



BONN PROCESS EXCHANGE FORUM ON NATIONAL PROCESSES

10-12 May 2023 in Königswinter, Germany



EVENT REPORT

BONN PROCESS EXCHANGE FORUM ON NATIONAL PROCESSES 2023

The second **Bonn Process Exchange Forum on National Processes** took place from 10 to 12 May 2023 in Königswinter near Bonn. It was organised by JUGEND für Europa (JfE), the National Agency for the EU youth programmes Erasmus+ Youth, European Solidarity Corps, and Erasmus+ Sport in Germany. The event brought together 50 participants from 22 countries representing 24 national processes:

- Albania
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Belgium (French-speaking community)
- Belgium (Flemish-speaking community)
- Belgium (German-speaking community)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Estonia
- Germany
- Greece
- Ireland
- Italy
- Netherlands
- North Macedonia
- Portugal
- Serbia
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Sweden
- Turkey
- Ukraine

The participants were key stakeholders, who are responsible for implementing the Bonn Process in their country: These may be contact persons responsible for supporting or managing the national process within the context of the Bonn Process in their country, representatives of the Ministry/National Authority for youth/youth work, representatives of the National Agencies for the EU youth programmes as well as implementation partners of the national contact points with a key role in implementing the national process.

The second Bonn Process Exchange Forum was a continuation of the process initiated in 2022. It aimed to support long-term cooperation in this group and promote the exchange of examples from practice and the thematic priorities of the different national processes. Other goals were to discuss challenges and possible support measures as well as develop ideas for future cross-border cooperation and follow-up steps for the national processes.

In addition to short presentations, talks on inspirational practices and a presentation of survey results on the state of play of the national processes, the programme included a variety of elements and methods based on the principle of participation and co-creation. Among other things, Open Space and World Café sessions, discussions, and joint planning sessions were carried out.

PROGRAMME

Time	10 May 2023	11 May 2023	12 May 2023	
9:00	Arrival	Welcome and opening	Exploring implementation steps	
		Implementation of the European Youth Work Agenda and the Bonn Process State of play at European level	Exploring ways to cooperate	
10:30		Coffee break	Coffee break	
11:00		Implementation of the European Youth Work Agenda and the Bonn Process State of play at national level	Follow-up	
		Inspirational practices	Evaluation and conclusion	
12:30		Lunch	Lunch	
14:00		Overcoming challenges	End of event	
15:30		Coffee break (optional)	Coffee break	
16:00		Tour of the area and icebreaker session (optional)	Overcoming challenges	
18:00		Welcome programme with dinner	Dinner and evening out	
19:30	Networking evening	Evening out		

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES ON EACH DAY

DAY 1

The participants were welcomed to the event by:

- **Manfred von Hebel**, Deputy Head of JUGEND für Europa
- **Elke Führer** and **Alicia Holzschuh**, European Service Centre for the Bonn Process at JUGEND für Europa

The welcome speeches were followed by a networking evening prepared by the two facilitators Ekaterina Sherer and Simona Mursec. After a short icebreaker exercise, an art space with different installations was introduced. Participants explored the following interactive exhibitions and co-created spaces:

- **“Mysterious Discoveries – Meaning of your name”**: The purpose of this part was to help participants remember names and share interesting stories and facts about themselves.
- **“Words that create meanings – Your favourite quote about Youth Work”**: This installation was co-created by participants, who submitted their favourite quotes about youth work prior to the event, adding more during the networking evening (see [Annex 1](#)).
- **“Contemporary Youth Work Achievements – Gallery of good practices”**: Participants had the opportunity to submit their examples from practice before the Forum, but blank templates were also available for participants to fill in during the event (see [Annex 2](#)).
- **“Look into the future”**: In this space, participants shared their expectations of the event.



Participants get inspired by the practical examples in the gallery with “Contemporary Youth Work Achievements”.

DAY 2

Morning sessions: Gaining an overview of the progress of implementing the European Youth Work Agenda across Europe

The second day started with an overview of the state of play of implementing the Bonn Process at European level from the perspective of European institutional representatives:

- **Jacob Kornbeck**, European Commission
- **László Milutinovits**, Partnership between the European Union and the Council of Europe in the field of youth
- **Barbara Schmidt dos Santos**, Head of Unit for European Youth Policy and Youth Work, JUGEND für Europa
- **Frederike Hofmann-van de Poll**, Researcher (see [Annex 3](#))

All four guests considered two key questions:

- Which have been your main milestones for youth work development and the European Youth Work Convention (EYWC) since 2020?
- Which will be your future milestones (2023–2025)?

