Maastricht 2022

Regional Conference
of EYP the Netherlands

Youth resolutions for the future of Europe

November 12 & 13

This document collects the ideas of 50+ high school students who participated in the Maastricht Regional Conference of the European Youth Parliament in 2022.

Over 50 participants from 7 Dutch high schools and 34 volunteers from all over Europe gathered at the Porta Mosana College to engage in teambuilding and debating activities. A special delegation of 3 Polish students also participated and shared their view on the separation of powers in Poland.

A variety of relevant issues Europe is facing were discussed under the theme of the conference "New beginnings: securing a sustainable tomorrow". From solving the energy shortages resulting from the Ukraine-Russia war to addressing the relationship between large-scale automation and unemployment, from protecting biodiversity to preservation of language diversity in the EU.

The resolutions were presented, defended, and accepted during the General Assembly on Sunday, hosted at an extremely special venue: the Statenzaal of the Gouvernement Limburg, where the Maastricht Treaty was signed in 1992.

Maastricht 2022 was realised by the efforts of volunteers and resources of sponsors. The volunteers were led by experienced members of the European Youth Parliament: Filippo Cretti (IT), who led the academic team, the editress Sofia Kasapidou (GR) who was in charge of the media output, the head of the jury team Valérie Cafaro (CH) and finally, the project managers Minke van der Heide (NL) and Lucas de Graaf (NL).
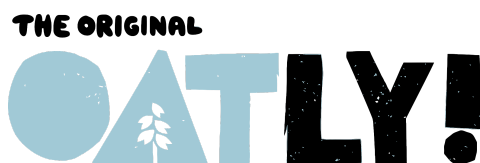
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AFCO

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION BY THE
COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Let me in, let me iiiin: *The long dragging accession process of the EU candidate countries, together with the three new applications stemming from the war in Ukraine, led to discussion highlighting the criticism of the current procedure. How can the EU institutions reform the accession system in order to resolve the current issues?*

Submitted by:

Dada Amoilafoe (NL), Lieke van Driel (NL), Lucia Scotto (NL), Sarrah Aulman (NL), Sophie Hietink (NL), Tudor Vlahu (NL), Teni Shittu (Chairperson, IE)

The European Youth Parliament,

A. Concerned by the vagueness of the Copenhagen Criteria[1] regarding the definition of a functioning market economy and stability of institutions,

B. Noting with deep disapproval the lack of vigour and consistency in the application of rules to countries seeking candidate status[2],

C. Deeply concerned by the length and inconsistency of the deliberation period between the application and the awarding of candidate status to a country[3],

D. Recognising the economic effects of delays in the accession process, and its role in the increasing brain drain[4] due to high emigration from aspiring EU-Member States,

E. Praises the European Commission's model of a two-part accession system[5], seeking to filter the accessibility of EU Membership,

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[1] The **key criteria** for accession;
- stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities;
- a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competition and market forces in the EU;
- the ability to take on and implement effectively the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.

[2] Four months after Poland's accession, Poland had failed to adopt 257 Eu regulations, therefore not meeting the Copenhagen criteria.

[3] Such as North Macedonia who took 17 years to get candidate status, Turkey has been an applicant since 1987 and Moldova and Ukraine got their candidate status after merely months.

[4] The emigration of highly trained or qualified people from a particular country.

[5] The current **two-part accession system** requires two stages: first, becoming a candidate country; and second, becoming a Member State.

F. Criticising the <u>lack of financial</u> support allocated by the European Commission to candidate states seeking to attain member status, considering the financial hardships of EU law transposition,

1. Urges the European Commission to prevent inconsistencies by specifying the definition of a functioning market economy within the Copenhagen Criteria;

2. Encourages the European Commission to act in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria by applying the functioning market economy definition to all applications from candidate states;

3. Calls upon the European Investment Bank to reduce unemployment by providing grants to medium and large enterprises to establish branches in candidate states;

4. Recommends for the European Council to replace unanimous decision making for the granting of candidate status by amending the procedure to that of an 85% majority;

5. Commends the current position of the two-part system that consists of both an initial application, through negotiations and candidacy status, and the transposition of EU law by encouraging the continuation of such an approach;

6. Instructs the Joint Committee on European Affairs[6] together with candidate states to ensure an easier fulfilment of the criteria specified by the EU policy chapters, by beginning a process of <u>twinning</u>[7] aimed at reducing the financial burden on candidate states.

