

EUROPEAN YOUTH *CAPITAL*

TEN YEARS OF BOOSTING VIBRANT YOUTHFUL CITIES

10 YEARS

OF THE EUROPEAN YOUTH CAPITAL TITLE!

MORE THAN 10,000 VOLUNTEERS

ENGAGED IN VARIOUS ACTIVITIES!

8,000 + EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

ORGANISED IN THE CAPITALS!

OVER 50,000,000 EUR INVESTED

IN YOUTH DURING THE EYC YEARS



EUROPEAN YOUTH CAPITAL: TEN YEARS OF BOOSTING VIBRANT YOUTHFUL CITIES

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ABOUT THE EUROPEAN YOUTH FORUM

The European Youth Forum (YFJ) is an independent, democratic, youth-led platform, representing more than 100 National Youth Councils and International Youth Organisations from across Europe and is the voice of tens of millions of young people towards the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations.

It works to empower young people to participate actively in society to improve their own lives, by representing and advocating their needs and interests and those of their organisations.

The European Youth Forum has initiated the European Youth Capital and awards the title since 2009.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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¹ The Pool of European Youth Researchers is an initiative of both the Council of Europe and the European Commission consisting of researchers and experts from across Europe who possess a wide range of expertise in different policy areas connected to youth. It represents a contribution to evidence-based policy-making in the field of youth.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

6 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	19 CHAPTER 5 CHAMPIONING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
9 CHAPTER 1 A DECADE OF EUROPEAN YOUTH CAPITALS	20 CHAPTER 6 INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES
9 Establishing the European Youth Capital title	Increased funding opportunities 20
9 The selection process	Increased number of youth-oriented activities 21
10 Ten years of the European Youth Capital: evaluation report	
11 CHAPTER 2 ENCOURAGING YOUTH PARTICIPATION	23 CHAPTER 7 BOOSTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY
11 Co-decision-making and participation structures	
12 Young people as policy-makers: participatory policy development	25 CHAPTER 8 DEVELOPING SPACES FOR YOUTH
13 Innovation in decision-making: participatory budgeting for youth	25 CHAPTER 9 OUTSIDE OF THE CITY WALLS
13 Active citizenship: promoting youth volunteering	Creating stronger links across the country 25
	Building a European-wide network 26
15 CHAPTER 3 EMPOWERING YOUTH AND STRENGTHENING YOUTH ORGANISATIONS	26 CHAPTER 10 THE NEXT TEN YEARS OF THE EUROPEAN YOUTH CAPITAL TITLE
15 Young people developing their skills and knowledge	European Youth Capital: how to apply? 27
16 Strengthening youth organisations <i>Increased cooperation between youth organisations</i>	
17 <i>Improving youth organisations' capacity to apply for funding</i>	28 REFERENCES
18 CHAPTER 4 FOSTERING EUROPEAN IDENTITY	Primary sources 28
	List of interviews and focus groups participants per location
	Secondary sources 31
	34 APPENDIX

List of acronyms

CoE	Council of Europe
EU	European Union
EYC	European Youth Capital
LAP	Local Action Plan
UN	United Nations
YFJ	European Youth Forum

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2009

ROTTERDAM
NETHERLANDS

The “European Youth Capital” (EYC) is a title awarded by the European Youth Forum (YFJ) to a European municipality for a period of one year. It is designed to empower young people, boost youth participation and strengthen European identity.

2010

TORINO
ITALY

This report on the impact of the European Youth Capital title on the cities and their young people builds upon the desk review of the existing relevant documents, dedicated online survey, 39 interviews and 8 focus groups with 49 participants. It offers testimonies of people that have been able to witness their cities changing thanks to the title and provides concrete examples of benefits that it has brought to them.

2011

ANTWERP
BELGIUM

2012

BRAGA
PORTUGAL

2013

MARIBOR
SLOVENIA

2014

THESSALONIKI
GREECE

2015

CLUJ-NAPOCA
ROMANIA

2016

GANJA
AZERBAIJAN

2017

VARNA
BULGARIA

2018

CASCAIS
PORTUGAL

2019

NOVI SAD
SERBIA

2020

AMIENS
FRANCE

WHAT IMPACT FOR THE EUROPEAN YOUTH CAPITAL TITLE?

Cities for Youth

In the past decade, the European Youth Capital title has contributed to improving the image of cities as youth-friendly places that can effectively support and encourage young people to be active citizens.

Encouraging Youth Participation

The European Youth Capital title has contributed to increasing young people’s engagement in decision-making processes through further improved or newly developed **co-decision-making and participation structures**, thus, better connecting young people with local authorities. The title has also provided an incentive for young people to actively take part in their local communities: over the last decade, more than **10,000 young people have volunteered** in various projects and activities in the Capitals.

Empowering Young People

The EYC title has served as an important learning opportunity for young people, linking them with their local administration, informing them about policy-making processes, the European dimension of the title and youth-oriented policies in Europe. Through participating in policy development processes, young people have been **developing skills and acquiring knowledge necessary to be active citizens**.

Finally, thanks to their experience in the EYC, **many young people developed skills that proved to be useful in their professional careers** (administrative, project management, financial management, negotiation and intercultural skills).

Strengthening Youth Organisations

Youth organisations in the European Youth Capitals have also been strengthened during the Capital year. They have become **better connected**, have started to cooperate more, have **reached out to and engaged with more young people and have increased their capacity** through trainings and first-hand experience in implementing the title.

Fostering European Identity

The title has also had a positive impact on fostering European values in the Capitals, such as solidarity, tolerance, and democracy. It has **connected young people across Europe**: a number of initiatives implemented during the Capital years gave an opportunity for young people from the Capitals to visit other European countries and see the realities of their peers; likewise festive activities have **attracted youth from Europe to come and visit the Capitals**. It contributed thus to experience diversity and foster European identity.

Championing Diversity and Inclusion

In many cases, the title became a catalyst towards **building more inclusive societies**: being an initiative where every young person has a role to play, spreading European Youth Capital initiatives to the most remote areas of the city, where traditionally sensitive issues related to gender, sexuality, ethnicity, socioeconomic differences etc. are being tackled through arts and discussions, or by simply bringing young people together behind the title.

Increasing Opportunities

In many Capitals, available opportunities for youth (including financial ones) have doubled after the EYC year. **Investment in youth has accounted for more than 50,000,000 EUR in only ten years since the title was established in 2007**: youth organisations and young people have benefited from increased municipal and national funding, cooperation with the private sector and European funding mechanisms. In addition to that, since 2009, **more than 8,000 events and activities have taken place across the European Youth Capitals!**

Boosting the Local Economy

The title of European Youth Capital title has also boosted the local economy in the municipalities awarded the title, **bringing returns in tourism and the retail industry, putting the cities on the map for (young) tourists from other European countries, and attracting various national and European level events to the Capitals**.

Developing Spaces for Youth

The title has provided young people with a possibility to clearly say to local authorities what kind of spaces are needed for youth in their city. Hence, almost in all Capitals, different infrastructural projects have emerged: from **renovating or building new youth centres to creating outdoor spaces** that serve not only youth but the rest of society as well, and remaining long after the city hosted the title.

Outside of the City Walls

The title has fostered **stronger links between the Capitals and national governments** bringing a number of national-level events to the Capitals; in some cases the title had a very prominent impact at the national level – the development of National Youth Capitals. At the European level, the title has provided an opportunity for the European Youth Capitals to cooperate more and exchange good practices in the form of a network, and **reach out to other municipalities across Europe**, thus multiplying the effect of the title.

The European Youth Capital title brings change to cities and their young people; and already by applying for the title, cities enter a league of different, courageous local and regional authorities that are ready to experience how the title:

- Opens up new opportunities
- Brings positive change
- Encourages active participation
- Promotes volunteering
- Fosters European identity
- Champions diversity and inclusion
- Strengthens youth organisations
- Boosts investment in youth
- Amplifies voice in Europe
- Transforms the city into an international meeting point
- Connects young people

The European Youth Forum now looks towards the next ten years of the European Youth Capital title:

future European Youth Capitals will continue to be pioneers of change, serving as examples of visionary social transformation to the rest of Europe and beyond.

CHAPTER 1: A DECADE OF EUROPEAN YOUTH CAPITALS

The European Youth Capital (EYC) is a title awarded by the European Youth Forum (YFJ) designed to empower young people, boost youth participation and strengthen European identity.

Each year, a new European city is given the chance to showcase its innovative ideas, projects and activities that aim to raise up young voices and bring a new youth perspective to all aspects of city life.

From public transport and infrastructure, to cultural and educational programmes and democratic policy-making, the European Youth Capital title invites cities across the continent to rethink how they engage with and include young people.

It is crucial that young people have equal opportunity to shape the social, economic and political life of where they live. The European Youth Capital initiative aims to support both young people and the city to open up these possibilities and lead the way for other European municipalities to follow.