Based on the speeches, the facilitators visualised the most important European milestones for youth work development and the European Youth Work Agenda (EYWA) in a wall picture (see Page 7 and [Annex 4](#)). The picture illustrates the milestones in a timeline from the 3rd European Youth Work Convention in 2020 to the expected fourth convention in 2025. It uses the metaphor of the youth work community of practice in its joint quest to develop youth work of travelling together on a sailing boat. They are heading towards a yet-to-be-co-created future guided by lighthouses that symbolise inspirational practices from different countries.

Thereafter participants reflected on how they and their national-level activities connect to the European level. Participants first got together in their country groups to map out how they are connected to the European level and to visualise this connection on the wall. They created a strong and intertwined image depicting the community's tailwind being provided by the EYWA.

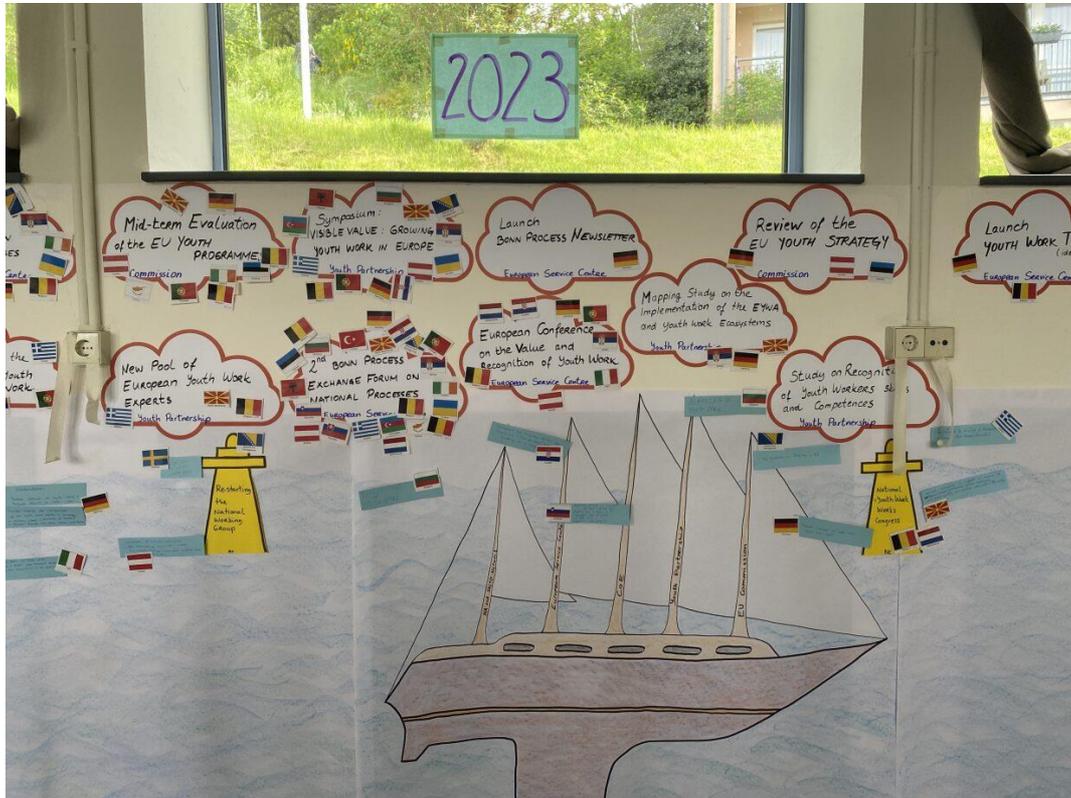
The morning session continued with a presentation of the state of play of national processes based on a survey conducted by the European Service Centre for the Bonn Process prior to the event. The analysis by researcher **Dr Frederike Hofmann-van de Poll** showed that implementation of the EYWA in the Member States has steadily increased over the years, reaching 39 countries with a managed national process in the context of the Bonn Process. Among other things, it was highlighted, that implementation priorities in many countries are geared towards quality, promotion and recognition, and policy frameworks.

