



# MILLENNIAL & GEN Z VIEWS FOR A YOUTH-OWNED RECOVERY

EUROPE, THE NEXTGEN  
ARE SPEAKING  
EUROPE, ARE YOU  
LISTENING?



Fundación  
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**SLOVENIA**

A joint research project by the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) and ThinkYoung **analysing young European views on the future of Europe.**<sup>1</sup>

The project classifies youth broadly as young people aged 16 to 38.

# ABOUT BUILDERS OF PROGRESS

## THE PROJECT AIMS TO

- Bridge the gap between policymakers and Europe's next generations who must work together to shape a better future for Europe.
- Shed light on the views of Gen Z (people born in and after 1995) and Millennials (people born between 1982 and 1994) on the most pressing topics on the European political agenda.
- Uncover how European youth want to 'build back better' after the pandemic.

## THE REPORT COVERS SIX MAIN TOPICS, WITH A SECTION DEDICATED TO EACH.

The following fact sheet summarises the views of respondents living in **Slovenia**. It then compares them to the EU and European averages.

## ABOUT THE RESEARCH<sup>2</sup>

The project had two main research phases. The first phase focused on social and political opinions in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. FEPS and ThinkYoung collected data through a survey and focus groups.

### 1 SURVEY 1

#### 11 European Countries

Data collection between 9 November and 14 December 2021

**11,000+ answers in total**

The survey reached over **1,000 respondents aged 16 to 38 in each country**

### 2 FOCUS GROUPS

#### 4 European Countries

Sessions took place online in February and March 2021

**2 focus groups in each country**

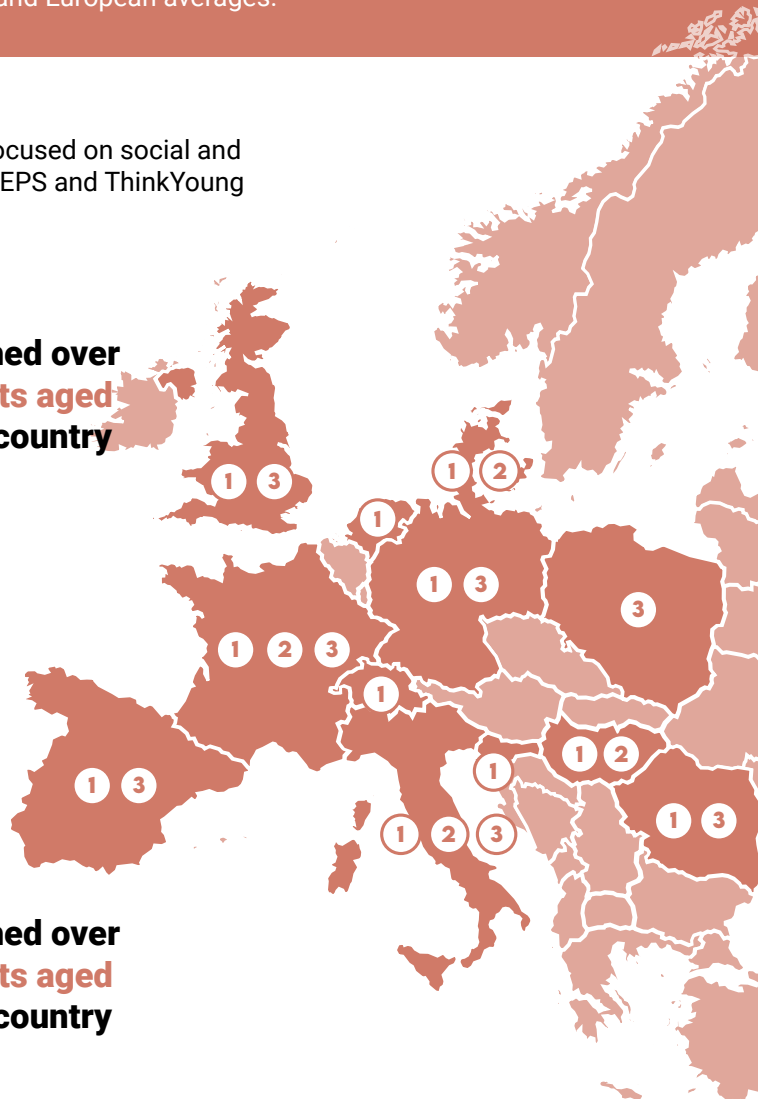
### 3 SURVEY 2

#### 7 European Countries

Data collection between 25 March and 7 April 2022

**7,000+ answers in total**

The survey reached over **1,000 respondents aged 16 to 38 in each country**



1. The project is conducted by the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) with the support of Anny Klawa-Morf Stiftung, Društvo Progressiva, Felipe González Foundation, Fondation Jean Jaurès and the Party of European Socialists (PES), and in co-operation with ThinkYoung – the research organisation that has co-ordinated the surveys and examination of the findings.

2. For full findings, methodology, and data analysis see the main report: Builders of Progress: Europe's NextGen.

Many aspects of daily life were affected by COVID-19 and the resulting measures imposed, such as school closures and prolonged periods of confinement. This Building Block addresses the following questions:

- What are the key personal concerns of young Europeans?
- What are young people's views on working and studying from home?