Establishing the European Youth Capital title

The title of European Youth Capital was first held by Rotterdam in 2009, which pioneered the initiative, deciding to make an important investment in young people. The process started with the Declaration of Rotterdam in 2004 and the Resolution on an annual European Youth Capital adopted by the European Youth Forum, in 2007. Youth leaders from across Europe called for such a title in order to strengthen attention to European youth policy at the local level, to increase youth participation and to strengthen European identity. The title is open to any Local Authority from Member States of the Council of Europe, which is a party to the European Cultural Convention². The European Youth Forum, as initiator of the title and representative of youth organisations in Europe, gives legitimacy to the title. It manages the European Youth Capital selection process, supports cities through the preparation and implementation phases, and promotes cooperation among the Capitals.

The selection process

Europe is the only continent holding such a title, and the selection process has improved over the years, which reflects the increasing ambition of the European Youth Forum and youth organisations, resulting in increased number of and in improved quality of applications. As Jury members note, the selection process has become more open and transparent; which makes the cities, the European Youth Forum and the Jury more accountable in terms of the selection and implementation of the proposed programme.

“I noticed that the process became more open in terms of applications. The programmes of the cities are now available on social media during the selection process, and everyone can see what each city is proposing to do. This already gives visibility to the programme and the cities, and makes the cities credible in their work with young people”

Member of the Jury 2016-2018

Since the launch of the initiative, the title has gained more prominence, and the number of applications peaked from 6 for the EYC 2011 to 20 for the EYC 2018 with total of 123 different cities from all across Europe that applied for the title throughout the years. Some of the Capitals applied several times before being awarded the title.

² Council of Europe, European Cultural Convention, 1954. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/018>

The commitment towards the application reflects the added-value of the process itself and how valuable it is for the municipality and its young people, regardless of the award. It is through this process that: youth participation in decision-making has increased; stronger links have been created between various stakeholders in the municipality and even further; young people have acquired knowledge and skills necessary to be active citizens; and societies have ultimately become more open and inclusive.

"It is not always the win that is the most important, it is the process of getting there. For many of the European Youth Capitals, it is a long process, which can last for many years. Even if they never get an award, they are still making valuable progress, because they put the focus on young people. If the city is a candidate, that means that they are already working on improving the situation of youth, and with every application they get a little bit better and engage youth more in society and democratic processes. Thus, it is the candidature itself and the work on application that is the most valuable part of the process"

Member of the Jury 2015-2017.

Ten years of the European Youth Capital: evaluation report

The European Youth Capital title has been promoting active youth engagement and creation of links between the European and local levels for ten years, and this evaluation report aims to reflect on the impact of the title on the cities and their young people. Moreover, it also serves as a reflection point for the future of the title.

This report is also meant to further raise awareness about the title among the European institutions and inspire other local authorities to apply for the European Youth Capital title.

Methodology

This report has been prepared between March and July 2018. Firstly, a desk review was conducted of relevant documents from the European Youth Forum and the municipalities who held the title of EYC over the last ten years, including background information on the title, application forms of the Capitals, meeting notes, monitoring reports and final reports from the Capitals.

The primary data for the report was collected through **surveys** (from Bulgaria, Greece and Azerbaijan), mostly from youth organisations, youth participants and members of the EYC organising teams; **39 interviews with key stakeholders in 10 Capitals**, including municipal officials, coordinating bodies, four Jury members, National Youth Councils, youth organisations and young people themselves; and **8 focus group discussions in 6 Capitals with 49 participants**, including the members of the EYC organising teams, youth organisations and other young people.

Eleven cities are included in this report, while field research has been undertaken in Cascais, Braga, Novi Sad, Maribor, Cluj-Napoca, Varna and Thessaloniki. Information from Torino, Rotterdam, Antwerp and Ganja and the members of the Jury has been collected via Skype/telephone conversations and interviews at the Network of European Youth Capitals meeting. The information gathered from each city differs due to data availability and is in line with their priorities of the Capital year.

More information on the methodology can be found in the Appendix.

CHAPTER 2: ENCOURAGING YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Co-decision-making and participation structures

In most of the Capitals, young people have been meaningfully involved in the European Youth Capital process from the very beginning – the application phase.

In Thessaloniki (2014), regular meetings and workshops were organised with more than 200 young people, representatives of youth organisations and the mayor to discuss priorities and propose activities to be included in the application form for the title.

“It was amazing, working for many days and nights, young people spent their time in meetings, separated in small groups by topics or thematic areas, and they really believed in the process”

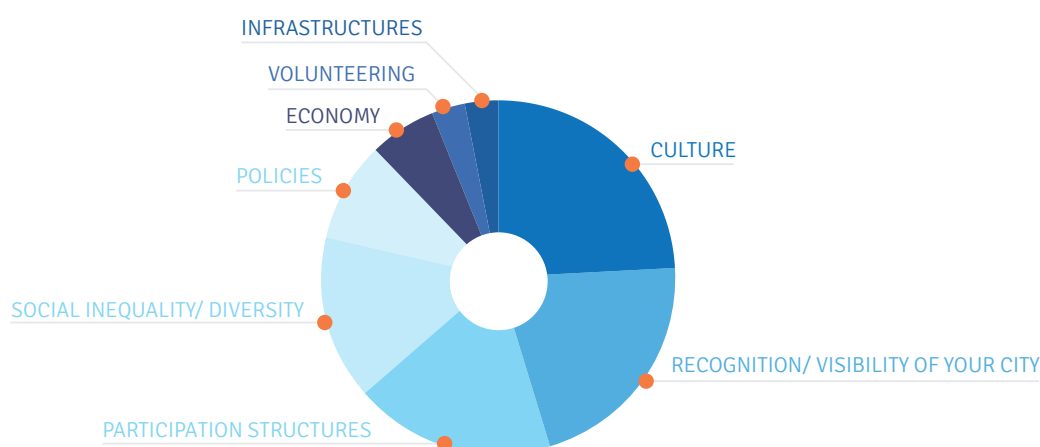
Youth representative, member of the first initiative group for Thessaloniki (2014), Greece.

In Torino (2010), application was also a jointly managed process, with local organisations and institutional representatives working together on proposing initiatives. The joint decision making was not only enforced during the application and implementation process of the title, but still continues today in various youth centres in the city, where young people and youth organisations actively take part in defining and delivering activities that are tailored to the needs of local young people.

The European Youth Capital title has inspired the establishment of new participation and co-decision-making structures and governing bodies, allowing young people to drive the Capital process, influence policy making and ensure that their voice is heard by the municipality. According to the survey that has been conducted for this report, the most important impact of the title has indeed been in the areas of culture, recognition and visibility of the city and **fostered co-decision-making and participation structures**.

European Youth Capital survey³

IN WHICH AREAS DID THE EYC HAVE THE MOST IMPORTANT IMPACT/BENEFIT FOR YOUR CITY/YOUNG PEOPLE?



³ The questions of survey can be found in the Annex II of the Appendix.

In all cities awarded the title, **separate EYC governance bodies have been formed, consisting of mayors, representatives of various municipal departments relevant to youth affairs, youth organisations, young people and higher education institutions.**

The SHARE Federation in Cluj-Napoca (2015) that carried out the process of implementation of the EYC year consisted of 31 entities that made decisions together with youth and local authorities, including the mayor. The creation of this separate body to manage the process outside of the municipality was taken up by many of the Capitals in subsequent years, as it proved to be very efficient.

In Ganja (2016), a committee comprising municipal representatives and representatives of youth organisations was formed. In Maribor (2013), a team of various stakeholders was formed within the municipality, including youth representatives to manage the process. **Working relationships between the municipalities and young people were transformed, with municipal structures opening up to young people and young people understanding better how decision-making processes work in their municipality.**

"The title and its implementation brought new mentality and opened the municipality towards youth and youth organisations"-

Representative of youth organisation, Thessaloniki (2014), Greece.

In many of the Capitals, **the structures created during the Capital year have continued their work in various ways, sometimes being re-adjusted to different needs of the city.**

In Braga (2012), the former technical office for the EYC has been transformed and is now an information centre where youth and youth organisations can receive information about various European funding instruments⁴.

Young people as policy-makers: participatory policy development

Participation in decision-making has not been limited to participation in the processes related to the European Youth Capital year and the programme of activities. **The title also strongly encourages youth participation in decision-making when it comes to broader policy development in the cities.**

"It is important to think long-term, not just to work during the year of the title, but to use the title to improve youth sector as a whole, advance youth participation and strengthen the networks created during the year"

Member of the youth organisation, Maribor (2013), Slovenia.

Policy development processes have changed in Rotterdam since 2009: the current youth policy connects different kinds of programmes focusing on youth, and they actively participate in its development through youth panels and various types of participation boards and forums on different thematic areas. These panels and forums bring together various groups of young people to set priorities for local youth policy and to give suggestions and recommendations to local government.

⁴ Erasmus+, Europe for Citizens, Horizon 2020 etc.

