe from harm by others or themselves. Events should not go ahead until they have a practical Safe from Harm plan in place and the means to deliver it. ([SfH Guidelines WOSM](#))





**Who we
stand with**

Who we stand with

Effective advocacy and positive change cannot be achieved in isolation. The European Scout Region recognizes that partnerships and collaboration are fundamental to achieving our mission of empowering young people and contributing to a more inclusive, sustainable, and peaceful world. This section outlines the key groups and entities we align ourselves with, from the young people we serve to the institutional partners we work with, and emphasizes the role of partnerships in driving our strategic objectives.

Why do we have partners?

Partnerships are essential to extending our reach and amplifying the impact of our advocacy efforts. By working with a diverse range of partners, the European Scout Region can leverage expertise, resources, and networks to ensure that our advocacy priorities—youth participation, non-formal education, peacebuilding, environmental sustainability, and safeguarding—are reflected in decision-making processes across Europe.

Partners help us expand our capacity to influence policy at local, national, and European levels. Through collaboration, we can foster innovation, build shared solutions, and ensure that the voices of young people are represented in forums that shape their future.

What attracts us to partners?

We seek partners who share our values of inclusivity, sustainability, and youth empowerment. Our partnerships are built on mutual trust, respect, and a shared commitment to creating a better world for young people.

We are attracted to partners who:

- Prioritize the engagement of young people in decision-making processes.
- Demonstrate a commitment to social justice, equity, and environmental sustainability.
- Bring expertise, resources, and networks that enhance our ability to create positive change.
- Share our vision of a peaceful and inclusive society where young people thrive as active citizens.

Our ideal partners are organizations that understand the importance of non-formal education, embrace diversity and inclusion, and are committed to long-term collaboration aimed at achieving sustainable outcomes.

What are we trying to achieve by having partners?

The goal of our partnerships is to create a stronger collective impact on the issues that matter most to young people. By working with partners, we aim to:

- Strengthen our advocacy efforts to influence policies that improve the



lives of young people.

- Foster innovation and develop solutions to challenges in areas such as youth participation, environmental sustainability, and peacebuilding.
- Share knowledge and resources to build the capacity of both our own organization and our partners to drive change.
- Increase visibility and recognition of the European Scout Movement as a key actor in youth empowerment and education across Europe.

Through partnerships, we aim to align our efforts with others who are equally committed to creating a more inclusive, sustainable, and equitable society.

Young People

Young people are at the heart of everything we do. The European Scout Region aims to be a youth-led organization, and our primary focus is on ensuring that young people are active participants in shaping their future. We work to empower young people by providing opportunities for them to engage in decision-making processes, develop their skills, and take action on issues that matter to them. By centering young people in our advocacy and partnerships, we ensure that their voices are heard and their contributions recognized at all levels of society. Our programmes, initiatives, and advocacy efforts are designed to build young people's capacities as leaders and active citizens who can drive meaningful change in their communities and beyond.

Our Members

Our members—47 National Scout Organizations (NSOs) across Europe—are the backbone of our work. They represent a diverse and dynamic network of young people committed to the values of Scouting and to making a positive impact in their communities. The European Scout Region works closely with its members to support their advocacy efforts and provide the resources and training needed to effectively engage with decision-makers. We also rely on our members to amplify the messages and priorities of the European Scout Movement, helping to drive our collective vision of a more inclusive and sustainable future. Through capacity-building initiatives, training programs, and collaborative projects, we ensure that our members are well-equipped to lead advocacy efforts at the national and regional levels.

Our Planet

Sustainability is a core priority for the European Scout Region. In alignment with our advocacy for environmental sustainability and climate justice, we are committed to reducing our environmental footprint and promoting responsible practices throughout our organization.

Our sustainability strategy focuses on:

- Advocating for policies that protect the environment and promote sustainable development.
- Educating young people about the importance of environmental stewardship and equipping them with the skills to lead climate action in their communities.



- Partnering with organizations that share our commitment to environmental sustainability and can help us drive systemic change at local, national, and European levels.

[European Scout Region Sustainability Strategy – Leading the Way to Net Zero](#)

Through these efforts, we aim to ensure that the European Scout Region contributes to a more sustainable future for all.

Our Partners

The European Scout Region works with a range of institutional partners to achieve our advocacy objectives. These include international organizations, civil society groups, governmental bodies, and private sector stakeholders. Each partnership is designed to leverage complementary strengths and resources, ensuring that our advocacy efforts are as effective as possible.

Our institutional partners provide invaluable support in areas such as:

- Policy development and advocacy at the European level.
- Capacity-building and training for young people and Scout leaders.
- Funding and resource mobilization for our initiatives and campaigns.