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[6] The **Joint Committee on European Affairs** deals with issues of policy as well as the transposition and implementation of EU law.
[7] **Twinning** aims to provide support for the transposition, implementation and enforcement of the EU legislation

AFET

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION BY THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Bad neighbours: *With the Russian invasion in Ukraine and instability in the Balkans and Caucasus regions, the European Neighbourhood Policy has shown its limits, resulting in new accession applications. What steps should the EU take in order to stabilise its neighbouring regions and speed up the enlargement process?*

Submitted by: Louisa Slort (NL), Tara Dhadwal (NL), Hashim Khalid (NL), Rebekah Tewelde (NL), Tiana Stiekema (NL), Tin van der Voort (NL), Zofia Wawrzyniak (PL), Katarina Mazzini (Chairperson, SI)

The European Youth Parliament,

A. Acknowledging the lower economic performance of the Western-Balkan region and their currency instability,

B. Pointing out the fact that the process of accession of the Western-Balkans is a not a priority for the European Commission,

C. Recognising the phenomenon of nationalism in Western-balkans countries which increased their anti-EU approach,

D. Alarmed by the generalistic and not regional-based approach of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP),

E. Profoundly concerned by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the tension at the Kosovo-Serbian border and the Azeri-Armenian conflict,

F. Aware of the lengthy process behind the accession process that might result in democratic stagnation and anti-EU beliefs,

1. Advises the European Investment Bank (EIB) to aid the worse economically performing neighbours in the Western Balkan region by investing money into foreign markets and providing financial assistance;

2. Invites the European Council to prevent further eruption of conflict by giving higher priority to Western Balkans accession;

3. Proposes to the Western Balkan states to promote the benefit of EU Membership and the support of democratic movements;

4. Calls upon the United Nations to solve the conflict in Ukraine by mediating and negotiating between the parties;

5. Advises the Council to mediate negotiations by threatening with sanctions if the respective conflicts escalate between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and Serbia and Kosovo;

6. Encourages Member states to help the Member States struggling most with high migration fluxes by providing the conflict areas with humanitarian military aid;

7. Demands the European Commission to allow for deeper regional cooperation and rapid impact management by reviewing the ENP;

8. Advises the European Commission to adopt a stage accession model[8] by implementing a cluster-based process.

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[8] **Stage accession model** is a way of accession by stages, where in each stage the state gains more benefits

CULT

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION BY THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Talk like you mean it: According to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, more than 100 languages within the EU remain endangered. Considering the fact that regional and minority languages are a great part of Europe's cultural heritage, what steps should the EU take to ensure their protection and promote cultural diversity?

Submitted by: Anouk Bus (NL), Basmala Abdelwahab (NL), Fayrouz El Hamus (NL), Jahan Omari (NL), Pien Smits van Waesberghe (NL), Shanady Mac-Intosh (NL), Jelle Zegers (Chairperson, NL)

The European Youth Parliament,

A. Appreciating the European Parliament's [research](#) which acknowledges endangered languages,

B. Noting with deep concern that Regional or Minority Languages (RMLs) [account for linguistic and cultural diversity in the European Union](#), a loss of which can cause people to lose their identity,

C. Alarmed by the fact that [intergenerational language transmission of RMLs is declining](#), due to a lessened connection to the RML caused by prejudices connected to speaking them,

D. Pointing out that education on RMLs is underdeveloped for speakers as well as non-speakers of RMLs,

E. Bearing in mind that the overpowering need to speak the official state language within a state can cause people to abandon RMLs,

F. Acknowledging that racism and social inequality are pressing issues that make people from RML communities abandon their language,

G. Observing a [negative attitude towards RMLs](#) - both from people outside of RML communities as well as from the RML communities themselves - that is dependent on their connection to said RML,

1. Strongly recommends [Joint Research Centre (JRC)](#) of the European Commission to prevent the loss of knowledge by establishing research centres dedicated to documentation and archiving of RMLs in areas where RMLs are spoken;

2. Encourages Member States to create a more positive attitude towards RMLs and build an environment where they are learned and respected more by giving RML communities the opportunity to celebrate their culture;

3. Hopes Member States will battle the extinction of RMLs by stressing their importance and encouraging the teaching of and about RMLs to younger generations;

4. Requests Member States to expand their language education and to ensure a good understanding and positive perception of RMLs among younger generations through an elective course on RMLs in the EU, a mandatory course on RMLs in their respective countries which are both supported by correct education materials based on research done by the JRC alike;

5. Urges Member States to encourage and enable their citizens to speak their RMLs instead of the state language by ensuring the representation of RMLs in public spaces and governmental positions;

6. Proposes the European Commission to decrease dependency on the official state language by creating a research group through the JRC that focuses on creating translation engines for RMLs that do not have one.