While exploring the challenges, it was pointed out that the implementation of the Bonn Process, and thus the further development of youth work, are still hindered by lack of political interest in youth work, of financial and human resources, of cooperation between actors and sectors, and of societal and political recognition of youth work. Issues, such as the need for mutual learning and cooperation, as well as uncertainty about how to communicate about the EYWA were also discussed. The wealth of information is contained in the presentation (see [Annex 5](#)) given during the programme, and the full [report](#) can be found on the Bonn Process website.

The morning programme finished with a session of sharing practice examples based on the World Café methodology. Seven participants were invited to share an inspirational practice from their national Bonn Process implementation.

- **Slovenia: Tina Kosi**
TOPIC: Strategic plan 2022–2027/2032 in Slovenia and action plan for 2023
- **Belgium: Rilke Mahieu and Lisa Franken**
TOPIC: 2nd National Youth Work Works Congress in Belgium-Flanders
- **Serbia: Jelena Stojanović**
TOPIC: How political support can push the practice further: policy developments for the establishment of the national youth strategy 2022–2030 in Serbia and its impact on practice
- **Portugal: Carlos Paz and António Hilário de Matos**
TOPIC: The professional profile of the youth worker and recognition of the youth worker's competencies
- **North Macedonia: Dragan Atanasov**
TOPIC: Establishing the first Master's programme in the field of youth work in North Macedonia
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina: Jasmina Banjalučkić**
TOPIC: Developing youth strategies according to evidence-based principles, cooperation and dialogue between youth and decision-makers
- **Austria: Aleksandra Vedernjak**
TOPIC: Re-starting a national working group

These seven practice examples were added to the mapping exercise, using the metaphor of the lighthouses. They complemented the visualisation of the process by presenting further milestones and the context in which these are being implemented.



The youth work community of practice on the move.

Elements of the wall picture:

- Sailing boat: Metaphor for the youth work community of practice on the move
- Clouds in the sky: European milestones in youth work development and EYWA
- Lighthouses: Seven examples of inspirational practices at national level
- National flags: Symbols of the connection and involvement of participants or countries

Afternoon sessions: Sharing practices and overcoming challenges

The afternoon started with participants sharing plans for upcoming national processes in mixed groups, each represented by three countries. They asked each other questions and shared inspirational thoughts. This was just the beginning of a more in-depth analysis of existing practices, processes, challenges, and solutions. To accomplish this, the main part of the afternoon was dedicated to an open space session, where discussions focused on 'Overcoming Challenges and Making the Unclear Clear'.

The participants worked on ten topics during the open space session:

1. Measuring achievements of the Bonn Process
2. How do I know I am doing a good job when it comes to implementing the Bonn Process and EYWA?
3. How to strengthen communication and outreach regarding the Bonn Process?
4. How to communicate the Bonn Process to youth workers?
5. Establishing a working group in Bosnia and Herzegovina
6. Are laws necessary for youth work?
7. Official standards
8. Good practices
9. How to start a national process

The main outcomes of the sessions were shared in a plenary session by representatives from each group (see [Annex 6](#)).

Summary of the results:

- The main findings of the first two sessions were that developing quality standards and means to measure the progress of the Bonn Process would help establish a common understanding of the purpose and potential of the Bonn Process, including an understanding of the concrete role of the national contact points. Action plans and labelling might prove beneficial at national level.
- Sessions three and four tackled the challenge of communication and concluded that, to convince national stakeholders that the Bonn Process can bring an added value to their youth work, it is necessary to switch the narrative. The focus should not be on the question of how to implement a good Bonn Process but on how to strengthen and develop youth work.

Different communication approaches starting from the needs and national realities, should be exchanged for mutual inspiration.

- The new European digital youth work platform (under development by the European Commission) should integrate communication about the Bonn Process.
- A communication of all details of the Bonn Process to youth workers is regarded as being not necessary, but information about general recognition of youth work and developments that concern the concrete working conditions of youth workers is.
- Session five concluded that the initiative can be taken by NGOs. Support by European institutions is welcome.
- In sessions six to eight the benefits of national legal frameworks for youth work were discussed, such as the added value of definitions of youth work, improved working conditions for youth workers as well as financial resources and recognition for youth work.
- The status of youth work, including the legal framework and official standards for the national cases of the Netherlands and Estonia, was shared, and the potential for similar developments in other countries was discussed.
- In session ten experiences in setting up fruitful national processes were shared. Potential important stakeholders were identified. It was considered promising to start from gathering knowledge about existing measures of youth work development. Following on from this knowledge mapping, a common direction, strategy, and action planning should be built up. For the implementation, a productive working group should be formed. A special focus should be given to the communication and the opportunities of available European funding.