- How have young people coped with the pandemic?



## YOUTH IN SLOVENIA WERE MOST CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Top personal concerns (concern scale from 0 to 10)

### Concerns for youth in Slovenia

1. Access to healthcare and health services **5.8**
2. Income **5.7**
3. Employment opportunities **5.2**
4. Emotional and psychological well-being **5.1**

### Concerns for youth in Europe

1. Emotional and psychological well-being **5.9**
2. Physical health and well-being **5.9**
3. Income **5.8**
4. Employment opportunities **5.7**

## YOUTH IN SLOVENIA FACE BARRIERS TO ACCESSING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES



**6.5%** of youth in Slovenia relied on mental health professionals to help their psychological well-being during the pandemic. This is below the European average of **10%**. **Given that 47% of young people in Slovenia and 61% in Europe are concerned about their mental health,**<sup>3</sup> our data suggest that a high proportion of young people in Slovenia and in Europe face barriers to accessing mental health services.



## YOUTH IN SLOVENIA HAVE MIXED VIEWS ON WORKING AND STUDYING FROM HOME

**49%** of youth in Slovenia see working and studying from home positively. This is below the European average of **59%**. Further research would be needed to understand why working and studying from home is significantly less popular among youth in Slovenia than in other European countries.

The 3 unexpected positives of working and studying from home and the 3 biggest negatives are similar in both Slovenia and across Europe (positivity scale from 0 to 10):

### Unexpected positives for youth in Slovenia

Spending more quality time with family

**6.6 vs 6.8** in Europe

Being able to use technology for work and study

**6.5 vs 6.7** in Europe

Commuting

**6.4 vs 6.3** in Europe

### Biggest negatives for youth in Slovenia

Speaking with friends or making new ones

**4.7 vs 5.3** in Europe

Psychological or emotional well-being while working or studying

**4.9 vs 5.3** in Europe

Motivation, drive and passion

**4.8 vs 5.7** in Europe

3. Concerned individuals are defined here as those choosing 6 or more on a 0 to 10 scale.



# DEMOCRACY & THE RULE OF LAW

Important aspects of European democracies are a lively political participation of citizens, the empowerment of these citizens, and the independence of state institutions based on the rule of law.

This Building Block addresses the following questions:

- How do young people participate in politics?
- Do young people want to be more involved and empowered by the EU in public affairs and economic policy?
- What is their view on the rule of law, and what role should the EU play in this regard?



