



Draft Programme

European Office of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
COMECE – Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the EU

Catholic Youth Convention – “Sharing our dreams on the Future of Europe”

Tuesday, 31 May 2022
17.15 – 18.45 CET
Online Event via Zoom

The end of the Conference on the Future of Europe and the initiative of making 2022 ‘European Year of Youth’ constitute the ideal framework to strengthen dialogue with all European citizens and especially with young Europeans, to boost youth participation in discussions around politics, economy, environment, education and issues of importance for young generations.

Heavily affected by the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, young people showed impressive adaptability to the changes the health crisis brought with itself – although the consequences of isolation, lack of social contacts and the impossibility to make valuable experiences are still a current reality for many of them. The health crisis pointed to the need of ensuring valuable exchange between younger and older generations, so that all can come together and better understand each person’s and generation’s needs. The challenges and opportunities of the ecological transition, for instance, make it necessary to enter in dialogue with all citizens on matters of intergenerational justice and solidarity.

Besides the environmental challenge, however, a dialogue proves to be necessary to understand the origins of the European project, rediscovering the values underpinning European integration and how they can be interpreted in light of present challenges. Through the openness and digital proximity of today’s world, young people strive to engage in meaningful dialogue with peers beyond the EU borders. Although digitalisation enabled a certain easiness of exchange and the apparent cancellation of geographical barriers, human encounter is what young people seek, both with their peers living within the EU and those seeing the EU from behind the Schengen borders.

The complexity of the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects are better understood when dialogue and conversations actively take place. How do young Christians envision the European project, its values, and how can they contribute to it? How can they boost processes of meaningful dialogue with people outside of Europe and foster reconciliation in view of the European future of the region of South-East Europe? What are their recommendations for the future of Europe and their ideas for a more inclusive, sustainable and co-created European project? **The Catholic Youth Convention: Sharing our dreams on the Future of Europe** on **Tuesday, 31 May 2022, 17.15 – 18.45 CET**, will be an opportunity for young people to discuss these and other questions with EU officials and peers from the EU and beyond – proposing ideas for the challenges of our time and their vision and wishes for the future of our continent.



Draft Agenda Tuesday, 31 May 2022

- 17.15** **Welcoming Remarks**
Fr. Manuel Barrios Prieto
COMECE General Secretary
- 17.25** **Youth and South-East Europe**
- Impuls**
Olivér Várhelyi
Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, European Commission
- Questions from the participants and discussion**
- 17.55** **Impuls**
Elena Lazarou (tbc)
Head of External Policies Unit, EPRS
- Questions from the participants and discussion**
- Moderation: Alix de Wasseige**
Policy Adviser for Economic and Social Affairs, COMECE
- 18.45** **End of event**

Additional Information

Session Youth and South-East Europe

Guiding questions: How to foster reconciliation in the region through youth dialogue and exchange? The idea is to invite some young Catholics from the Albanian Bishops' Conference or Bishops' Conference of Saints Cyril and Methodius to talk about their experience, as well as to invite young Christians from the Western Balkans to enter in dialogue with EU officials.