In Varna (2017), the Youth Advisory Council, chaired by the mayor, was created during the EYC year, through a process of public discussions and consultations. The Youth Advisory Council consists of young people and representatives of different municipal structures, directorates, social services and the labour office. This has made the Youth Advisory Council more inclusive and has increased the representation of various groups of young people, which will help to ensure that the municipal decisions, policies and strategies are more connected with the realities of young people in Varna, and have a greater impact on society at large.

“It was one of the few periods that the Municipality was open to young people, youth ideas and proposals. It was an amazing creative period for all youth initiatives and a great opportunity to re-brand the city”

Member of the organising team, Thessaloniki (2014), Greece.

Innovation in decision-making: participatory budgeting for youth

The participatory budgeting system implemented in many of the European Youth Capitals 5 has been one of the most innovative mechanisms of youth participation.

While the general participatory budgeting⁵ system has been previously used in municipalities to boost citizens’ participation in decision-making and encourage citizens to identify, discuss and prioritize public spending; the **EYC has transformed the mechanisms to focus solely on young people**, including high-school students, formal and informal youth groups, as well as young people in general.

In Cluj-Napoca (2015), during the Capital year, young people cast over 50,000 votes through the participatory budgeting scheme in which they pitched their own projects.

The online participatory budgeting system in Cluj-Napoca (2015) has continued after the EYC year; in 2018, one of the winning projects has been the construction of the youth centre for youth organisations.

In Cascais (2018), the pilot project of participatory budgeting for youth was implemented in schools, with each school receiving 2,500 EUR for their students’ projects in 2017. In 2018, due to its successful implementation, the programme expanded to participating schools receiving 10,000 EUR each. The participatory budgeting for youth has been an important step forward in terms of youth participation in decision-making processes: being able to propose ideas and projects for public spending, as well as implement them, **young people have become more aware of their rights and responsibilities as citizens, and the role they have in shaping their own communities.**

Active citizenship: promoting youth volunteering

Engaging young people as volunteers is an important aspect of the European Youth Capital process, as it helps young people practice active citizenship.

⁵ Participatory budgeting refers to the democratic process of discussions and decision-making regarding the allocation of parts of the municipal budget.

More than 10,000 volunteers have been engaged in various projects and activities in the Capitals throughout the implementation year.

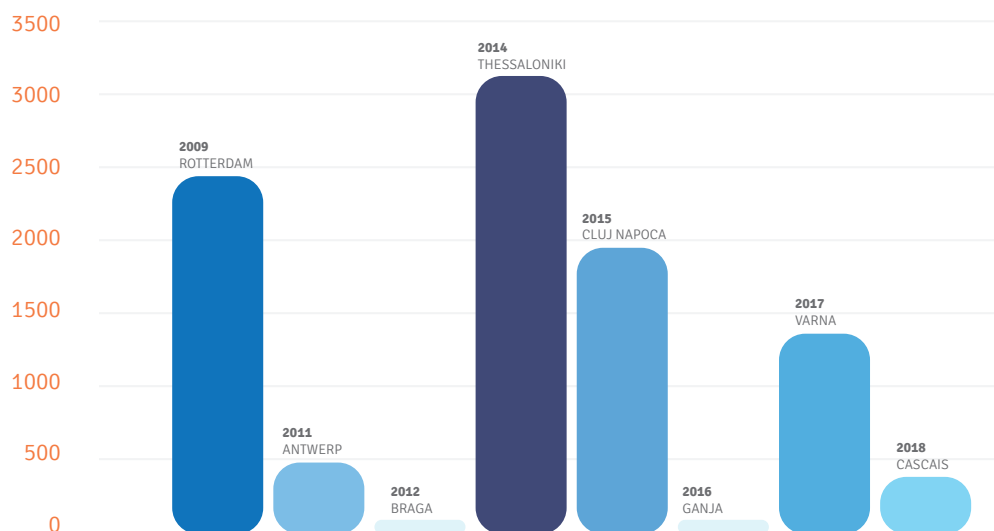
In cities such as Cascais (2018), volunteers are included in the volunteer database and are contacted on a regular basis for various activities as a part of the EYC year. Only in the first four months of the Capital year, Cascais has managed to involve more than 390 young volunteers through numerous events and activities.

"I used to be one of the volunteers before I started working here. We have always had a lot of voluntary activities happening in summer and the rest of the year was calm, but now we have all year long activities and young people are more motivated and proactive. I love to see how young people are evolving and it is a growing experience for me too"

Volunteer Coordinator, Cascais (2018), Portugal.

In Thessaloniki, in 2014, more than 3,200 volunteers participated in running projects and delivering over 250 events during the year. In Cluj-Napoca (2015), 53 800 hours of volunteer time was dedicated to the implementation of the Capital year and the municipality started working with the European Voluntary Service (EVS)⁶ volunteers for the first time.

Number of volunteers engaged in European Youth Capitals⁷



⁶ EVS (European Voluntary Service) is an international volunteer program funded by the European Commission. It enables all young people legally resident in Europe, aged between 18 and 30 years, to carry out an international volunteer service in an organization or in a public body in Europe, Africa, Asia or South America for a period ranging from 2 to 12 months. It provides the reimbursement of travel expenses and complete coverage of the costs of food and accommodation for the international volunteer. More information about EVS can be found here: <https://europeanvoluntaryservice.org/whatis-evs/>. The European Voluntary Service is being replaced by the new European Union initiative called European Solidarity Corps which creates opportunities for young people to volunteer or work in projects - in their own country or abroad- that benefit communities and people around Europe. More information about it can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/youth/news/2017/what-european-solidarity-corps-and-how-it-related-erasmus_en.

⁷ Rotterdam EYC 2009. 2010. Your Evaluation. Evaluation youth year 2009. Rotterdam, Netherlands; Antwerp EYC 2011. 2012. Antwerp European Youth Capital 2011 presentation. Antwerp, Belgium; Universidade do Minho. 2014; The economic and social impacts of Braga 2012 EYC. Braga, Portugal; Thessaloniki EYC 2014. 2015. European Youth Capital Report, May 2015; Cluj-Napoca EYC 2015. 2015. Cluj-Napoca 2015. European Youth Capital Preliminary findings. Cluj-Napoca, Romania; interviews with representatives of Ganja (2016), Varna (2017), Cascais (2018).

In Thessaloniki (2014), volunteers who went through trainings during the EYC year have proven to be instrumental when the refugee crisis broke in 2015 in organising refugee camps and planning activities for refugee children. In this case, young people's newly developed skills gained during the EYC year and ability to effectively respond to emerging challenges have proved to be beneficial for the entire society.

Council of Europe report on Youth Policy in Greece⁸

Due to high levels of youth mobilisation, the Council of Europe congratulated 'Thessaloniki - European Capital of Youth 2014' in its annual report on Youth Policy in Greece. Thessaloniki (2014) was referred to as 'an impressive example of good practice with regard to the mobilisation and participation of young people in youth actions.' Particular emphasis was put on the successful cooperation between youth organisations, volunteers and local government through the Thessaloniki (2014) programme.

CHAPTER 3: EMPOWERING YOUTH AND STRENGTHENING YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

Young people developing their skills and knowledge

The EYC title has served as an important learning opportunity for young people, linking them with their local administration, informing them about policy-making processes, the European dimension of the title and youth-related work in Europe.

This development of skills and knowledge as a key outcome of the EYC has been emphasised by Rotterdam from the start of the initiative in 2009 and has remained one of the key aspects of the title. Rotterdam continues working on this even a decade later, and other Capitals have likewise continued to prioritise it in their applications, as well as in their subsequent work with young people.

"There was a positive change, there were some new opportunities that encouraged young people to exercise their creativity and competences"

Young person from Varna (2017), Bulgaria.

Antwerp (2011) organised the Youth Ambassadors initiative - 15 young people providing advice on programme development, promoting events, evaluating the programme and looking for young talents.

⁸ Council of Europe, Youth Policy in Greece (2015), 2015. <https://book.coe.int/eur/en/national-youth-policies/6631-youth-policy-in-greece.html>

Thanks to their experience from the EYC, **many young people have used newly acquired skills in their professional careers** (administrative, project management, financial management, negotiation and intercultural skills). While some have remained in the youth field and continue to work for youth organisations or have entered the public sector and pursued political careers at the local level, others have established successful private businesses, having unlocked their potential thanks to the title.

"Young people are now more experienced, more active and more engaged and they do more projects"- member of the organising team,

Municipality of Ganja (2016), Azerbaijan.

The impact of the title has also been felt in terms of **municipalities recognising young people as valuable partners**, able to work on important policy changes, and implementing a demanding European Youth Capital programme. Most importantly, through participating in policy development processes, young people have been **developing skills and acquiring knowledge necessary to be active citizens**, including knowledge of the democratic structures and institutions, advocacy skills, and they have become more aware of the possibilities and constraints of local decision-making processes.