**THE MOST POPULAR FORM OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN SLOVENIA IS VOTING. 47% HAVE VOTED AT LEAST ONCE<sup>4</sup>**

## Preferred forms of participation in Slovenia

1. Voting **47%**
2. Petitioning (in person or on websites such as Change.org) **38%**
3. Donating money for a cause **27%**

## Preferred forms of participation in Europe

1. Voting **56%**
2. Donating money for a cause **36%**
3. Petitioning (in person or on websites such as Change.org) **28%**

**73% OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA BELIEVE THAT THE EU SHOULD INVOLVE AND EMPOWER MORE YOUNG PEOPLE IN EUROPEAN PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
THIS IS ABOVE THE AVERAGE ACROSS THE EU COUNTRIES SURVEYED (67%).**

**73% OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA BELIEVE POLITICIANS NEED TO BETTER COMMUNICATE TO CITIZENS WHAT THE EU IS DOING AND HOW IT IMPACTS DAILY LIFE  
THIS IS SLIGHTLY ABOVE THE AVERAGE ACROSS THE EU COUNTRIES SURVEYED (71%).**

**44% OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA BELIEVE THAT EU POLITICIANS SHOULD BE MORE DIVERSE IN TERMS OF RACE & ETHNICITY  
THIS IS BELOW THE AVERAGE ACROSS THE EU COUNTRIES SURVEYED (52%).**

**68% OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA BELIEVE THE EU SHOULD STOP PROVIDING FUNDING TO MEMBER STATES THAT FAIL TO RESPECT DEMOCRATIC RULES  
THIS IS SLIGHTLY ABOVE THE AVERAGE ACROSS THE EU COUNTRIES SURVEYED (65%).**

4. These numbers reflect the percentage of respondents that choose each option from a list of answers. Respondents were asked to select all answer options that applied to their case out of a list of twelve options.



# EQUALITY

The negative impact of the pandemic has hit youth hard due to increased vulnerability. It also highlighted social and gender-based inequality. This Building Block addresses the following questions:

- What are the main priorities according to young people to increase equality and ensure no one is left behind?
- What are the most pressing social policies and issues?
- What are seen as the best ways to combat gender inequality?



## YOUTH IN SLOVENIA WANT THE EU TO PRIORITISE IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF JOBS AND WAGES<sup>5</sup>

### Top social policy priorities for youth in Slovenia

1. Improving the quality of jobs and wages **55%**
2. Housing **44%**
3. Promoting healthier living, healthcare, elderly care, social care, and childcare **37%**
4. Improving education standards **25%**

### Top social policy priorities for youth in the EU

1. Improving the quality of jobs and wages **41%**
2. Housing **32%**
3. Promoting healthier living, healthcare, elderly care, social care, and childcare **32%**
4. Improving education standards **26%**

## YOUTH IN SLOVENIA THINK REDUCING PAY GAPS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN WILL HAVE THE GREATEST IMPACT ON GENDER EQUALITY IN EUROPE<sup>6</sup>



### Top strategies for youth in Slovenia

1. Reduce the gaps in salaries and pensions between men and women **49%**
2. Combat gender-based violence and protect and support victims **37%**
3. Provide cash for parents for childcare **34%**

### Top strategies for youth in Europe

1. Reduce the gaps in salaries and pensions between men and women **40%**
2. Combat gender-based violence and protect and support victims **36%**
3. Provide direct assistance to parents for childcare **29%**



## A LARGE MAJORITY OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA ASK FOR A MORE SOCIAL EU

**77% OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA BELIEVE THAT THE EU SHOULD GUARANTEE FAIR MINIMUM WAGES FOR ALL EUROPEAN WORKERS. THIS COMPARES TO THE EU AVERAGE OF 69%.**

**60% OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA AGREE THAT THE EU SHOULD ENSURE DECENT UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS FOR ALL EUROPEANS. THIS COMPARES TO THE EU AVERAGE OF 58%.**

**76% OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA AGREE THAT THE EU SHOULD GET MORE INVOLVED IN SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN NEED IN EUROPE. THIS COMPARES TO THE EU AVERAGE OF 67%.**

**72% OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA THINK THE EU SHOULD ENSURE ACCESS TO DECENT AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR ALL CITIZENS. THIS COMPARES TO THE EU AVERAGE OF 69%.**

**51% OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA AGREE THAT THE EU MUST DO MORE TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF LGBTQI+ PEOPLE. THIS COMPARES TO THE EU AVERAGE OF 61%.**

5. The numbers show the percentage of respondents that choose each answer option. Respondents selected three priorities from eleven options.