The second day ended with a small reflection activity.

DAY 3

On the final day, the group explored cooperation opportunities and joint thematic engagement. Participants had the chance to network with other people interested in organising initiatives around the same topical areas and explore how they could cooperate further and organise concrete activities and support.

Inspiration for this session came from three presentations by participants who showed how they are already engaged in cross-border cooperation or are integrating a European dimension in their activities:

- **Tina Kosi (Slovenia) and Elke Führer (Germany):** German-Slovenian study visit 2024
- **Olga Kyriakidou (Greece):** European network of youth workers associations
- **Sandra Miladin (Croatia):** European conference on the value and recognition of youth work from 4 to 7 December 2023 in Croatia

Participants were then invited to join thematic corners, where they focused on one of the eight thematic priorities and discussed these according to a set of key questions:

- What are your national priorities and major objectives within the selected thematic priority?
- How could international/bilateral cooperation OR engaging with the European level support your local/national work and help overcome your challenges?
- What can you offer others, what are your capacities, where do you see opportunities?

Each group prepared papers describing their commitments, which they presented as part of the event follow-up (see [Annex 7](#)). Participants used this space to further develop their own implementation plans as well as develop transnational cooperation ideas. For example, they planned study visits, included new countries in the European Network of National Youth Workers Associations, or considered joint measures on thematic priorities, such as knowledge-building on the impact of youth work or exchanges on quality assurance approaches, to name just a few.

At the end of the event, each country worked on its follow-up actions. To do so, all the national groups were asked to revise their objectives for the year, analyse what happened during the Exchange Forum, and document the actions they intend to take based on this analysis. These national follow-up plans were written on small paper boats, which were presented by each country and then placed on the wall picture (see [Annex 8](#)). This complemented the image of the community of practice on the move, illustrating the dynamics of a committed and vibrant community.

EVALUATION RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The evaluation consisted of two elements, a Mentimeter poll and a presentation of objects that participants had brought with them from home and which they associated with the Bonn Process.

In the evaluation, the following questions were asked:

- What is your general feeling about the Exchange Forum?
- How did you find the preparation process, logistics, and the location of the event?
- How did you find the programme elements, methodology, support from the organisers and the facilitators team during the Exchange Forum?
- How confident are you that you will be able to fulfil the follow-up steps you planned?
- Where should the next Exchange Forum take place?
- What are your wishes for future Exchange Forums?
- What are your wishes for future cooperation?

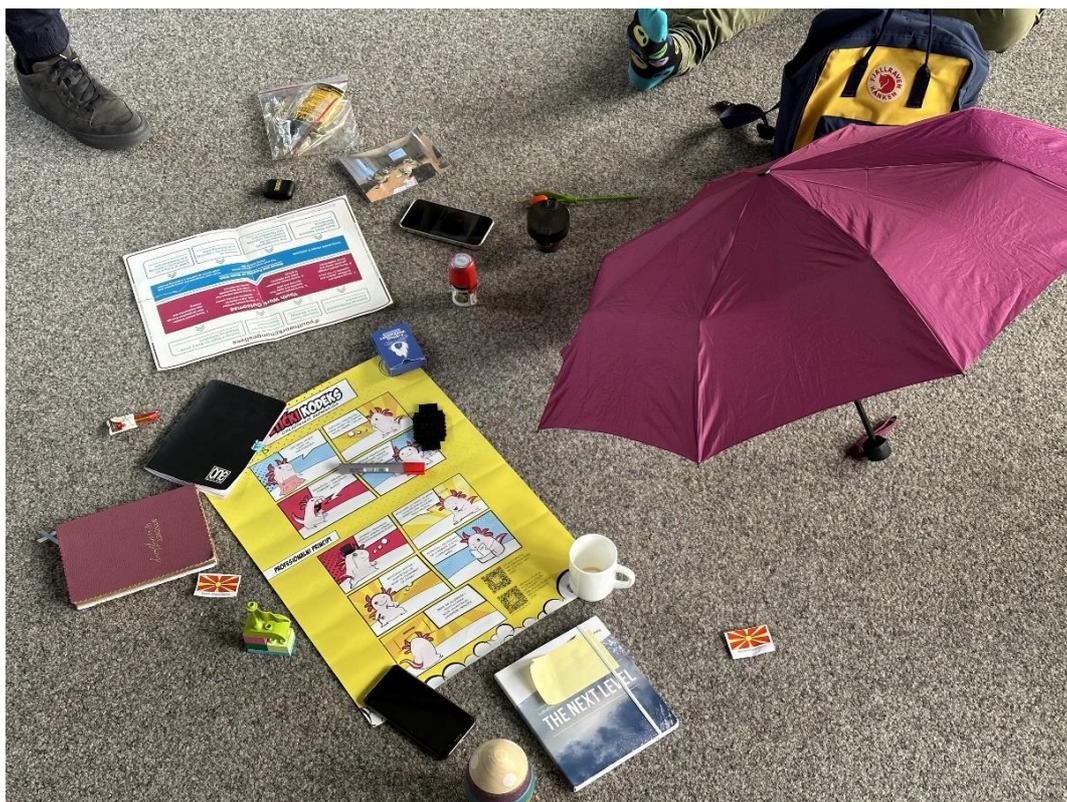
In general, there was a very positive attitude towards the Exchange Forum: 27 participants showed enthusiasm, six people rated the event as good, and only one person gave a low response. In terms of preparation, logistics, and venue, the overall rating was seven out of ten. A score of eight out of ten was given to the programme elements and methodology. The support of the organisers received the highest rating, at nine out of ten. Regarding opinions about where the next Exchange Forum should take place, 14 people suggested another European country, twelve participants were unsure, four people suggested Bonn, and three people proposed hosting the next event themselves.