Strengthening youth organisations

Increased cooperation between youth organisations

The EYC title has had an important impact on strengthening youth organisations. Being awarded the title has given a boost to youth work and increased awareness among young people on the work of youth organisations in particular. Consequently, **youth organisations reached out and engaged with more young people**, and they were able to promote their work to the wider public.

In Maribor (2013), one-third of participating youth organisations increased their engagement of young people by over 50% during the Capital year.

In Braga (2012), even several years after the city held the EYC title, there is still a growing number of youth organisations and youth clubs, while the numbers have been declining in the rest of the country.

In Novi Sad (2019), representatives of youth organisations have mentioned that the process of the EYC application and working on preparation for the EYC year **has brought youth organisations closer and helped them learn about each other, collaborate and recognise each other's work**. This also ensures that continuous attention is given to youth after the EYC year, because the strong network of youth organisations created in the process can continue to jointly advocate for young people's rights in the municipality.

In Thessaloniki (2014), the organisations which were involved in implementing EYC activities still cooperate, and relationships formed during the EYC year continue to be an important part of current cooperation and partnerships between youth organisations. In Maribor (2013), the [Mladi Maribor](#) online database platform was created to bring together all the youth organisations information in one place. This made it easier for youth organisations to be aware of each other's work and look for partners for joint activities.

Improving youth organisations' capacity to apply for funding

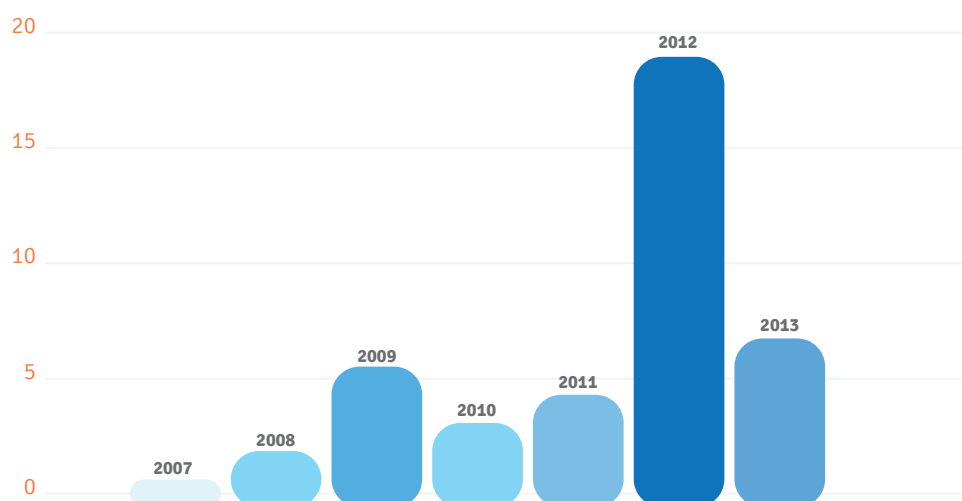
An important step for the Capital cities has been the development of the capacity of youth organisations **to apply and benefit from different funding mechanisms**. Newly established youth organisations and first-time applicants needed a particular support and guidance during this process. In Varna (2017), trainings, feedback and guidance for the youth organisations applying for municipal grants were one of the most important outcomes of the Capital process, having provided youth organisations **with skills and knowledge in project management, fundraising, reporting** etc. They are now able to take advantage of more diverse funding opportunities outside of the municipality.

In Maribor (2013), trainings were organised during the EYC year for young people and youth organisations on European funds and the application processes, as well as the EVS mobility programmes, which greatly increased the use of these programmes and schemes. Although this capacity development process takes time, it is an important step in creating stronger and more sustainable youth organisations.

Youth organisations in the Capitals have actively used the European funding opportunities during the Capital year, especially where youth organisations faced budgetary constraints, also and more importantly in the years following the title. The representatives of youth organisations in Braga (2012), Thessaloniki (2014) and Varna (2017) have all noted **that after the EYC year, youth organisations have increasingly started benefiting from European funds**.

In Braga (2012), a study on the socio-economic impact of the EU Youth in Action programme⁹ found that the number of Youth in Action projects in the city increased fourfold during the EYC year, and also remained higher than before in the year following the title¹⁰.

The number of Youth in Action projects implemented in Braga 2007-2013¹¹



⁹ The Youth in Action programme, which ran from 2007 to 2013, aimed to inspire active citizenship, solidarity and tolerance and involve young people in shaping the future of the European Union. Youth in Action (YiA) promoted mobility, non-formal learning, intercultural dialogue and inclusion, primarily among people aged 13-30 and supported youth workers and civil society organisations through training and networking. The programme supported around 8 000 projects and provided opportunities for around 150 000 young people and youth workers every year. More information on Youth in Action programme and its impact can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/youth/success-stories/youth-in-action_en

¹⁰ De Barros, J.M.A. 2016. Relatório de estágio na Fundação Bracara Augusta – Loja Europa Jovem, com ênfase no Caso de Estudo sobre os Impactos Sócio Económicos do Programa Juventude em Ação 2007-2013 no Município de Braga. Instituto de Ciências sociais. Universidade do Minho.

¹¹ Ibid.

This indicates that the impact of the title on youth organisations is not only related to their improved cooperation or increased opportunities to use municipal funding. The title also provides an opportunity for local youth organisations to acquire necessary capacity to obtain other sources of funding, which they continue to use long after the end of the EYC year; supporting youth organisations in becoming more proactive, independent, entrepreneurial and sustainable.

CHAPTER 4: FOSTERING EUROPEAN IDENTITY

The European Youth Capital title has offered young people from different cities more **opportunities to meet with young people from other European countries**. In Cascais (2018), young volunteers benefited from an exchange with another EYC 2018 candidate city, Manchester, to also promote cooperation with cities that were not awarded the title. Other young volunteers from Cascais (2018) visited Novi Sad (2019). For some of them, it was the first time to go abroad and experience a different culture.

“The project allowed us to go to Serbia for a week and for them to come here; we got to know more about their culture and what it means for them to be part of Europe and how they approach different subjects”

Volunteer from Cascais (2018), Portugal.

Learning about the processes of democratic participation and the possibilities for engagement at the local, regional, national and European levels is also highly important in this process. Thus, **the Capitals have used the opportunities through their representatives in the EU institutions to bring Europe closer to their local context**. In Cascais (2018), a debate on Future of Europe took place on Europe Day (9 May) between young people, the European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, Carlos Moedas, and the mayor of Cascais.

In Thessaloniki (2014), various events and activities were organised in order to inform young people of the way the European Union functions. These included a summer school with simulation of EU processes, conferences on young people’s perceptions of Europe and European Youth Dialogue on the future of young people in Europe.

The campaign “Go for Europe” was also run to motivate young people to take part in the European elections in 2014, at the time when Greece was undergoing a deep economic and financial crisis and trust in the EU institutions was very low. Interesting to note that the overall **youth turnout in the EU was 28%, it reached 45% in Greece¹²** and, while there is no age disaggregated data, the turnout was higher in Thessaloniki than the rest of Greece¹³ with the dedicated “Go for Europe” online campaign reaching almost 90% of young people in Thessaloniki.

¹² European Parliament, Post-election survey: European Elections 2014, 2014. http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2014/post/post_ee2014_sociodemographic_annex_en.pdf

¹³ Ministry of Interior, European elections May 2014, 2014. <http://ekloges-prev.singularlogic.eu/may2014/e/public/index.html?lang=en#%7B%22cls%22:%22main%22,%22params%22:%22%7B%7D%7D>

“The EYC promoted the cooperation across Europe not only with other EYC cities but with most of the European countries via Erasmus + actions, the special promotion of Thessaloniki as a youth destination in the Balkan countries and the links with the young community people from the network of Thessaloniki's sister cities”

Member of a youth organisation, Thessaloniki (2014), Greece.

CHAPTER 5: CHAMPIONING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The European Youth Capital title has also been a turning point for many municipalities to change the way they work with youth, and to **build more inclusive societies**, becoming inspiring examples for other cities across Europe.

Cascais (2018) is working to narrow the gap between young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds and the rest of the community. The municipality has been running a social inclusion summer volunteering programme for several years, but the range and scope of volunteering programmes has blossomed during the Capital year. Young volunteers take part in cultural heritage projects and clean beaches and mountains in the area.

In Torino (2010), the title also aimed to reach young people in disadvantaged areas of the city by applying targeted measures to include them in the activities. Varna (2017) hosted an International Roma Youth festival, connecting local Roma Youth with international Roma organisations.

Novi Sad (2019) has ensured the establishment of the support centre for the LGBTIQ community and their families, which is the first centre of its kind in Serbia. Novi Sad (2019) is also working on promoting ethnic diversity in the Vojvodina region, through projects focused on ethnic minorities in the county, as well as promoting reconciliation and collaboration of young people in the neighbouring countries in the Balkans region.