We collaborate closely with institutions and other youth and civil society organizations. These partnerships enable us to have a seat at the table in key decision-making processes and ensure that the voices of young people are represented in the development of policies that impact their lives.



**How we
»»»»do it**

How we do it

Stakeholders

External Representation

The European Scout Region's External Representatives are the key drivers of the goals outlined in this advocacy plan on a regional level. Their role includes a variety of diverse tasks:

- **Research & Policy:** The foundation of our advocacy work is built on positions that focus on issues young people are facing today that are not addressed adequately enough by decision makers or aligned with the vision and mission of our movement;
- **Advocacy:** Highlighting issues of importance to young people and our movement, and presenting possible solutions, is a key driver of how we contribute to positive change around the world;
- **Coalition Building:** By speaking up, lobbying, building relations with like-minded organisations, taking part in consultations, publishing opinion pieces and by taking on leadership positions within thematic youth constituencies where they exist, or by creating them where they do not, we create an environment where young are considered to be key partner in addressing global and regional issues affecting them, while advancing the vision and mission of our movement;
- **Representation and Influence:** External Representatives may also hold mandates and decision-making power in institutional/partner organisations' bodies.
- **Continuous Improvement:** The world around us is constantly presenting us with different realities. To adapt to new realities, our working methods and goals are reviewed periodically.

To achieve the above outlined aims, continuous professional development in the areas of public speaking, relationship building and advocacy of volunteers and staff in conjunction with adequate funding of advocacy activities is of key necessity. Together with our regions and NSOs, that are already engaged in advocacy activities or are only at the start of their advocacy journey, we work towards mapping opportunities and training of representatives to leverage the potential of our movement to create positive change.

The work of external representation is outward-looking. Nevertheless, by engaging with partners and representing our interests, representatives will become aware of external ideas and best practices and will support WOSM strategically where appropriate in its growth as an organisation.

European Scout Committee

The Role Description of a Member of the European Scout Committee outlines key responsibilities of which a number tie in with advocacy work of the European Scout Region of WOSM. The key areas of responsibility of the European Scout Committee include:

- The implementation of the decisions of the European Scout Conference



- The implementation the Mission, Vision and Strategy for Scouting as well as the policies of WOSM and, in particular, the Regional Scout Plan
- Following the work of the Region in an area or a strategic priority and adopting the budget of the Region
- Co-operating and working closely with Member Organizations
- Remaining up to date with recent developments in the region and at world level
- Fostering the idea of European citizenship, based on the consciousness of a common heritage and destiny

Based on these, from an advocacy perspective, the role of the European Scout Committee is acted through:

- **Direction:** Reviewing and contributing to validating and approving the priorities identified by those in charge, including positioning, partnering, investing, policy setting and representation.
- **Oversight:** Ensuring the decisions of the Conference and objectives of the Regional Scout Plan are implemented and in turn receiving progress reports on action plans, engagements and identified priorities by those in charge.
- **Visibility:** Facilitating the promotion of the work achieved, the collaboration established and representing where and if needed.

World Scout Bureau

The World Scout Bureau is responsible for ultimately delivering on the Regional Scout Plan and therefore supporting the volunteer and youth bodies that exist in order to achieve it. Through the Business Development Practice Team, WOSM provides the Secretariat for advocacy, partnerships, resource mobilization and grants management. The World Scout Bureau acts as a facilitator through:

- **Support:** Offering assistance, services, training, capacity and support to National Member Organisations who wish to establish projects or initiatives in Business Development.
- **Empowerment:** Training and mobilizing a team of External Representatives to engage with partners and deliver on the aims of the Advocacy Strategy.
- **Convening:** Through Network meetings and official events,
- **Visibility:** Facilitating the promotion of the work achieved and collaborations between the European Scout Region and external partners through effective communications and positioning.

Levels of Representation

Deciding whether to send Staff, External Representatives (Youth), or Committee Members to an advocacy event requires a strategic assessment of the event's goals, audience, and the desired outcomes for the European Scout Region. By understanding the nature of the event, the audience, and the goals, the European Scout Region can send the most suitable representative to ensure effective participation and impact.