EMPL

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION BY THE
COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Job (in)security: *The pandemic and the war in Ukraine have seriously hazarded job security, especially when it comes to younger generations. With youth employment in the EU being at an all time low, what steps should the EU take to tackle this situation?*

Submitted by: Célestine van Swieten (NL), Engel Sammels (NL), Jakob Schwartz (NL), Marjolijn Webb (NL), Niels van de Laak (NL), Shadia Yoko (NL), Tamar Reuven (NL), Eleni Anayiotou (Chairperson, CY)

The European Youth Parliament,

A. Alarmed by the fact that a lower quality of life in Member States is directly linked to a higher youth unemployment rate, as seen prominently in Southern-European Member States that were hit hardest by the Covid-19 pandemic,

B. Deeply conscious of differences in quality of education between private and public schools which results in unequal development opportunities,

C. Noting with deep concern that labour migrants and refugees are faced with unfair disadvantages, such as language barriers and lack of qualifications' recognition,

D. Bearing in mind that inadequate wages, also caused by a lack of centralised minimum wage policies, make employment prospects for the youth less attractive, leading to under- and unemployment,

E. Recognising the growing difference between full-time and part-time employees, as well as older and younger employees causing:

    a) disproportionate job offers,
    b) difficulties regarding work experience and increasingly higher qualifications,
    c) wage differences and a lack of social security,

F. Noting with satisfaction the guidelines set by the Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Adequate Income Ensuring Active Inclusion, which encompasses criteria for transparency and non-discrimination,

G. Noting further that as a result of the pandemic and a lack of overall mental health support and resources, mental health and subsequent employment rates amongst young people have deteriorated,

H. Observing that crucial skill shortages lead to the respective specialised shortages in the workforce, that could be filled by currently unemployed youth,

1. Encourages the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)[9] to continue its course improving access to support services, specifically focusing on European youth in areas where unemployment rates surpass 25%;

2. Suggests that the European Commission allocates more funds to the European Social Fund (ESF+) [10], as to support curriculum enhancements and career guidance programmes, shrinking the difference between public and private schools;

3. Supports the implementation of programmes like the European Network of Employment Services (EURES)[11] to help refugees find jobs in the Member States by decreasing language, bureaucratic, legal, and cultural barriers for those participants;

4. Reiterates the importance of the implementation of a minimum wage policy on a national level, guided by the Proposal for a Council Recommendation on Adequate Income Ensuring Active Inclusion and the Reinforced Youth Guarantee;

5. Emphasises the importance of creating a secure position for young people in the workforce through the support of the YEI, by:
   a) creating better conditions for short term job offers by ensuring paid internships,
   b) implementing measures to close the wage gaps based on age,
   c) appointing an independent Young People's Commissioner;

6. Strongly suggests Member States to properly implement ALMA[12] by integrating it into their respective national agendas, thus ensuring active inclusion and transparency of eligibility criteria;

7. Urges the ESF+ to fund companies to incentivise investment in mental health experts for employees to prevent mental issues such as burn-out or anxiety, which lead to unemployment;

8. Seeks that YEI redirects young unemployed people towards traineeships and internships with current skills shortages, promoting entrepreneurship, thereby realising the potential of green and digital transitions.

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[9] The **Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)** is one of the main financial resources that focuses specifically on supporting young Europeans that live in areas where unemployment rates surpass 25%

[10] The **European Social Fund (ESF+)** is the main instrument of the EU that is involved with employment, ensuring that better and fairer job opportunities are made available to EU citizens.

[11] **EURES** is a cooperation network that maintains a database of jobs, thereby promoting employment mobility.

[12] **ALMA** is a cross-border mobility initiative supported under the ESF+, which provides a supervised stay abroad for a period of 2 to 6 months in another EU Member State, along with a cohesive training project, to young NEETs.

ENVI

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION BY THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

__Biohazard:__ Biodiversity is declining at an alarming rate, due to human activities, primarily pollution. With the EU Biodiversity Strategy targeting to protect at least 30% of the EU's marine and terrestrial areas, what measures should the EU take to reach their biodiversity targets by 2030?