In Cluj-Napoca (2015), Hungarian and Romanian youth organisations worked together on the promotion of cultural diversity in the city. The Hungarian student organisation was a member of the SHARE Federation and 90% of the EYC 2015 materials were also available in Hungarian.

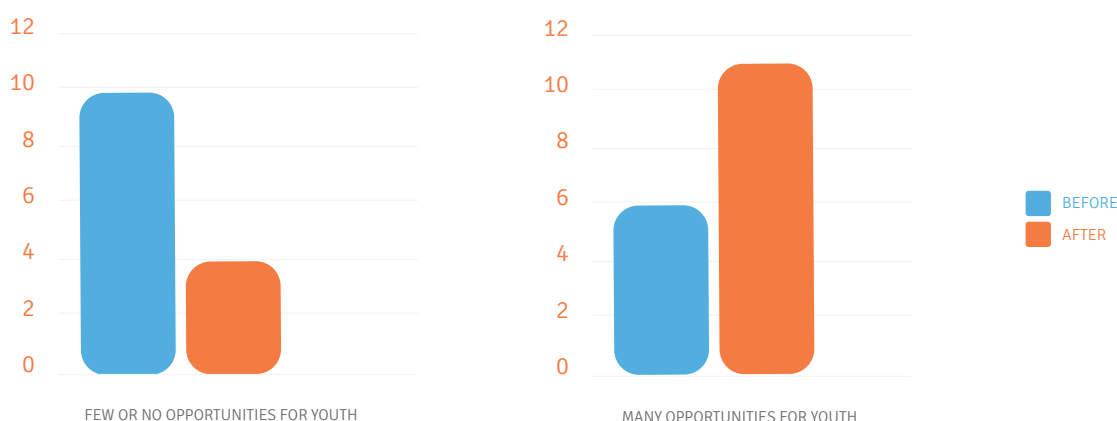
To a number of Capitals, the title was an incentive to start addressing sensitive topics related to gender equality, ethnic and sexual minorities, inclusion of youth from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, etc. and work towards ensuring that all young people are an integral part of their society.

CHAPTER 6: INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES

Increased funding opportunities

According to the survey, in many Capitals, the perception of available opportunities for youth, including financial opportunities, doubled after the EYC year .

European Youth Capital survey¹⁴



"Many initiatives have been supported, many youth projects have been funded, the whole city has lived an intensive programme for changing the city culture towards raising the voice of youth, and youth has been involved in policy planning and implementation at the municipal level"

Member of the organising team, Varna (2017), Bulgaria.

More than 50,000,000 EUR have been invested in youth in different Capitals as a part of the initiative!

In Torino, the budget for youth increased by 50% during the year 2010, from 4,600,000 to 7,100,000 EUR.

In Cluj-Napoca, 2,500,000 million EUR were allocated for youth organisations' events and activities in 2015. In Antwerp (2011), available funding for young people's projects increased by 115% compared to 2010, totalling 290,000 EUR, and the number of youth initiatives funded through these grants doubled.

In Thessaloniki (2014), the funding for youth came at a particularly important time, even though country was suffering from the financial crisis and financing opportunities for the youth field were limited. Thessaloniki (2014) managed to fundraise from the private sector that donated 61,500 EUR for the Capital year.

¹⁴ The questions of survey can be found in the Annex II of the Appendix.

In Braga (2012), 350,000 EUR were obtained from the Erasmus + Portuguese National Agency for the EYC year. In Maribor (2013), 7% of the budget came from the national-level funding.

While the **investment in youth** after the Capital year has decreased in many of the cities, it still **remains bigger compared to the year before the title.**

The local and national governments through the EYC process have understood the importance of investing in young people and the benefits it can bring, and have continued to support young people and youth organisations after the Capital year.

Increased number of youth-oriented activities

One of the core features of the Capitals programmes have been various youth-centred and youth-led events and activities in multiple thematic areas, from arts and music festivals to political debates and trainings, all implemented with the same goal: having young people actively participating in society.

Since 2009, more than 8,000 events and activities have taken place across the European Youth Capitals!

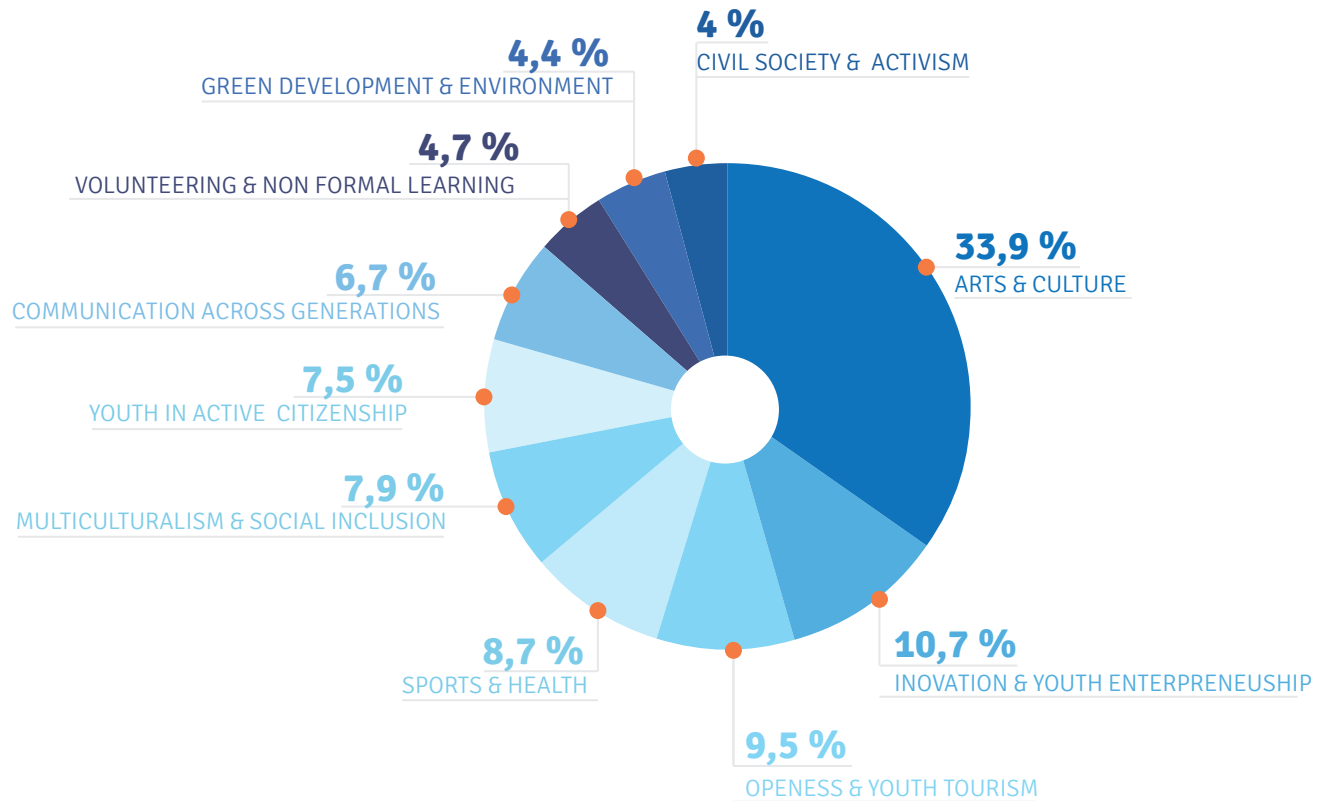
Winning the European Youth Capital in 2012 was a turning point for Braga. We created traditions of people becoming much more involved and taking initiative on different issues. The mentality of our city changed and it also raised citizens' expectations in terms of what is possible."

Member of the organising team, Braga (2012), Portugal.

In the survey on the impact of the European Youth Capital title, culture has been mentioned as one of the most important areas, which benefited from the year.

In Thessaloniki (2014), cultural events outnumbered other activities. Out of 255 events organised as a part of the EYC 2014, 86 events (or 33.9%) were in the area of arts and culture.

Events by thematic areas, Thessaloniki (2014)¹⁵



In Torino, over 3,500 square meters of wall spaces through the “PicTurin” project were transformed into works of art during the 2010 Capital year, and many of these still remain throughout the city, serving as an important legacy of the culture and arts activities which took place during the EYC 2010.

