





Youth for the City

City for the Youth

Information on Lublin's projects for youth and on the bilateral initiative called "Youth for the City, City for the Youth – projects and initiatives to engage and act in the local communities".

Iceland 
Liechtenstein  Norway
Norway grants grants

Lublin 
CITY OF INSPIRATION



Dear Reader,

The granting of the European Youth Capital (EYC) 2023 title provided an impetus for Lublin to extend its support for the city's younger residents. Collaborative partnerships and adherence to best practices from Poland and abroad were some of the key drivers of our city's new solutions for its youth

Therefore, in 2022, Lublin became the leader of a bilateral initiative called "Youth for the City, City for the Youth – projects and initiatives to engage and act in the local communities", implemented in partnership with the European Wergeland Centre based in the capital city of Norway, and the Sempre a Frente Foundation. The implementation of this initiative has helped to make young people more engaged in the community's life and contribute to a future they deserve.

As a city, we are proud of our efforts to create an inspiring and diverse environment in which young people can thrive. We believe that an understanding of their needs and aspirations is key to shaping a society driven by such values as participation, creativity and responsibility. Therefore, we remain attentive to young people's voices, and seek to create spaces that invite them to express their views and opinions.

This publication outlines Lublin's efforts to support young people, and to help them develop and pursue their goals. Here you will find information on the EYC 2023 programme, along with descriptions of initiatives that have provided new opportunities for young people to learn, grow and engage in social activities. It also provides examples of international projects that have encouraged young people from Poland, Ukraine and Norway to share their experiences and build intercultural bridges.

Explore the opportunities offered to young people in Lublin and gain inspiration from the projects implemented as part of the bilateral initiative.

Beata Stepaniuk-Kuśmierzak
President's Plenipotentiary
for the European Youth Capital

dr Krzysztof Żuk
Mayor of Lublin

About the city

The capital of eastern Poland, Lublin is an open and friendly city that actively responds to the needs and aspirations of young people.

All residents, regardless of their origin, world-view and orientation, can find their own space in Lublin, feel at home, and have their voices heard and appreciated.

The city is known for its commitment to the development of art and culture, as evidenced by its long-standing experience of organising widely recognised festivals. Theatres, museums, art galleries and other cultural institutions offer many opportunities for young people to broaden their horizons and develop their interests.

Lublin is an academic city with many universities and colleges, including the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, the Medical University, the University of Life Sciences, the Catholic University of Lublin and the Lublin University of Technology. The city has a youthful spirit due to its large student population, fostering a lively atmosphere and urban culture.

Several dozen youth organisations operate in the city. They play an active role in developing and implementing the city's policies, especially through cooperation with the Lublin City Office.





Lublin's youth policy

Youth policies are sets of measures, programmes and strategies developed by governments, international organisations or other institutions to address youth issues and needs. This public policy area focuses on social matters involving young people.

development in the long run. Moreover, a properly implemented youth policy fosters the engagement of young people in social, cultural and political life. It provides them with the opportunity to express their views, participate in decision-making processes, and influence the future. An effective youth policy can also help counter social problems such as youth unemployment, poverty, addiction and crime by providing appropriate educational programmes, support and career prospects. With this awareness, Lublin's authorities have considerably revised their approach to the city's youth policy over the last decade.

This process included the following stages:

1. Raising the awareness of youth organisations (2010–2012)

The year 2010 marked a turning point in Lublin's youth policy. It saw the establishment of several new youth organisations, and the Social Participation Office was set up within the Lublin City Office to coordinate the city's cooperation with civil society and support of NGOs.

2. First surveys and questionnaires, first youth policy developed jointly by the municipality and NGOs (2012–2015)

This period was marked by attempts to identify the needs and expectations of young people in the city. Local NGOs drew up comprehensive reports on the situation of Lublin's youth.

The year 2015 saw the first youth policy project, implemented jointly by youth organisations and the municipality. It was carried out within the framework of the **Erasmus+ KA3** Youth programme and resulted in a publication titled "Let's Talk! Young people's recommendations on civic participation and youth information", giving rise to a structured youth policy in Lublin.

3. Strengthening the role of youth representatives in the city's decision-making (2016–2021)

During the period in question, the Municipal Team for Children and Youth was appointed by the Mayor of Lublin to provide a platform for discussion and to work on issues related to children, young people and students in various aspects of their functioning in the city. The idea for the Municipal Team was put forward by young people participating in the project titled “Youth in Politics – Politics for the Youth. Lublin’s youth policy” carried out by the Youth City Council of Lublin in 2017–2018. In this process, the participants identified a range of important issues related to youth activities. The councillors, in cooperation with Lublin’s youth, developed several recommendations for the Mayor of Lublin, covering the following areas: youth activities, student self-government activities, and career counselling.

Also established was the Lublin Students’ Council. It has the right to propose initiatives for the development of the city’s academic life. **The Lublin Students’ Council** is made up of 26 members. Three student organisations operating in Lublin – AIESEC, ELSA and IFMSA – as well as nine Lublin-based universities, have delegated their representatives to sit on the Council.