Criteria	External Representatives	European Scout Committee	Staff (World Scout Bureau)
Event type	Youth forums, activism events, peer discussions	High-level policy meetings, decision-making forums	Operational or partnership meetings, technical events
Audience	Youth, NGOs, youth-led organizations	Government officials, policymakers, large donors	Operational stakeholders, funders, technical experts
Goal	Highlight youth perspectives, advocate for youth policy	Influence policy, form strategic partnerships, governance	Support capacity building, partnerships, project funding
Role	Speaker on youth issues, peer engagement	Strategic oversight, policy influence, long-term planning	Operational support, technical expertise, logistics

Type of event	Description	Representatives	Reason
Youth-Led Conferences & Forums	Events organized by or for youth, focusing on youth issues, activism, or policy.	External Representatives	Youth representatives can engage as peers, share personal experiences, and advocate for youth.
High-Level Policy Meetings	Strategic discussions with policymakers, government officials, and institutions.	Committee members	Committee members can influence policy, represent the movement's vision, and build partnerships.
Coalition Building / Networking Events	Meetings to build alliances with NGOs, youth organizations, or like-minded groups.	External Representatives or Committee Members	Youth reps for grassroots connections; Committee members for high-level partnerships.
EU / Intergovernmental Conferences	Official intergovernmental events	Committee members	These events require strategic representation to influence decision-makers at high levels.
Workshops on Capacity Building or Training	Practical, hands-on training events aimed at building skills and capacities.	Staff (World Scout Bureau)	Staff bring the technical expertise needed for capacity-building and training initiatives.



Partnership Development Meetings	Discussions with donors, partners, and funders about resource mobilization.	Staff (World Scout Bureau) or Committee Members	Staff for technical and business development; Committee for high-level partnership discussions.
Governance & Decision-Making Forums	Conferences or meetings focused on regional or global decision-making for scouting.	Committee Members	Committee members are responsible for overseeing strategy and ensuring alignment with Scout goals.
Advocacy Campaign Launches	Events to launch advocacy initiatives or campaigns addressing youth issues.	External Representatives	Youth representatives are key to demonstrating youth leadership in advocacy efforts.
Public Speaking or Media Events	Events with opportunities for public engagement, media interviews, or panels.	External Representatives or Committee Members	Youth for fresh perspectives; Committee members for strategic and authoritative representation.
Regional Scout Conferences & Meetings	Internal WOSM meetings to discuss regional strategies and plans.	Committee Members and Staff (World Scout Bureau)	Committee for strategy and governance; staff for technical and operational support.
Official Network / Consultation Meetings	Gatherings for consultation or collaboration with external stakeholders.	Staff (World Scout Bureau)	Staff facilitate effective communication and coordination with external stakeholders.
Donor or Fundraising Events	Events focused on resource mobilization and securing funding for projects.	Committee Members or Staff (World Scout Bureau)	Staff handle logistics and funding details; Committee members support high-level negotiations.
Leadership Summits & Symposiums	High-level summits focused on leadership, governance, or strategic direction.	Committee Members	Committee members bring the experience and strategic insight needed for leadership discussions.



Ways of Working

Platforms and partnerships

The Advocacy Strategy will target all key stakeholders involved in policy and decision making in education and related areas that affect all forms of reform initiatives in this regard. The following have been identified as main target audiences of this strategy.

- Decision Makers
- Policy makers
- International institutions
- Civil Society

The dialogue with EU Institutions and representatives of member states will be continued and reinforced in order to achieve the objectives of the strategy. This will require reinforcing existent relations and establishing new ones in areas where the relationship is considered to be lower. The European Scout Region will maintain and increase the number of meetings, including high-level ones with representatives of EU institutions to discuss policy priorities related to the strategic plan thematic areas. These meetings are useful to present the vision and the objectives of the Scouting Movement and make an impact on central issues at the European policy level. Through stakeholder analysis we evaluate our existing and future partnerships for the Committee to approve.

Stakeholder analysis

The European Scout Region has developed its partnership and alliances with various stakeholders on an annual basis. These alliances include several memberships, affiliations, alliances or coalitions with various civil society platforms. This helps us to engage in campaigns, bring grassroots expertise, promote civil dialogue and learn from other NGOs. The existing and potential partners are crucial to the success of our work as it will allow us to build synergies with others who share our vision and goals in order to achieve our objectives and support our advocacy initiatives. A thorough stakeholder analysis will be performed each year to identify our partners and allies with whom we would like to maintain our relationship, strengthen it and establish new ways of cooperation.

Institutional engagements

Each year, the European Scout Region will endeavour to be present at a number of advocacy fora, events and networks in order to engage with decision-makers, ensure WOSM is contributing to the development of European policy and practice, and achieve the aims of this strategy.

Existing institutional engagements:

- YFJ General Assembly and Council of Members
- Council of Europe Advisory Council on Youth and Programming Committee on Youth
- Lifelong Learning Week and LLLP General Assembly
- OECD Friends of Youth Meeting



- EU Youth Conference
- CEV General Assembly
- European Youth Event

Developmental prospects

The European Scout region has several areas that need reinforcement to allow our organisation to become an even more effective advocate for our strategic priorities and the needs of young people.