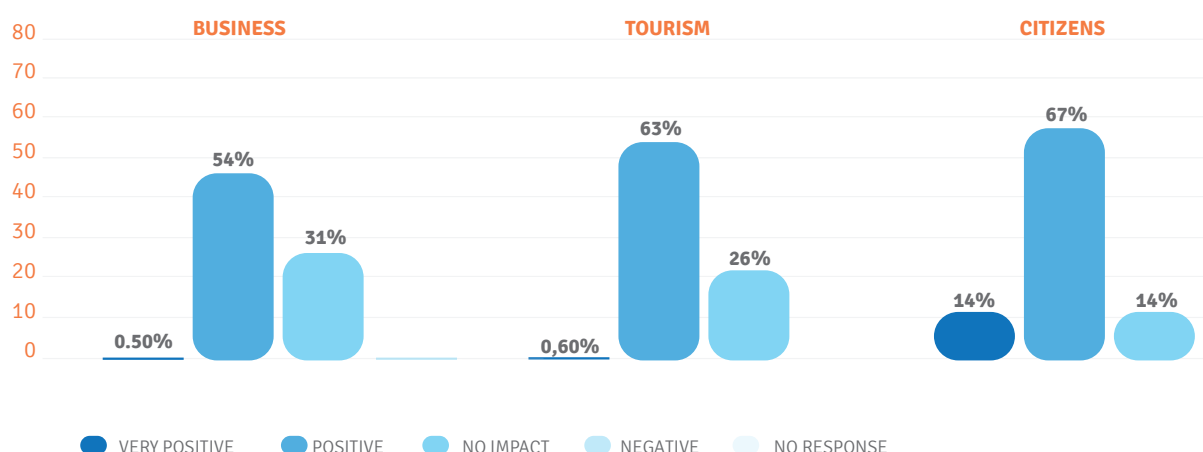
¹⁵ Thessaloniki EYC 2014. 2015. European Youth Capital Report, May 2015.

CHAPTER 7: BOOSTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The EYC has brought economic benefits to the cities through **increased number of visitors as a result of large international events**, such as the “Fun City” (Varna 2017) and “Untold” (Cluj-Napoca 2015) festivals and the European Youth Forum’s meetings, which each year brings hundreds of youth leaders to the European Youth Capital, benefiting local businesses and the tourism industry. These large scale international events contributed significantly to **boosting the European profile of the cities transforming them into international meeting points** during their Capital year.

The 2014 study by the University of Minho on the impact in Braga (2012) on local services and the retail sector found that the majority of businesses, the tourism industry and overall citizens had positive or very positive views of the EYC.

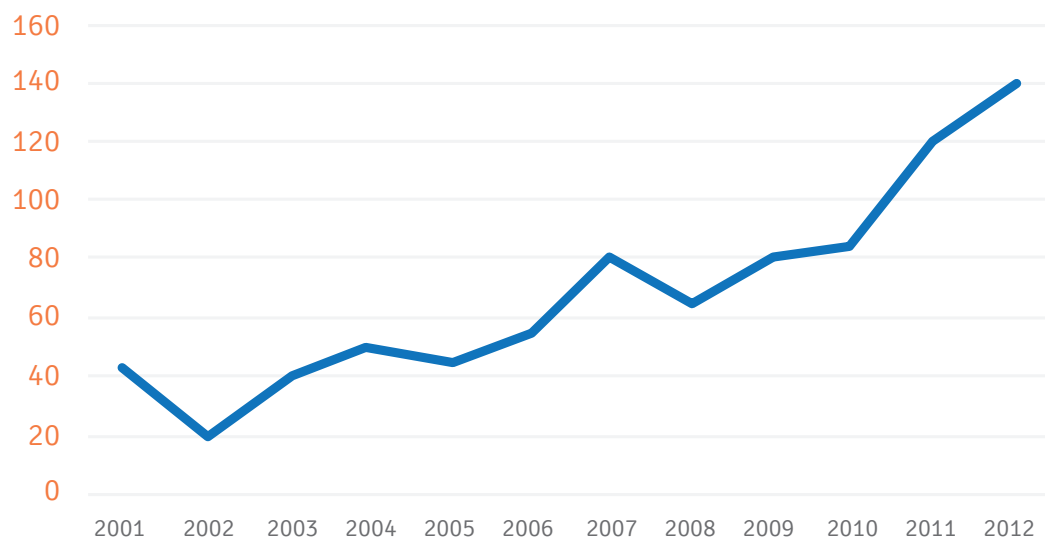
General evaluation of the EYC: business, tourism and citizens¹⁶



Preliminary results of the external evaluation in Thessaloniki (2014) showed that there was almost a 30% increase of tourism and hotel bookings during the EYC year. Likewise, in Cluj-Napoca (2015), the number of tourists during the EYC year increased by 21%. In Maribor (2013), there were more than 4,800 overnight stays related to different activities during the Capital year. In Braga (2012), the tourist information office has recorded an increase in tourists from across Portugal but also Spain and France; 73% of surveyed retailers indicated that they believed there were more tourists in Braga during the EYC year.

¹⁶ Universidade do Minho. 2014. The economic and social impacts of Braga 2012 EYC. Braga, Portugal.

Number of visitors to Braga 2001-2012¹⁷



Thus, in Braga (2012), the title resulted in a significant economic boost from tourism, sponsorships and other activities, bringing over 11,500,000 million EUR into the economy, or 6,000,000 EUR in revenue.

In Thessaloniki (2014), for every **1 EUR spent by the municipality, 5,14 EUR were brought back into the local economy** through tourism, sponsorships and private support.

High-level political and social events were held in the city, which brought an estimate of 6,000,000 EUR to the local economy. Among those events were the EU Youth Conference of the Greek Presidency, an international conference organised by the Goethe Institute focus on youth in the Mediterranean, the Anna Lindh Foundation conference on Euro-Arab youth dialogue, an international conference on European Youth Policy by the Heinrich Boll Institute, the European Youth Parliament Conference with the support of the Schwarzkopf Foundation, and the General Assembly of the “Great Silk Way” International Youth Union supported by the government of Azerbaijan.

In all the former Capitals, the investment of **the municipality in the EYC initiative and in young people has proven to be beneficial and has brought revenues in various ways**. The title continues to bring economic benefits to the Capitals, as the cities remain to be seen as youth-friendly places, attracting large numbers of young people to visit them.

¹⁷ Universidade do Minho. 2014. The economic and social impacts of Braga 2012 EYC. Braga, Portugal.

CHAPTER 8: DEVELOPING SPACES FOR YOUTH

The title has provided young people with **a possibility to clearly say to local authorities what kind of spaces are needed for young people in their city.**

Investments in infrastructure, either creating new or renovating existing places, during the EYC year have left a lasting legacy in the former Capitals, ensuring the availability of youth spaces for future generations.

In Torino (2010), which used to be an industrial city, many of the industrial areas have been converted into youth spaces. Now a youth centre is situated within one of the old factories. Similarly, Dora Park, an avenue of abandoned factories, was transformed into an outdoor space for young people.

In Varna (2017), the Youth House in the city was renovated and other youth spaces have also continued being developed after the Capital year. The total municipal investment in the youth infrastructure in Varna (2017) was 766,000 EUR.

The investments in infrastructure clearly show that the title has encouraged cities to think more about spaces that would be tailored to reflect the realities of local young people and help them grow both as individuals and as active members of their society.

CHAPTER 9: OUTSIDE OF THE CITY WALLS

Creating stronger links across the country

The title has had an impact on the national level in various ways. The Capitals have **included surrounding municipalities in their activities. They have also often hosted important national (youth) events.**

In Varna (2017), the National Youth Meeting on Youth Zones was held, during which the participants drafted a proposal on what youth zones are and what should be the criteria for such zones.

Novi Sad (2019) has been declared a project of national interest of the Republic of Serbia, supported by its President and Prime Minister, thus giving it a national recognition and inspiring other cities in the country to embrace working with young people.

In Romania, following Cluj-Napoca (2015), the **National Youth Capital initiative was started**, giving an opportunity to other cities in the country to experience the benefits of the title.

The National Youth Capital title has expanded beyond the former Capitals, and is now also awarded in other countries: in 2018, Lviv, in Ukraine, was awarded the title of the National Youth Capital. Other municipalities in other countries are seeking best practices of establishing the National Youth Capital title to activate their young people's citizenship and bring change to their cities, thus the initiative is slowly spreading around.

Building a European-wide network

The European Youth Capitals cooperate in various ways. Rotterdam (2009) and Antwerp (2011) still often exchange best practices related to the local-level youth policy development, as a result of the proximity of the cities.

Novi Sad (2019) has partnered with the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), in order to involve other countries in the Balkan region in EYC 2019 activities. They have also started discussing a possibility of creating Regional Youth Capital to connect young people and contribute to the process of reconciliation in the region.

Other **Capitals are actively cooperating through the Network of European Youth Capitals**, an informal body created in 2012 in Braga, which brings together cities that have been awarded the title. The Network provides an opportunity for the Capitals to exchange knowledge and experience on different youth-related topics, such as youth participation in urban development, participatory budgeting and social innovation. The Network also supports the Capitals during the preparation phase towards the Capital year, sharing best practices that could help implement the title better.

The title has had a **multiplying effect and has already contributed to empowering young people in other municipalities across Europe**, notably the ones that took part in the application process for the title.

Thus, acknowledging the need for local and regional authorities to invest more in youth and foster their active citizenship, the title has a potential to grow even further.

CHAPTER 10: THE NEXT TEN YEARS OF THE EUROPEAN YOUTH CAPITAL TITLE

In a decade of the existence of the European Youth Capital title, the Capitals have managed to become **real champions for young people**, fostering their engagement in decision-making processes and building their European identity.