4. Work on the first youth policy (2019–2023)

In January 2022, the City Council passed a resolution to adopt the Lublin 2030 Strategy. Among other issues, the document addresses youth policy. The work on the Lublin 2030 Strategy took three years to complete and was participatory in nature, involving a total of **about 15,000 people** at all stages, **including residents, experts, organisations and institutions.**

Those participating in the process, through more than a several hundred open thematic meetings, debates, discussions, workshops, and a series of quantitative and qualitative surveys, as well as two-stage public consultations, came up with a vision for the city’s future along with recommendations on the directions of its development.

To support the needs of Lublin’s youth, the city took measures to develop a separate youth policy document. This process lasted from March to November 2023, and involved young people living or studying in Lublin, as well as experts, social activists and city officials. To deliver an effective policy, tailored to young people’s current situation, it was necessary to thoroughly understand their needs and the challenges they faced. To this end, a detailed analysis was carried out at the initial stage. It was on factors including survey findings on Lublin’s youth and on additional qualitative surveys.

The youth policy goals set the directions for Lublin’s development as a friendly and open city which provides a wide range of opportunities for young people to thrive. The process of developing the youth policy was based on the widest possible participation of young people, especially those whose needs had not been defined to date. The resulting document provides a clear and comprehensive outline of how to develop a responsible municipal policy that empowers young people. It is important to recognise their individuality and to create an environment in which they can take part in the city’s life. The final document includes a methods section introducing the methodology of the survey conducted, a description of values and directions of development of Lublin’s youth policy, as well as proposed tools and actions.

The outcome was a document titled **“City for the Youth. Lublin’s Youth Policy”**, published in late 2023, when Lublin enjoyed the prestigious title of the European Youth Capital.



European Youth Capital 2023

The European Youth Capital (EYC) title is awarded each year by the European Youth Forum to one European city that displays extraordinary commitment to organising and promoting youth activities and developing cultural, educational and social activities aimed at young people. The main objectives of the EYC title include promoting youth activities and initiatives, and increasing the participation of young people in the social and cultural life of the city.

In 2023, Lublin was awarded the European Youth Capital (EYC) title, the first time a city in Poland had gained this honour. This prestigious title was granted by the European Youth Forum in recognition of the programme presented by the city, based on essential European values, i.e., participation in urban life, equality, accessibility and prevention of discrimination.

Lublin seeks to be open and friendly to young people, and responsive to their needs and aspirations. The city's residents and authorities strive to make it a place where young people – regardless of their background, beliefs and sexual orientation – feel at ease, are aware of their rights, and have their voices heard.



**LUBLIN
2023**

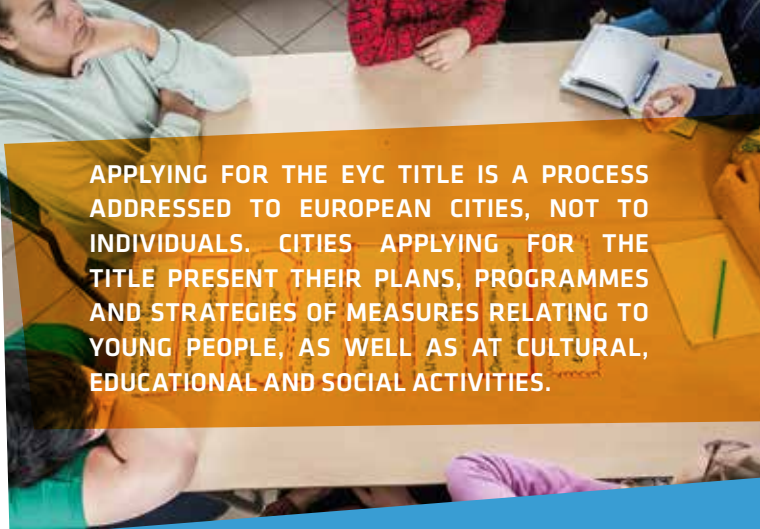
EUROPEAN
YOUTH
CAPITAL

Application process

It is worth emphasising that the most important outcomes of Lublin's European Youth Capital title include partnership and cooperation. The joint initiative of young people and the Sempre a Frente Foundation, who approached the municipal authorities with the proposal to submit the application, was a key success factor. It was young people and youth organisations that not only presented the idea of applying for the EYC title but also drew up the principal framework to and the final version of the application. The municipality's role was to provide organisational and substantive support throughout the process. The drawing up of the application involved many consultations with young people, youth workers, representatives of NGOs, and the Lublin City Office. An application team was formed as an initiative of young people and youth organisations, supported by city councillors.

Young people, together with representatives of the city and youth organisations, coordinated the application process for the second and third rounds of the competition.