6. The numbers show the percentage of respondents that choose each answer option. Respondents selected three priorities from ten options.



# SUSTAINABILITY

Climate change has been a hot topic at the European level, with the Commission announcing the European Green Deal in 2019 and the war in Ukraine bringing energy independence to the centre of the discussion. This Building Block addresses the following questions:

- Do young people think the EU is doing enough to tackle climate change?
- What should be the priorities for achieving a transition to climate neutrality?
- What are the views of young Europeans on the role of local food chains?



## COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE IS A TOP PRIORITY FOR YOUTH IN SLOVENIA

COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE SHOULD BE THE **SECOND SPENDING PRIORITY** FOR THE EU'S COVID-19 RECOVERY PACKAGE ACCORDING TO YOUTH IN SLOVENIA AND ACROSS THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES SURVEYED.

**62% OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA AGREE THAT THE EU IS NOT DOING ENOUGH FOR CLIMATE AND THE ENVIRONMENT. THIS PERCENTAGE COMPARES TO THE EUROPEAN AVERAGE OF 65%.**

**THE STRONG WILLINGNESS TO ACT IS ALSO REFLECTED IN THE FACT THAT 53% OF SLOVENIANS SUPPORT THE IDEA THAT THE EU SHOULD PRIORITISE THE ENVIRONMENT OVER THE ECONOMY, EVEN IF THIS MEANS THE LOSS OF SOME JOBS.**

## YOUNG PEOPLE IN SLOVENIA ALSO STRESS THE NEED TO SUPPLY CLEAN ENERGY & REDUCE POLLUTION<sup>7</sup>



### Top climate policy priorities for youth in Slovenia

1. Reducing pollution in the air, water, soil and consumer products **50%**
2. Supplying clean, affordable and secure energy **45%**
3. Making sure the fight against climate change is fair and equitable for all **34%**

### Top climate policy priorities for youth in Europe

1. Reducing pollution in the air, water, soil and consumer products **41%** = joint top priorities =
1. Making sure the fight against climate change is fair and equitable for all **41%**
3. Supplying clean, affordable and secure energy **40%**



## YOUNG PEOPLE IN SLOVENIA WANT FAIR WAGES FOR FARMERS & HIGH-QUALITY FOOD STANDARDS<sup>8</sup>

### Top climate policy priorities for youth in Slovenia

1. Fair wages and pay/income help for farmers **34%**
2. Safe, healthy, and high-quality food standards **30%**
3. Improved local supply chains **29%**

### Top climate policy priorities for youth in Europe

1. Fair wages and pay/income help for farmers **36%**
2. More support for small farmers and local producers **28%**
3. Protecting the environment and modernising farming practices **28%**

<sup>7</sup> The numbers show the percentage of respondents that choose each answer option. Respondents selected three priorities from nine options.

<sup>8</sup> The numbers show the percentage of respondents that choose each answer option. Respondents selected three priorities from eleven options.



# EUROPE IN THE WORLD

The EU's role globally has been a hot topic. Issues of security, defence, and European integration have been further raised following the war in Ukraine. This Building Block answers the following questions:

- What do young people think about the EU on the world stage?
- What should be done about EU enlargement?
- Are young Europeans for or against the creation of a single European army?
- What are young Europeans' views on the war in Ukraine?



## THE MAJORITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN SLOVENIA SEE THE BENEFITS OF BEING REPRESENTED BY THE EU ON THE WORLD STAGE, AND OF BRINGING NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES INTO THE EU

**55%** OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA AGREE THAT THE EU SHOULD HAVE MORE POWERS TO REPRESENT EUROPE WITH A SINGLE VOICE ON THE WORLD STAGE. THIS IS COMPARED TO **52%** ACROSS THE EU.

**61%** OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA AGREE THAT THE EU SHOULD DO MORE TO LET NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES JOIN. THIS IS SIGNIFICANTLY ABOVE THE EU AVERAGE **49%**.