Working together, young people, youth organisations, municipalities and local businesses have managed to **transform their communities**, learning the value of cooperation and trust.

Regarding the lessons learnt over the years, the need to expand the reach of the title with the support of European institutions and Europe - wide networks of municipalities have been identified. In the future, the title would also benefit from more sustainable funding sources and bigger political support from the European institutions, lesser administrative burden for youth organisations, and mitigating risks of political changes, just to name a few.

These lessons will guide the work of the **upcoming Capitals that will continue being pioneers of change and serve as examples of visionary transformation to the rest of Europe and beyond.**

Building on a decade of successes and inspiring experiences in the cities, the European Youth Forum is committed to keep working towards improving lives of young people and making local communities an essential part of it. **Will you join the adventure?**

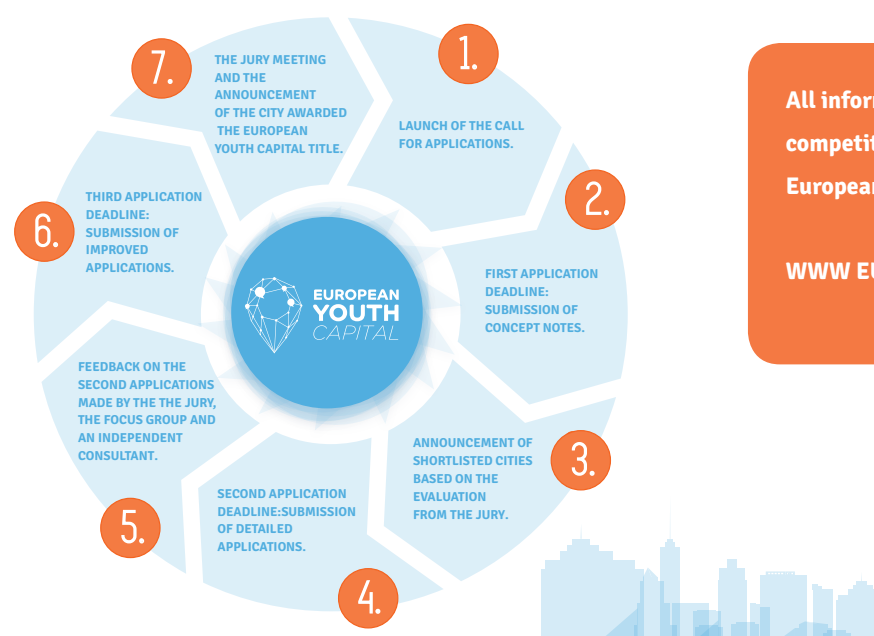
"It has been an overall fantastic, exhausting and rewarding experience. Mind-opening, challenging and yet impacting the local youth everyday-mentality and dare I say leaving a good legacy regarding policy-making and youth initiatives and participation"

Municipal representative, Thessaloniki (2014), Greece.

European Youth Capital: how to apply?

"You have know your city well and find out what city needs and its weak point. When you are thinking of something, you have to think of the common good. You have to gather a team that really knows what they are doing"

Memeber of the organising commitee, Braga (2012), Portugal.



All information related to the competition can be found at the European Youth Forum's website at
WWW.EUROPEANYOUTHCAPITAL.ORG

"Don't take young people for granted, don't put them in the programme just as advisers but engage them in the whole process; make sure they are working with the municipality in making the budget and the application, and that they are involved in the programme and its implementation"

Member of the Jury 2016-2018.

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APPENDIX

Annex I: Methodology

Research objectives

The objective of the research was to examine, analyse, evaluate and present the impact of the European Youth Capital on development of policies and initiatives, focusing on young people's cultural, social, economic and political life in cities that have been awarded the title and evaluate the overall impact of the initiative on strengthening relationship between European and local levels.

The evidence was collected with aim to support the positive impact of the European Youth Capital title on young people and youth organisations at the local level, promote the title in different European institutions and among key institutional stakeholders, examine how the title contributes to the promotion of common European values and development of youth related cultural, social, economic and political life, and provide insights into future potential of the European Youth Capital initiative, inspiring municipalities across Europe to apply for the title.

Methodological considerations

The main priorities for this research were to obtain perspectives of cities/municipalities, youth organisations and young people about the impact of the EYC title. The positive impact and challenges were obtained as described below through the desk research of relevant documents, and primary data collection through surveys, interviews and focus group discussions.

The methodological approach described below has been selected in order to ensure the inclusion of not only relevant documentary materials, but also the perspectives of the broad range of stakeholders, in order to evaluate the impact of the initiative on the different groups.

Sources of data

The research presents the experiences of the municipalities which were awarded the title of the European Youth Capital over the last ten years. The evaluation was based on desk review of the reports, online survey, 39 interviews and 8 focus groups with 49 key stakeholders, municipalities, youth organisations and young people in eleven selected locations: Rotterdam, Torino, Antwerp, Braga, Maribor, Thessaloniki, Cluj-Napoca, Ganja, Varna, Cascais and Novi Sad.

This research and analysis will started with a desk review of the existing materials, which were used as a basis for the development of research methodology, background, preparation of questions and evaluation visits and outline and inception report.

These reports include:

- Resolution from 2007
- Progress reports on the initiative from 2011 and 2014
- Application forms and reports from the cities
- Monitoring reports
- Meeting reports
- Relevant European documents in the field of youth
- Websites, social media posts (Facebook, Instagram)
- Press releases and media materials

Quantitative data collection and analysis

The quantitative data on the impact of the title was collected through secondary desk research, and focused on the number of youth policies and initiatives in the selected municipalities, activities, number of young people involved in certain activities etc.

Qualitative data collection and analysis

Basic qualitative data was collected through a short online survey sent out to youth capitals and all the relevant stakeholders, with particular focus on young people. Following the survey, detailed information was obtained through 39 individual interviews and 8 focus group discussions with 49 key stakeholders: municipalities, including municipality officials, coordinators, youth organisations and young people, and member of the jury in order to examine their perceptions of the opportunities and impact of the title. Content and discourse analysis, as well as participant observation will be used to analyse the qualitative data before the writing process.

Field visits were conducted in Cascais, Braga, Novi Sad, Maribor, Cluj Napoca, Varna and Thessaloniki, with meetings with representatives of Torino and Ganja held during the meeting of the Network of the European Youth Capitals. Online communication and telephone calls were conducted with Rotterdam and Antwerp.

Involvement of relevant stakeholders

The evidence presented in the report includes various perspectives of wide range of stakeholders, including:

- Mayors, municipal or city officials implementing the programme, municipal youth departments, including departments of youth, education, sports etc.
- National youth councils
- Youth organisations, young people, youth workers
- Past and present jury members of the EYC

The stakeholders were identified in cooperation with EYF and coordinators of the European Youth capitals. Additional interviewees and members of focus groups were identified by relevant local contacts through the snowball methodology prior to the fieldwork.

Ethical consideration

Conducting social science research raises a range of ethical concerns. This research took into consideration the norms and morals, and accepted codes of conduct during research, and utmost care was taken to ensure the anonymity of participants if necessary, and mutual respect and trust in all interactions. Dignity, rights and wellbeing and safety of research participants was guaranteed, and the research was done abiding by the principles of objectivity.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants after the detailed explanation of the purpose of the research, risks and benefits, an information sheet on the evaluation was provided, and informed consent form signed by participants to ensure that they are voluntarily taking part in the research. The information sheet and consent form also contain the contact details of the researcher and a contact for complaint and queries.

In order to maintain the integrity of stored data , data was protected from physical damage as well as from tampering, loss, or theft by limiting access to data. As the research was conducted by only one consultant, she was the only person with the access to the data, which will be stored electronically on a private laptop, with a unique ID and password.

Safety of research participants and researcher will be a priority throughout the process. Potential risks and threats will be assessed on an ongoing basis.

Annex II: Survey questions

The “European Youth Capital” (EYC) is a title awarded by the European Youth Forum to a European municipality for a period of one year aiming to encourage municipalities to both continue and expand the implementation of new ideas and innovative projects with regard to the active participation of young people in society. This initiative has been taking place since 2009, and this year YFJ is conducting a 10 year evaluation of the European Youth Capital, in order to assess the impact of the title on the development of policies and initiatives focusing on young people’s cultural, social, economic and political life, as well as the impact on strengthening relationship between European and local levels. This survey is a part of gathering the feedback on the EYC from the various stakeholders.

If you have any questions, please contact Lana Pasic, Research and Evaluation Consultant at lane.pasic@gmail.com

***REQUIRED**

ABOUT YOU

1. NAME / CONTACT DETAILS

YOUR ANSWER

2. YOUR CITY AND COUNTRY*

YOUR ANSWER

3. I AM A...

- ☐ Municipal official/ representative of a government institution
- ☐ Member of the EYC organising team
- ☐ Member of a youth organisation
- ☐ Youth participant
- ☐ Other

EYC AND YOU(TH)

4. Have you been involved in any of the activities as a part of EYC within your municipality?
If yes, please describe which ones (policy-development processes, youth participation structures, events, voluntary activities etc).