- **Reinforced advocacy framework:** Through a new Advocacy Strategy and framework, the ESR will be equipped with a plan for the future of advocacy in the region, twinning strategic priorities with steps on how they will be achieved, and ensuring we are being represented with partner organisations with the most relevant structures of the organisation.
- **Capacity building:** There is a need to ensure all External Representatives and spokespeople of the region are well briefed and trained on the aims of the new Strategy in order to better represent the Movement. Through capacity building, the ESR and representatives can better represent the needs of member organisations.
- **Clear messaging and communications:** A new advocacy strategy opens up the opportunity to clearer communicate advocacy achievements and developments to the Movement. With the development of a new strategy, ESR social media, future position statements, internal and external messaging and communications can be tied to advocacy priorities of the region and strategically touch upon transversal themes.
- **Representation of young people and volunteers:** There is a need to further bring young people and volunteers from within the ESR into policy dialogue as active stakeholders and not just as beneficiaries. Members should also be consulted more often for their views and for their support in changing policy. The reinforcement of positive social norms and cultural practices that create an enabling environment will support sustainable social change within the organisation.
- **Evidence-based policy making:** Through project work and collection of best practices of projects and interventions from member organisations, European Scout Region can intensify our advocacy impact. Policy change needs to be evidence-based to provide convincing arguments and influence. Investing in research to capture practical examples from within the Scouting movement will be beneficial in ensuring projects' practical evidence feeds our advocacy work.
- **Stronger and wider partnership base:** The European Scout Region should focus on strengthening partnerships and work with a wider group of stakeholders, donors and other civil society organisations involved in influencing and establishing policy. Due to the recent expansion of ESR membership, these partnerships should be with organisations within and outside the European Union. It is particularly important for ESR and its members to be engaged in policy discussions with the European Union and Council of Europe, and to some extent, national governments.



Monitoring and Evaluation

Impact Monitoring Indicators

- Number of events attended in:
 - EU institutions (European Parliament, European Commission, Council of the EU, European Economic and Social Committee, Committee of the Regions)
 - Civil-society-led actions
- Number of meetings with decision makers:
 - Members of the European Parliament
 - Staff in Permanent Representations to the EU
 - European Commission officials
 - Representatives/members of the EESC
 - Representative/members of the CoR
 - Representative of other international organisations (UNESCO, UNESCO UIL, CoE, OECD, etc)
- Number of speaking opportunities at events
- Number of external media stories generated
- Number of resources/position papers created
- Number of new partnerships created



×
×
×
×

Annex 1

Call to Action for the EU Elections 2024

Annex 1 - Call to Action for the EU Elections 2024

On the occasion of the last European elections in 2019, the European Scout Region of the World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM) led the consortium that implemented the project 'My Europe, My Say'.

The main objective of the project was to enhance young people's participation in political settings and bring the European Union (and its institutions) closer to them. This project sought to bridge the gap between young citizens and the EU by educating, informing, and equipping them with the skills and tools to engage actively in their communities.

The Movement

The mission of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.

Scouting aims at enabling young people, through non-formal education, to become active citizens creating positive change towards a more sustainable future. To create positive change, we need to share our message and values, collaborate with interested stakeholders, and engage with decision-makers on a local, regional, national, and global level.

Using Our Vote

From 6 to 9 June 2024, more than 365 million EU citizens in the 27 Member States will be called to the ballot box for the 10th European elections. European elections represent a crucial moment in our continental democracy: they give EU citizens a say in the political direction of the European Union.

Young people in Europe have a significant opportunity to impact the political direction. This year, 5 Member States will allow 16 and 17-year-olds the right to vote, and the EU has expressed strong political will to engage with young people. The Presidents of the European Parliament and the European Commission have made it clear that the EU institutions will listen to and address the concerns of younger generations.

In a troublesome time for Europe, we face the European Parliament elections in 2024 amid many external and global challenges. In a multi-election year, 2024 could impact Member States' ability to deliver on policies such as the green transition, justice and human rights issues. Building on its fundamentals, commitments and principles, Scouting in Europe takes this opportunity to share its 'European Scouts and Guides Call to Action for the European Elections' developed by participants of both the European Region of WOSM



and the Europe Region of WAGGGS at the Youth Advocacy Training for Pluralistic Democracies in the context of the Council of Europe's 20th University on Youth and Development.

Youth Participation and Engagement

Young people will live with the impacts of decisions made during the upcoming Parliamentary term for many decades to come and should be given the opportunity for meaningful consultation in decision-making processes.