## HALF OF RESPONDENTS IN SLOVENIA FAVOUR THE CREATION OF A SINGLE EU ARMY



**50%** OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA AGREE THAT ALL EU COUNTRIES SHOULD MERGE THEIR ARMIES INTO A SINGLE EUROPEAN ARMY. THIS COMPARES TO THE EU AVERAGE OF **(45%)**.



## YOUNG PEOPLE IN EUROPE WANT TO SEE INCREASED EU AUTONOMY & STRICT SANCTIONS ON RUSSIA MAINTAINED IN RESPONSE TO THE WAR IN UKRAINE<sup>9</sup>

**52%** OF YOUTH IN EUROPE AGREE THAT THE EU SHOULD INCREASE ITS SOVEREIGNTY AND MOVE AWAY FROM ITS RELIANCE ON OTHER COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE IN AREAS LIKE DEFENCE, TRADE, AND DIGITALISATION.

**76%** OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN EUROPE SUPPORT MAINTAINING THE STRICT ECONOMIC SANCTIONS CURRENTLY IMPOSED ON RUSSIA.



# BUILDING BACK BETTER

In July 2020, the European Council approved a EUR 800 billion emergency recovery package for the post-COVID-19 Europe. This package represents an opportunity to reinvent and transform Europe and to 'build back better'. This Building Block answers the following questions:

- How should the EU change after the pandemic?
- How would young Europeans like the recovery package to be spent?
- Which pandemic response measures should be kept for the future?



## YOUTH IN SLOVENIA SHARE SIMILAR VIEWS WITH THE MAJORITY OF YOUNG EUROPEANS ON HOW THE EU SHOULD CHANGE AFTER THE PANDEMIC<sup>10</sup>

### Top EU changes post-pandemic for youth in Slovenia

1. More focus on healthcare systems **37%**
2. More sharing of the cost and financial burden of a pandemic, or a crisis **35%**
3. A more unified response to global threats and challenges **34%**

### Top EU changes post-pandemic for youth in Europe

1. More focus on healthcare systems **34%**
2. A more unified response to global threats and challenges **30%**
3. More sharing of the cost and financial burden of a pandemic, or a crisis **30%**

## HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES ARE THE TOP COVID-19 RECOVERY SPENDING PRIORITY<sup>11</sup>



### Top priorities for youth in Slovenia

1. Healthcare and social services **38%**
2. Combating climate change **31%**
3. Reducing debt and inflation **31%**

### Top priorities for youth in the EU

1. Healthcare and social services **35%**
2. Combating climate change **32%**
3. Smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth **25%**



## YOUTH IN SLOVENIA WANT TO SEE HELP TO THOSE IN NEED & PUBLIC SPENDING ON RESEARCH CONTINUED POST-PANDEMIC<sup>12</sup>

THE THREE MOST CHOSEN PANDEMIC RESPONSE MEASURES TO KEEP IN BOTH SLOVENIA AND ACROSS EUROPE ARE: ASSISTANCE TO THOSE MOST IN NEED, WORKING AND STUDYING FROM HOME, AND MORE PUBLIC SPENDING ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT. HOWEVER, SOME DIFFERENCES EMERGED:

A SIGNIFICANT MAJORITY OF YOUTH IN SLOVENIA (63%) PRIORITISE KEEPING ASSISTANCE TO THOSE MOST IN NEED. THIS COMPARES TO 42% IN EUROPE.

YOUTH IN SLOVENIA ARE LESS INCLINED TO PRIORITISE KEEPING FINANCIAL AID TO HELP OTHER COUNTRIES GLOBALLY FIGHT THE PANDEMIC (11%) WHEN COMPARED TO YOUTH ACROSS EUROPE (22%).

## EUROPE, THE NEXTGEN SPOKE, EUROPE, TIME TO ACT!

10. The numbers show the percentage of respondents that choose each answer option. Respondents selected two priorities from a list of six options.

11. The numbers show the percentage of respondents that choose each answer option. Respondents selected three priorities from a list of twelve options.

12. The numbers reflect the percentage of respondents that choose each answer option. Respondents selected up to three priorities from a list of ten options.