YOUR ANSWER

5. How would you rate the involvement/role of municipality in supporting young people BEFORE the EYC year?

NO SPECIFIC SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE										EXCELLENT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

6. How would you rate the involvement/role of municipality in supporting young people AFTER the EYC year?

NO SPECIFIC SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

EXCELLENT

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Please explain your choices above

YOUR ANSWER

8. How would you rate the available opportunities for youth BEFORE the allocation of the title (think in terms of opportunities for participation, new programmes and initiatives, funding for youth organisations, visibility of young people's needs etc.)?

NO OPPORTUNITIES

MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. How would you rate the available opportunities for youth AFTER the allocation of the title (think in terms of opportunities for participation, new programmes and initiatives, funding for youth organisations, visibility of young people's needs etc.)?

NO OPPORTUNITIES

MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Please explain your choices above

YOUR ANSWER

11. Following the EYC year, has your municipality/state continued supporting young people through targeted programmes/initiatives/funding/policies? Please explain.

YOUR ANSWER

12. Did the EYC promote greater links with other European Youth Capitals and young people from other European countries or beyond? If yes, how?

YOUR ANSWER

IMPACT OF THE EYC

13. On a scale from 1 to 10 please rate the overall impact of the EYC on young people in your city/municipality.

NO IMPACT

MASSIVE IMPACT

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

14. Please select up to 3 points on which you feel the EYC had the most important impact/benefit for your city/young people:

- ☐ Participation structures
- ☐ Policies
- ☐ Infrastructure
- ☐ Culture
- ☐ Social inequality/diversity
- ☐ Politics
- ☐ Economy
- ☐ Recognition/visibility of your city (regionally, nationally, at European level, internationally)
- ☐ Other

15. Please explain your selection above and refer to specific outcomes (e.g. initiatives, funding allocation, infrastructure works, youth participation bodies etc.)

YOUR ANSWER

ANYTHING THAT COMES TO MIND

16. Did you have a particularly memorable experience with the EYC that you would like to share? Why was the involvement with the EYC important to you?
Do you have recommendations for other Capitals or young people?
Please use this space to share any other thoughts about your experience with the EYC

YOUR ANSWER

Annex III: Questionnaires

Mayors/municipal coordinators/municipal staff

1. In which ways do you involve young people in decision-making processes (action plans, development strategies etc.)?
2. Are there any National/Municipal Youth Councils or other structures and how do they operate? Are any of them result of the EYC process?
3. How much funding is allocated by your city/municipality towards the EYC? Is there additional funding from any other European/national/regional/local public institutions?
4. What has been the impact of the initiative for your city (in terms of (youth) policies, infrastructure, culture, addressing social inequalities and inclusion)? (in case of Cascais and Novi Sad – what is the expected impact?) Have there been any specific investments, increased tourism, greater attention from national governments, growing network of partners e.g. businesses, European institutions etc?
5. What plans do you have for keeping the momentum of youth involvement after the EYC year? (for Cascais and Novi Sad only)
6. Have you worked on ensuring continuity and sustainability of the impact of the EYC in your city, through continued commitment towards young people? If yes, how? Please refer to specific initiatives or policies?

EYC teams/coordinators/youth organisations leading the process

1. How do you cooperate with the EYF in this initiative? What is the relationship like? Do you feel supported?
2. How are young people in your city/municipality involved in the decision-making processes (do they participate in the development of youth strategies, action plans etc)?
3. Are there any National/Municipal Youth Councils or other structures and how do they operate? How are young people engaged in them? Which young people take part in these structures (are they elected, volunteers etc, who do they represent?)
4. Have there been any changes in the way city/municipality/institutions and young people work together, since the allocation of the title? If yes, please explain. Were they sustained after the EYC year?
5. How does the coordinating team collaborate (or collaborated during the EYC year) with youth organisations, universities, schools etc.?
6. How are young people engaged in the voluntary activities?

7. How many young people were/are involved during the EYC year and through which activities? In case of past EYC cities, has the momentum of youth involvement through voluntary activities been maintained? If yes, please explain how (specific policies, initiatives, youth bodies etc.)
8. What has been the impact of the initiative for your city (in terms of (youth) policies, infrastructure, culture, addressing social inequalities and inclusion)? (in case of Cascais and Novi Sad – what is the expected impact?) Please use concrete examples.
9. In which ways have you worked on creating/maintaining links between your cities and other European Youth Capitals, and how do you aim to promote the European dimension of the initiative?
10. How do you plan on ensuring continued youth engagement after the EYC year (Cascais and Novi Sad)?

Questions for the focus group discussions

1. How are young people in your city/municipality involved in the decision-making processes (do they participate in the development of youth strategies, action plans, youth councils etc)?
2. Have there been any changes in the way city/municipality/institutions and young people work together, since the allocation of the title?
3. How are young people engaged in the voluntary activities? Is voluntary engagement recognised and promoted?
4. What has been the impact of the initiative for your city (in terms of (youth) policies, infrastructure, culture, addressing social inequalities and inclusion, youth participation, youth work)? (in case of Cascais and Novi Sad – what is the expected impact?)
5. What is the greatest benefit of this initiative for young people in your city?
6. Did this initiative promote greater links with other EYCs and young people from other European countries?
7. Could you say that the European Youth Capital title made an impact on your sense of belonging to local community? Understanding Europe, its values and feeling more European?

Questions for the EYC Network

1. What are the main goals and activities of the Network?
2. What do you see as the main role of the Network?
3. In which ways do you cooperate with the YFJ?
4. What has been the impact of the initiative for your city (in terms of policies, infrastructure, culture, addressing social inequalities and inclusion, youth participation)?
5. How do you promote youth engagement during/after the EYC in the capitals?
6. In which ways have you worked on creating/maintaining links between the European Youth Capitals, and how do you to promote the European dimension of the initiative at the local levels?
7. What are some of your main challenges and what are the main needs of the network (in terms of funding, support from the YFJ/cities/national governments/EU institutions)?

Questions for the Jury members

1. How long have you been a jury member and how did you become involved with the EYC?
2. Since your initial involvement in the EYC initiative, how has the process of application and selection evolved? What have been some of the key moments for the initiative over the last decade?
3. What are the main elements in the application that you look for when evaluating the Capitals? What are the key processes and structures that a city needs to have or establish in order to become a European Youth Capital?
4. Why should a city strive to be a European Youth Capital? What do you believe are some of the greatest benefits and impact of the EYC for youth sector and young people in the Capitals and Candidate cities?
5. What are your recommendations for cities and municipalities applying to be the EYC in the coming years?

Annex IV: Informed consent form
10 Years Anniversary Evaluation Report
Lana Pasic Research and Evaluation Consultant

INFORMATION SHEET AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM

The “European Youth Capital” (EYC) is a title awarded by the European Youth Forum to a European municipality for a period of one year aiming to encourage municipalities to both continue and expand the implementation of new ideas and innovative projects with regard to the active participation of young people in society. The EYC initiative also aims to strengthen the relationship between the European and local levels, fostering youth participation by applying common European objectives regarding youth policy.

An evaluation of the 10 years of the initiative is currently being conducted in order to assess the impact of the EYC title on the development of policies and initiatives focusing on young people’s cultural, social, economic and political life, as well as the impact on strengthening relationship between European and local levels.

If you agree to take part in this interview/focus group discussion, we will begin. The interview focus group will take approximately 45 minutes to one hour. I would like to talk to you because you were directly involved in the EYC initiative as an organiser or participant in some of the activities. You will be asked questions about the project and your involvement in it, as well as some of your opinions and insights about project.

Information you provide will be used towards the evaluation and writing of the 10-year evaluation report. If you feel uncomfortable about any of the questions during the interview, or do not wish to answer them, we will move on to the next question. All information you provide will be strictly confidential and anonymous, unless you agree to be cited in the final documents. If you do not understand something, please let me know at any moment.

Your participation in this interview and research is completely voluntary. You may choose at any point not to participate in this study if you do not wish to do so. Choosing to participate or not will not affect your future treatment in any way.

There will be no immediate or direct benefit (financial or otherwise) to you taking part in this interview. No payment will be offered for your taking part in this research. However, your participation will help us to find out more about positive aspects and some challenges of the initiative, and will help the EYF and other aspiring youth capitals to better prepare and implement the programme.

Who to contact

If you have any questions you may ask them now or later, via the following contacts. Please contact Lana Pasic, Research and Evaluation Consultant.

Certificate of Consent

I have been asked to give consent to participate in the interviews for the research and evaluation study on European Youth capital. I have read the forgoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to participating in this interview.

Print Name

Signature

Date





EUROPEAN
YOUTH
CAPITAL



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