Youth and decision-making

Young people aged 15 to 29 years old represent 18,4% of the European population. They will shape the future of our societies and therefore have a right to be heard. Increasing youth involvement in decision-making will benefit the overall society as young people open new perspectives. We consider MEPs to be the key stakeholders in implementing suitable programs.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- Urge MEPs **to create an EU youth delegate program**. Furthermore, we ask that the youth be involved **in all levels of democracy**, such as youth councils.
- Deliver **co-management structures** to ensure **meaningful youth participation** for youth organisations and individuals.
- Apply a functional system to **assess, resource, and monitor the impact** of every policy and budgetary decision on young people (ie, adopt the Youth Test). These objectives should be accomplished by 2029.

Promoting democracy and democratic values

Maintaining democracy is an integral part of ensuring freedom, peace and equality. Reassuring these key values benefits the citizens of Europe and beyond.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- Encourage governments on all levels to use their capacities in **creating strong democratic systems**. This can be achieved through **political education as a part of the national curriculum, extra-curricular non-formal education, and the promotion of fundamental rights** such as freedom of speech.
- **Lower the voting age to 16 in elections for the European Parliament**. Promoting democratic values is a continuous process and a crucial part of democratic societies. The goal of lowering the voting age should be accomplished by the next European elections in 2029.

Promoting media literacy and critical thinking

Being informed on current developments is a crucial part of active citizenship. To have an accurate understanding of current affairs, critical thinking is a key skill of media literacy. In particular, minors and young adults have to develop these skill sets. We consider formal and non-formal educators to be the main



stakeholders, along with tech companies such as Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, and TikTok.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- **Implement programmes of media literacy in various forms of curricula.** We also ask the EU **to develop a media literacy campaign.** These actions should be taken as soon as possible.
- Produce policy and legislative proposals in accessible language

Recognising young people as a key part of peacebuilding

Young people play an active role in reconciliation and open new perspectives. We consider peace as an essential requirement for social progress. Through empowering young people as peacebuilders, communities across Europe and the world will benefit. Empowerment can be achieved through European funds to promote mobility between young peacebuilders and NGOs as capacity builders.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- **Implement accessible funds for international and intercultural exchange between young people** so they can become the peacebuilders of today and tomorrow. This should be accomplished by the next European elections in 2029.

Quality Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education (NFE) is crucial for lifelong learning to support all aspects of a person's life and well-being. Yet, it is too often under-prioritised and under-recognised favouring Formal Education. Most of the time, formal education is not enough for young people to thrive in the modern world of work. A combination of formal and non-formal education equips young people best for the changing world of work.

Non-Formal Education awareness raising and recognition

Learning by doing through youth organisations and volunteering complements the delivery of formal education and decreases the skills mismatch by allowing young people to develop adaptable life and interpersonal skills.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- **Promote the integration and recognition of non-formal education in national education policies.** Advocate for NFE as a tool for youth to develop soft skills and learn how to be active leaders committed to environmental protection and social progress in their local communities.
- Implement a system to **recognise and validate competencies** gained through NFE to be **recognised throughout all EU Member States.**
- Develop and implement an **EU Framework for Quality Standards in NFE programmes.**
- Through a Parliamentary Recommendation, **all Member States should be encouraged to include NFE in educational legislation,** enabling and promoting the collaboration of schools with the NFE sector.



- Provide skills-building, mentoring, and networking opportunities to help young people build the skills needed to secure a holistic livelihood and successful career.

Volunteer protection and training

To promote societal recognition and the value of learning and developing soft and life skills gained through volunteering, validation and recognition of volunteering experience in recruitment processes is crucial.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- **Develop a public system of recognition of the competencies and importance of volunteer work** to improve the employability of young people and for recognition in the university's ECTS credits.
- **Appoint a competent team of experts for an Advisory Panel** on youth work, volunteerism and the implementation of volunteers in civil society.

Inclusive Non-Formal Education

Education systems need to respond to the diverse needs and requirements of young people today. Education, training, and access to employment are powerful drivers for empowering people, social mobility, and reducing vulnerabilities and inequalities.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- Put more focus on **building a system of inclusive non-formal education** against discrimination, that supports a multicultural and diverse program accessible to everyone.
- Recognise non-formal education programmes as a **fundamental catalyst for fostering peace and human rights**.
- Harness digital evolution to support young people in **strengthening their digital skills** and literacy.
- Provide **safer spaces for open dialogue** and confront stereotypes and discrimination, to ensure an evolving approach to **equitable NFE**.

Funding

To be as effective as they can be, formal and non-formal education systems need to be well funded. Education systems should be prioritised in member state budgets to reach the most marginalised communities often excluded from mainstream education.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- Ensure and encourage **operational, unrestricted funding of NFE** programming from EU member states.
- Provide youth organisations with **funds to develop non-formal education programs** and give youth access to these opportunities.
- Target funding to **support the most marginalised learners**, including families with no economic means, girls, children with disabilities, and displaced and refugee children.