Participants would like to see more opportunities for discussions and open space sessions at future Exchange Forums alongside more time to share examples from practice and involving inactive countries. They suggested making the Exchange Forum longer, preparing newcomers in advance, exchanging concrete actions and documents, making future cooperation more feasible, and having larger delegations with more representatives from public institutions. Future cooperation should include exchanges and study visits between countries, periodic online meetings, wider involvement of youth workers and youth work organisations, and more projects and actions.

For the last activity of the evaluation, participants were invited to show an object from home, which, from their perspective, symbolises the Bonn Process, and share its meaning in one word. For example, an umbrella was brought as a symbol of the common roof for youth work through the European Youth Work Agenda. A mobile



phone was brought, as it symbolises how much communication is needed in the Bonn Process to bring different actors from different levels together to push youth work further. Some participants also brought materials, which were developed in the context of their national processes.



The participants' collection: The Bonn Process in one object.

The second Bonn Process Exchange Forum on National Processes ended on 12 May 2023, but the joint endeavours in different national contexts continue.

BONN PROCESS EXCHANGE FORUM ON NATIONAL PROCESSES

ANNEXES

Annex 1:

Quotes on Youth Work

https://www.bonn-process.net/downloads/media/80/1b544c94dba36b28fbe65d8a68db055d/Annex1_Quotes-on-Youth-Work.pdf

Annex 2:

Good Practices

https://www.bonn-process.net/downloads/media/81/e1832f89d18be0d28ef7d25dddf8a8b8/Annex2_Good-Practices.pdf

Annex 3:

Presentation review Council of Europe recommendation on youth work

https://www.bonn-process.net/downloads/media/82/8412a5cb67930c27f95a566601096ec4/Annex3_Presentation-Recommendation-on-Youth-Work.pdf

Annex 4:

Visualisation of European milestones

https://www.bonn-process.net/downloads/media/83/052b5a80824dc6f0ee2d56a52316f6dc/Annex4_Visualisation-European-Milestones.pdf

Annex 5:

Presentation of the state of play of national processes

https://www.bonn-process.net/downloads/media/84/5c2f77d50fd5d0cdf912053db3433c6/Annex5_Presentation-state-of-play-national-processes.pdf

Annex 6:

Outcomes of the open space sessions

https://www.bonn-process.net/downloads/media/85/048e9578d6e20c3ae065b97904fef693/Annex6_Outcomes-Open-Space-Sessions.pdf

Annex 7:

Commitments to the priority areas of the Bonn Process

https://www.bonn-process.net/downloads/media/86/1845b065eb53eba7fb3b5ba5ce01c1f5/Annex7_Commitments+to+the+priority+areas+of+the+Bonn+Process.pdf

Annex 8:

National follow-up plans

https://www.bonn-process.net/downloads/media/87/9a38286048f01d717fa7be8f77fb9285/Annex8_National-follow-up-plans.pdf

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