

European Youth Week 2019: “Democracy and me”

From 29 April until 5 May, the ninth edition of European Youth Week is taking place across Europe. This year’s theme is “Democracy and me”. Alongside activities taking place all week in all participating countries, on 29 and 30 April flagship events in Brussels will bring together hundreds of young people to make their voices heard.

With a view to the upcoming European Parliament elections from 23 to 26 May, debates during this year’s European Youth Week will focus on how young people can be active in their communities and influence democratic decisions.

On 30 April, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor **Navracsics**, will host a Citizens’ Dialogue with young people, as well as a flagship debate in the European Parliament in Brussels, gathering more than 800 youth who will discuss democratic participation as well as the impact of the European Solidarity Corps on young people, NGOs and local communities.

Ahead of the European Youth Week, Commissioner **Navracsics** said: *“I applaud this generation of young Europeans who are active, committed and ready to support others. Almost 125,000 young people have now registered for the European Solidarity Corps, clearly indicating young people’s will to engage in society. Our latest Eurobarometer survey on youth reveals that three out of four young people say they have been active in some form of civic activity, be it voting, joining a movement, signing a petition online or volunteering. I am proud and encourage young people to mobilise their peers to vote in the upcoming European Parliament elections so they have a voice in shaping their future.”*

The results of a Eurobarometer survey released today show that for more than two thirds of young people (67%), priority number one for EU action over the next ten years should be protecting the environment and fighting climate change. The second and third priorities they identified are improving education and training, including free movement of students, apprentices or pupils (56%) and fighting poverty, economic and social inequalities (56%). In addition, 72% of young people interviewed say that, from the moment they were allowed to participate in elections until today, they voted in local, national, or European elections. The survey addressed around 11,000 young people aged between 15 and 30 years old in March 2019. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss these and other topics at European Youth Week events.

Moreover, this afternoon (29 April), Commissioner **Navracsics** will present the results of the [2018 Altiero Spinelli Awards for Outreach](#). This edition of the Altiero Spinelli Prize had a particular focus on young people and will reward projects that enhance their critical awareness of the European Union and their motivation to participate in the democratic processes that will shape its future. This edition attracted 79 applications and the five winning

projects will be awarded at an event in Brussels.

Background

European Youth Week takes place every two years. It celebrates and promotes activities targeted at young people through events organised in all countries participating in the Erasmus+ programme. In addition to the Brussels flagship events, hundreds of activities and events are being organised locally. During the previous European Youth Week in 2017, 112,000 young people participated all across Europe and North Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Serbia and Turkey.

One of the main topics of this year's edition, the European Solidarity Corps, was announced by Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker in his [2016 State of the Union](#) address. It offers young people between the ages of 18 and 30 the opportunity to take part in a wide range of solidarity activities across the EU and beyond. Since its [launch on 7 December 2016](#), almost 125,000 young people have registered for the European Solidarity Corps, and almost 15,000 participants started their activity.

The Altiero Spinelli Awards are a European Parliament initiative implemented by the European Commission, awarded for the first time in 2017. The Awards aim at putting the spotlight on outstanding works that enhance citizens' understanding of the European Union and their motivation to participate in democratic processes.

The Commission will also publish during the 2019 European Youth Week new figures on the uptake of the Youth Guarantee and Youth Employment Initiative. The Youth Guarantee is a flagship initiative of the EU to foster youth employment, by making sure all young people under 25 receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

For more information

[European Youth Week](#)

[European Solidarity Corps](#)

[Results of the 2018 Altiero Spinelli Prize](#)

[Eurobarometer](#): "How do we build a stronger, more united Europe?" – The views of young people

[Erasmus+](#)

[EUandMe campaign](#)