Environmental Sustainability & Climate Justice

There is a fundamental interconnection between social justice and climate action. As youth associations, we are trying to help the most affected people and areas suffering from the effects of climate change with our projects. To do so, we need the necessary financial support.

Climate cooperation and solidarity

World Scouting and Guiding, in the interest of safeguarding young people's futures, wants to stress the importance of the climate crisis and the 2015 Paris Agreement, limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels through decisive and timely action.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- **Support youth organisations with funding under existing programmes to organise projects for people and areas deeply impacted by the effects of the climate crisis.** Those could include climate refugees, people experiencing social issues due to the climate crisis's impact, and people and areas affected by natural catastrophes (e.g. floods, heat-waves, drought).
- Implement **effective and safe routes, accommodation, support, and fair processing** procedures for those affected by climate migration.
- Support the **implementation of legal instruments** that ensure a healthy environment and a sustainable future.
- Encourage Member States to meet their targets of **distributing loss and damage funding** for Global South and island nations affected by climate change and to support vulnerable groups through **proactive climate adaptation**.

Climate Education

Young people need to understand their impacts on the natural environment and have the necessary skills and knowledge to tackle the many challenges in their communities.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- Ensure the protection of our natural environment through the **capacity building** and **empowerment** of young people.
- Encourage Member States to **recognise, promote and fund** non-formal environmental education, ensuring that the skills gained from alternative education are recognised and accredited through formal educational pathways and the world of work.

Infrastructure and Transport

Young people need to be able to travel easily and with low costs and low emissions within the EU.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- **Intensify and set up new routes for night trains to connect big European cities and high-speed connections between capital cities**



to enable an easier and more affordable way to travel and be a realistic alternative to air travel.

- **Enforce a unified booking system for train tickets and the same rights for passengers as for air travel to simplify the booking process** when travelling through Europe.

Agriculture and Nature

Scouts and Guides are deeply connected with the nature surrounding us, and protecting nature and restoring ecosystems is important in our work as a youth organisation shaping the future of young people. Protecting our natural environment and preserving wildlife and biodiversity is fundamental to our beliefs in Scouting and Guiding. For us, nature is our classroom.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- **Promote and facilitate outdoor activities** like hiking, camping, and trekking. Protecting European trail routes enables young people to participate in outdoor activities and encourages climate education and skills built in the great outdoors.

Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

The European Union must go further to ensure no person is left behind regardless of age, gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, migration status, racial or ethnic background, religious status, etc.

Gender equality and LGBTI

Scouting and Guiding is open to all young people, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation or expression. Sadly, this isn't the case across all member states and bodies of the European Union.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- Build upon the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020 - 2025 to fulfil gender equality and women's empowerment needs across the EU, **ensuring intersectionality is a key principle of its implementation.**
- **Provide statistical evidence of the gender pay gap and raise awareness** of existing differences. This will lead to a reduction in pay inequalities across genders.
- Ensure the **renewal of the FEMM Committee and Youth and LGBTI Intergroups**, and introduce a **Social Equity Committee** in the European Parliament.

Human Rights

Vulnerable people, such as those facing multiple forms of discrimination, will have a positive effect on the reduction of discrimination, crime rates, and social inequalities.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- **Consolidate the protection of human rights** inside and outside the EU.



- Develop, resource, and implement an overarching **Intersectionality Strategy** to bridge overlaps causing disproportionate harm to those affected by multiple forms of discrimination.
- **Provide housing and financial support** for refugees to support their social integration.
- **Assess, renew, implement, and resource Equality Strategies** such as the LGBTQIA+ Strategy, Gender Equality Strategy, Anti-Racism Strategy, and the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This includes promoting **legalisation** and encouraging European member states to **adopt legislation** for equal access to all human rights.
- **Renew the mandate of the European Commission Equality Taskforce** and provide increased resourcing for further accountability, transparency, oversight and performance.
- Integrate **human rights education** and **monitor the implementation of the World Programme for Human Rights Education** to combat harmful practices and policies that interfere with the protection of several human rights.

Children's Rights

Promoting children's rights and participation in EU member states will lead to an improved sense of citizenship, engagement and empowerment in children and young people.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- **Monitor the implementation** of the UN Convention on the **Rights of the Child** by **creating task forces** that ensure the act is upheld in each country.
- **Promote meaningful youth participation** in decision-making (co-decision making) in each country at **local and national levels** (such as national youth councils).

Mental Health

Individuals who suffer from poor mental health require easy-to-use, quick, accessible, and inclusive services.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- Ensure that young people are educated about mental health. Encourage each member state to **create an online platform to support youth's mental health, and include mental health in their national curriculum.**
- Take a **multi-stakeholder approach to mental health**, working with education, healthcare and welfare services to promote good mental health and prioritise prevention.

