



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”

Wednesday, 15 June 2022
13.45 – 15.00 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 **Wednesday, 15 June 2022, 13.45 – 15.00 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 Wednesday, 15 June 2022

13.45

Welcoming Remarks

Fr. Manuel Barrios Prieto

COMECE General Secretary

Welcoming Remarks

Dr. Hardy Ostry

Director European Office of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

Youth and South-East Europe

14.00

Impuls

Olivér Várhelyi

Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement
Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and
Enlargement Negotiations, European Commission

Questions from the participants and discussion

14.30

Impuls

Branislav Staniček

Policy Analyst, European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS)

Questions from the participants and discussion

Moderation: Alix de Wasseige

Policy Adviser for Economic and Social Affairs, COMECE

15.00

End of event

Additional Information

Guiding questions:

How to foster reconciliation in the region through youth dialogue and exchange? How can a new narrative be given shape on the Western Balkan region and which part can young people play in it? How can young people from current EU Member States contribute to give shape to a new, positive narrative on the region? Which policies has the EU put in place to stimulate social and political empowerment within the candidate countries?