Submitted by: Anna Bachem (NL), Sophia Biermann (NL), Isis Gorissen (NL), Nailah Hofstetter (NL), Zuzanna Kluszczyk (PL), Yasumi Meijer (NL), Esther Nijboer (NL), Laura Birbe (Chairperson, ES)

The European Youth Parliament,

A. Deeply concerned by the current decrease in biodiversity with <u>60% of wildlife population being lost over the past 40 years</u>, mainly due to <u>pollution, human activity and overexploitation</u>,

B. Fully alarmed by the drastic change of <u>75% of Earth's land and 40% of marine environments</u> to the extent where parts have become inhabitable,

C. Noting with regret how <u>human activities such as pollution</u> and global warming lead to the degradation and imbalance of ecosystems,

D. Concerned by the devastating consequences for ecosystems caused by the deep-rooted relationship between <u>global warming and natural disasters</u> convey,

E. Aware that the current population growth is directly <u>linked to an increase of unsustainable activities,</u> leading to unbalanced ecosystems losing the ability to restore themselves,

F. Keeping in mind that <u>unsustainable farming practices</u> have negative consequences for biodiversity wellbeing,

G. Realising that <u>over half of global GDP depends on nature and the resources it provides</u>, with three key industries being construction, agriculture, and food and beverage;

1. Suggests the <u>European Environmental Agency</u> (EEA) financially incentifies transparent business culture among large companies by aiding their transition to more environmentally conscious practices,

2. Further calls upon the [EEA](#) to implement carbon-taxing strategies and using that surplus for low-carbon producing businesses;

3. Calls upon the European Commission to further protect terrestrial and marine environments that have remained unaffected by expanding on initiatives such as [the Vertical Ocean Farming](#) and the [SER society](#);

4. Urges the European Commission to increase resources and efforts regarding sustainable management and waste disposal of toxic chemicals;

5. Calls upon the European Commission to reduce the burning of fossil fuels by further implementing renewable and green energy sources, and restricting the use of fuel-based cars in commonly trafficked areas;

6. Calls upon [the EU Knowledge Centre for Biodiversity](#) in cooperation with Member States to sensitise highly carbon-emitting industries about the close-knitted relation between unsustainable human activities and biodiversity degradation by organising events in educational institutions, catalysing attention on tv and social media, and further fundings through the EEA;

7. Calls upon Member States to regulate the use of harmful pesticides and fertilisers by
   a) decreasing the amount farmers are allowed to use,
   b) supporting and subsidising organic and sustainable-based farming practices;

8. Urges the European Commission to further implement the [Green Infrastructure Plan](#) first by contemplating sustainable infrastructure in urban planning; and second, by spreading awareness on the link between biodiversity loss and the economic sector.

ITRE I

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION BY THE
COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY I

The Terminator: The last decades have seen an incredible technological development, which has led to several jobs becoming obsolete in favour of machines. How can the EU welcome these new robotic technologies, while ensuring a job for its citizens?

Submitted by: Julie Terng (NL), Manou Visser (NL), Nout Faber (NL), Riekje in 't Veld (NL), Senno Evers (NL), Youri van der Worp (NL), Yutaro Yamamoto (NL), Hermione Ysabelle Buensuceso (Chairperson, IT)

The European Youth Parliament,

A. Emphasising that millions of jobs risk to be replaced as a result of the automation of 20% of EU labour,

B. Bearing in mind that the public opinion is concerned and against the prospect of automation, which may hinder the automation process, decreasing the industrial sector's competitiveness,

C. Noting the lack of national and international legal framework regulating artificial intelligence and automation,

D. Acknowledging that some Member States are not able to provide financial aid to implement automation,

E. Deeply alarmed by the lack of the specific skill sets and education required by the jobs created by automation,

F. Noting with regret how robots and the process of automation damage workers rights, such as living wages, safety and well-being,

1. Urges the European Commission to control the quality of AI and automation technology by implementing regulations about their maintenance;

2. Encourages the Council of the EU to approve the AI Act by accelerating the legislative process;

3. Suggests the EU industries assist the workers who have been displaced or fired by the effects of automation by utilising the capital from the economic growth gained from automation;

4. Encourages Member States to reskill and educate their citizens to allow them to adapt to changing working environments, by introducing accessible online learning environments like KhanAcademy to schools and universities;

5. Calls upon Member States to improve their database collection on robot density[13] in the EU;

6. Requests Member States to gain public support in favour of automation by raising awareness and educating the public about its positive effects;

7. Urges the European Commission to enhance working conditions, wages and safety by updating and expanding the relevant regulations on workers' rights;

8. Encourages the European Commission to enhance the EU's industrial sector's global competitiveness by further supporting innovation through Horizon Europe.

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[13] The **robot density** is a measurement that tracks the number of robots per 10,000 workers in an industry.