Disabilities

Individuals who face disabilities deserve equitable access to services that are rapid, simple, inclusive, and easily accessible.



By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- Ensure **accessible information** is provided on **EU electoral and policy processes** and decisions for those with disabilities or those facing language barriers, including through translation into all recognised languages, braille, audiobook, and child-friendly formats.
- Prioritise **equal participation** to effectively protect persons with disabilities from any form of discrimination and violence.

Robust Economy and Welfare Systems

Young people need to be prepared for a strong and holistic livelihood to tackle the world of work, and European Union member states need to ensure that young people are equipped with the skills that can be adapted to the jobs of tomorrow.

By 2029, we call on the European Union to:

- Implement just economic transition: **invest in research and higher education, with a focus on sustainability, inclusivity and justice.**
- Encourage **joint planning, investment, and implementation** that spans government ministries and multiple sectors to ensure that welfare systems are resilient and provide continuity of learning when faced with unexpected shocks or emergencies.
- Encourage Member States to pledge to the **Voluntary Solidarity Mechanism** supporting the protection and relocation of asylum seekers and refugees.
- Ensure all Member States provide **universal health coverage** for their citizens with comprehensive, equitable, affordable, acceptable and safe health services.



× Annex 2
× Policy Statements

Annex 2 - Policy Statements

Youth Participation and Engagement

As Scouts, we stand up for the right of young people to be equal partners in the decision-making that affects them today and tomorrow. We advocate for youth engagement not only for the sake of young people's inclusion and development but also because young people have a right to engage in decision-making because of their agency and expertise.

Young people have the right, the capability, and the drive to lead positive change everywhere. They have opinions, are innovative, and are willing to take on responsibilities around issues that affect them. Young people's role should not be reduced to that of passive beneficiaries of top-down policy interventions. Instead, they must be involved as equal partners in the policy design, decision-making, and implementation process.

Advocacy in Scouting is youth-led, from young people leading community projects to leading Scout groups and national boards, to being part of our regional and global leadership, and as such we consider youth-led action a cross-cutting advocacy target. May it be decisions taken in the European Union, the Council of Europe, or a national or regional Parliament, these decisions affect young people today. Young people have a right to participate in all processes, considering the wide range of issues affecting their lives.

Following this strong belief, we advocate for the engagement of young people's actions at all levels and in all topics impacting their lives. It is not enough to offer young people a seat at the table. We call on actors at all levels to include young people in a meaningful way in their decision-making and actions, including the process leading up to the decision, planning, and implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation. Young people are not tokens, but part of a societal group with valuable opinions that can strengthen every organization's decision-making.

We will advocate for youth participation and engagement by:

- Speak out about the importance of young people and young people's rights in decision-making processes in all events we participate in;
- Promote the role of, non-formal human rights education as a fundamental aspect of youth development;
- Showcase actions young people around the world have taken to improve the lives of their community;
- Train and empower young people around the world to speak up and make sure their voice is heard globally;
- Demand meaningful youth participation in all processes and events we participate in;
- Partner with other youth organizations and partners as multipliers in this effort.



Peaceful and Inclusive Societies

Meaningful mechanisms for youth participation in policy-making in peace processes, as well as safe spaces that enable young people to be partners in peacebuilding by developing skills and abilities related to leadership, resilience, and community building, are imperative. To enable more youth-friendly funding to grassroots organizations working for peace, funders must widen the definition of youth-led peace efforts to focus on building stronger, more resilient communities from the grassroots level, which in turn prevent future crises.

Conflict and insecurity disproportionately affect young people and their ability to access their rights. Peace, however, is a much bolder vision than the absence of violent conflict - and "positive peace" is about striving to achieve the wide range of conditions required for a society to not only solve conflicts but sustain peace, development, and opportunity for all. Young people are drivers of peace, resilience, innovation, and social cohesion in communities and in society at large. Scouting provides one of the world's oldest, largest, and most wide-ranging platforms for young peacebuilders to learn, organize, and take on leadership roles in communities around the world.

Young peacebuilders are often part of grassroots organizations in fragile communities, making access to funding for youth, peace, and security-related initiatives nearly impossible to come by. Funders must actively make youth-friendly funding opportunities available to youth, peace, and security initiatives in all communities where it's needed and support young people in applying for and reporting on grants.

We will advocate for peace by:

- Actively engaging and building the capacity of young people to be at the forefront of building and sustaining peace in their communities, and to meaningfully participate in decision-making;
- Working with partners and key stakeholders to broaden the understanding of peace, emphasizing positive peace, and the importance of youth participation, civil society, community resilience, climate, and environmental risk, and dialogue;
- Calling on partners to increase access to grants for youth-led or grassroots organizations to secure funding opportunities for youth peacebuilding, peace education, non-formal education, preventative efforts, reintegration, and reconciliation efforts;
- Raising awareness of non-formal education, around our key programs, as a crucial element of building and sustaining peace;
- Continuing to provide and advocate for safe spaces to protect young people and their rights;
- Advocating for the continued normative advancement and implementation of the YPS agenda and engaging with partners to further the Agenda's five pillars in all peace and security programs and policies.



Quality Non Formal Education

In today's rapidly changing society, skills needed to thrive in work and life are constantly being updated. Education systems must provide learners with relevant lifelong learning opportunities that instill foundational life skills that can be adapted and developed throughout one's life, and non-formal education provides important spaces and methods for this kind of learning. Non-formal and formal education are complementary to each other in pursuing the shared goal of providing high-quality life-long learning opportunities.

Scouting across the world makes up the largest educational Movement for young people. Non-formal education requires increased recognition and validation, increased investment, and stronger partnerships among practitioners and stakeholders. Non-formal education has witnessed more recognition and gained momentum over the past years for its defining role in empowering individuals and communities while being a key contributor to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. This momentum is accelerated in situations when formal education has to shut down, leaving non-formal education as the only tool to reach not only the most vulnerable young people and adults but large proportions of society. Despite the positive impact non-formal education has shown over the last years, NFE is still not sufficiently recognized at political and societal levels and has inadequate resources to function properly and provide individuals all around the world with quality education.

We will advocate for non-formal education by:

- Delivering an accessible, quality educational offer that skills young people with the knowledge, skills and capacities needed for personal and professional growth;
- Positioning Scouting as the world's leading non-formal education movement;
- Taking part in events focused on learning and education;
- Being an active member of the Lifelong Learning Platform and platforms of other education-focused European organizations;
- Ensuring non-formal educational principles are adopted by other organization's advocacy, conferences and outcome documents;
- Seeking out partners and collaborators to advance this purpose.



Environmental Sustainability and Climate Justice

Through non-formal education, young people are empowered and take action at the local level, becoming active citizens while tackling a range of diverse issues affecting their lives and communities. Grassroots actions such as these have the power to create widespread positive change in local communities around the world, all in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2017, scouting officially committed to becoming the world's largest coordinated youth contribution to the SDGs by 2030.

As Scouts we stand for the Sustainable Development Goals, henceforth the SDGs, a set of 17 Goals adopted by the United Nations in the framework of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. The European Scout Conference 2019 recognised the crucial importance of sustainable development for the growth of our Movement and sustainable development is now one of the strategic priorities of the Regional Scout Plan. The objective is the empowerment of young people as leaders in achieving the 2030 Agenda, giving them the tools to become agents of change to create socially, economically and environmentally sustainable communities.

On the European level, the EU institutions have adopted in 2015 an agenda of implementation of the SDGs, to shape European sustainable policies reaffirming that sustainable development is a core principle of the Treaty on European Union and a priority objective for the Union. More recently with the paper "Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030", the Commission has declared to position itself as a frontrunner in implementing the UN's 2030 Agenda. The adoption of the European Green Deal aims at keeping the EU focused on sustainability.

Young people must be brought in as partners in addressing the climate and biodiversity emergency, including through youth-friendly funding to grassroots efforts but also through meaningful youth engagement in policy processes and decision-making. Non-formal education must be recognised and properly invested in as an effective approach to enabling widespread environmental action.

We will advocate for sustainable development by:

- Identifying and taking up leadership positions within the youth constituencies at European policy development bodies and other key development platforms;
- Having a presence in the programming or planning of major, European policy development and events to position scouting as the leading organisation for youth-led community development;
- Calling for the recognition of non-formal education as a crucial approach to Education for Sustainable Development when engaging with educational policymakers at all levels.
- Taking a leadership role in youth constituencies on the environment;
- Calling on international organisations and states alike to develop youth-friendly environmental programs and solutions.
- Encourage Member States and decision-makers to commit themselves to the development of strategies against climate change and to involve Scouts on a national level, in the elaboration of policies that affect them especially, both in the present and in the future.







© World Scout Bureau Inc.
Management
November 2024

World Scout Bureau
Europe Support Centres
Geneva, Switzerland
Brussels, Belgium

GENEVA
P.O.Box 327,
Rue Henri-Christiné 5
CH-1211 Geneva 4
Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 705 1100

BRUSSELS
rue de l'Industrie 10
B-1000 Brussels
Belgium
Phone: +32 2 893 24 35

Reproduction is authorised to National
Scout Organizations and Associations
which are members of the World
Organization of the Scout Movement.