ITRE II

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION BY THE
COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY II

Turn off the lights: *Following the Russo-Ukraine conflict and Russia's relations against the EU actions, the Member States and citizens are faced with possible short-comings of gas supply for the winter. How can the EU both guarantee short-term energy provision, while ensuring a long-term sustainable energy production?*

Submitted by: Bibi de Mooij (NL), Christiaan Kleemans (NL), Crimson Mahoney (NL), David Cvetkovski (NL), Muco de Vries (NL), Safan Dollart (NL), Tianshu Huo (NL), Matilde Scatizzi (Chairperson, IT)

The European Youth Parliament,

A. Aware of the fact that the demand for energy is gradually rising since Russia decided to cut off its energy supply to Europe,

B. Acknowledging that Member States use fossil fuels for 70% of their energy needs, while renewable energies only make up 22% of consumption,

C. Concerned by the fact that fossil fuels are responsible for 90% of the EU's CO_2 emissions,

D. Aware that the fossil fuel energy supply is limited and that, at this rate, is estimated to only last until 2060,

E. Noticing that the European Commission has decided to define natural gas as green[14], thus supporting new gas projects instead of boosting renewable energy,

F. Aware that the actions taken to reach the REPowerEU plan, which would require the usage of at least 45% of renewable energy by 2030, have been insufficient,

1. Calls upon the Member States to implement LNG as a short term solution to compensate for the Russian gas cut;

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[14] **Green energies** are renewable energy and comes from sources that are constantly and naturally renewed, such as wind power and solar energy

2. Urges Member states to increase their renewable energy storage by implementing the [Batstorm project](#)[15], which already works in different Member States such as [the Netherlands and Spain](#);

3. Encourages Member States to implement the use of biomass energy, sourced from [manure and algae](#), as a transitional solution to reduce carbon emissions and dependency on energy import from other countries;

4. Advises the European Commission to redefine natural gas as a non-renewable energy source;

5. Commends the use of nuclear energy by Member States as a transitional source of power for Europe to reach its goal of carbon neutrality;

6. Encourages Member States to raise awareness on small-scale sustainability and energy conservation through educational programs and media campaigns with the support of NGOs.

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[15] **Batstorm project** identifies and supports research and development needs in the area of battery-based energy storage

JURI

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION BY THE COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AFFAIRS

Checks and balances*: Due to different governmental reforms, the Polish judiciary's independence has been compromised. Bearing in mind that an effective judiciary is fundamental for the EU's functioning, how can the latter act in order to restore the separation of powers in Poland?*

Submitted by: Feline Ligteringen (NL), Fenne Huizer (NL), Julia Cieślikowska (PL), Lyan Fruneaux (NL), Mia Kuzmanovska (NL), Raphaella May (NL), Sarah Siegenbeek van Heulekom (NL), Tuur van Berge Henegouwen (NL), Julia Grajewska (Chairperson, PL)

The European Youth Parliament,

A. Concerned about the data in the 2022 EU Justice Scoreboard, according to which only 24% of the general population in Poland perceives the level of independence of courts and judges to be fairly or very good,

B. Noting that despite several measures being taken by the EU to tackle the judiciary crisis in Poland, it is still not fully complying with the EU's requests and recommendations,

C. Aware that Polish judges who oppose the changes in the judicial administration are being targeted by the government and can face repressions,

D. Cognisant that procedures described in Article 7 of the Treaty of the EU (TEU)[16] require unanimous voting from other Member States, which has been proved to be difficult to reach,

E. Deeply alarmed that Poland's Constitutional Tribunal issued a ruling that directly challenges the primacy of EU law,[17]

F. Concerned that the offices of Minister of Justice and Prosecutor General in Poland are occupied by the same person, leading to the erosion of the rule of law protection,

G. Deeply alarmed by Poland's recent decision to lower the retirement age of judges to 60 years for women and 65 years for men, undermining the EU's core value of equality between men and women,

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[16] **Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union** is a procedure to suspend certain rights from a Member State.
[17] The principle of the **primacy of EU law** is based on the idea that where a conflict arises between an aspect of EU law and an aspect of law in an EU country (national law), EU law will prevail.

1. Calls upon the European Commission to set a comprehensive and concise action plan for the Polish government to meet milestones by which they will restore the independence of their judicial branch;

2. Strongly urges the European Council to only approve Polish government's €35.4 billion Recovery and Resilience Facility plan once it has fully complied with all [recommendations](#) in the field of the rule of law;

3. Proposes the European Council initiates the procedure to amend Article 7.2 of the TEU and change the unanimity-based procedure to a 90% vote threshold;

4. Recommends Member States to create media campaigns, similar to the [I Vote Europe campaign](#), encouraging their citizens to take part in elections;

5. Strongly urges the Polish government to:
   a) separate the offices of Minister of Justice and Prosecutor General,
   b) make the judicial system independent from the executive and legislative branches,
   c) set an equal retirement age of judges.