The application for the European Youth Capital title marked the beginning of a change in youth activities for the city. **THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE EYC IN LUBLIN WAS TO INCREASE THE SOCIAL AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE BY CREATING A SENSE OF BELONGING AND SYNERGY WITH THE CITY.** In terms of defining the purpose of the activities planned, a distinction was drawn between internal objectives, those focused on the internal situation of the city, and external objectives – those concerning the external environment.



APPLYING FOR THE EYC TITLE IS A PROCESS ADDRESSED TO EUROPEAN CITIES, NOT TO INDIVIDUALS. CITIES APPLYING FOR THE TITLE PRESENT THEIR PLANS, PROGRAMMES AND STRATEGIES OF MEASURES RELATING TO YOUNG PEOPLE, AS WELL AS AT CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.

Goals of the European Youth Capital:

- Making positive changes.
- Encouraging the active participation.
- Promoting volunteering.
- Promoting European identity.
- Promoting and protecting diversity and social inclusion.
- Empowering youth organisations.
- Increasing youth investment.
- Transforming the city into an international meeting venue.
- Networking and creating synergies between young people across Europe.



Lublin is YOUTH



Implementation of the EYC programme

To demonstrate the role of young people and youth organisations, the EYC activities were divided into three areas fully reflecting the idea of the city involving its young people:

CITY FOR THE YOUTH

the city's activities aimed at creating more youth-oriented and youth-friendly spaces in the city;

YOUTH FOR THE CITY

a focus on youth projects and initiatives, with young people being active participants and initiators;

YOUTH AND THE CITY

an area of cooperation and partnership between young people and the city.



In 2023, during the implementation of the EYC programme, young people came up with their own initiatives, carried out their own projects, benefited from grant programmes, and organised or co-organised almost two-thirds of the activities carried out within the programme.



10 benefits brought by the EYC

The European Youth Capital title is both a great honour and a great responsibility. The EYC programme provides a big opportunity for the city and its youth to grow further. Benefits for young people include:

1. A MORE DIVERSE CULTURAL OFFERING

diverse and inspiring cultural events, organised as part of the European Youth Capital;

2. CREATIVITY IN ACTION

workshops, competitions and debates that foster creativity and develop entrepreneurship;

3. ESTABLISHING CONTACTS

meetings with peers from other countries through international cooperation and experience exchange;

4. A VIBRANT CITY

Lublin is becoming a more attractive place to live, work and study – by using its own infrastructure and friendly spaces that have been created especially for young people;

5. NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN

developing and acquiring new skills through organised training, workshops and conferences;

6. A STRONGER COMMUNITY

engaged in the life of Lublin, establishing and strengthening bonds with the city and the local community – by connecting school, university, city district and youth group projects;

7. CIVIC ACTIVITY

a variety of voluntary and social initiatives to exert a tangible impact on local development;

8. A TASTE FOR LUBLIN

Lublin gaining popularity not only as an attractive place for tourists and investors but also as an attractive place to study and live for young people, and a place to share experiences and inspirations of youth-friendly cities;

9. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

the benefits derived from new partnerships and cooperation with cities from all over Europe;

10. DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATION

young people driving Lublin's growth through their creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.

The initiative called

“Youth for the City, City for the Youth”

projects and initiatives to engage and act in the local communities”

In 2022–2024, the Lublin Municipality implemented a bilateral initiative called “**Youth for the City, City for the Youth**”. The initiative obtained PLN 850,000 in co-funding from EEA and Norway Grants. The activities carried out under the Initiative have become a very important element of the entire EYC 2023 programme in Lublin.

The purpose of the Initiative was to increase the civic engagement of young people (aged 10–30) from Poland and Ukraine in their local communities, with the support and use of the Norwegian experience.

The planned activities were expected to make Lublin a place that invests in young people’s creative ideas, strengthens their skills, develops their understanding, and provides them with opportunities for international meetings and dialogue regarding their civic engagement.

THE NORWEGIAN FINANCIAL MECHANISM AND THE EEA FINANCIAL MECHANISM

(commonly known as the EEA and Norway Grants) are a form of non-refundable foreign aid granted by Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein to EU members – around a dozen countries in Central and Southern Europe and the Baltic States. Their main purpose is to bridge the economic and social gaps between these EU members and the donor states through economic support and investments. These grants also support cultural, scientific, educational and ecological projects, promoting civic engagement and environmental protection. In addition, the Norway Grants and the EEA Grants help to strengthen ties, promote European integration and foster better understanding between nations. They support partnerships and cooperation between the donor states and beneficiaries, creating a conducive environment for experience sharing, partnership building and strengthening solidarity.





Activities

as part of the Initiative

As part of the Initiative, a number of projects have been implemented in response to the issues and ideas raised during consultations with Lublin's youth, youth support organisations and international partners. These included:

CREATING OPEN SPACES IN LUBLIN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO MEET, BOND AND COOPERATE (Youth Spaces);

INCREASING THE NUMBER OF YOUTH INITIATIVES

by launching the School Participatory Budget;

INCREASING THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE OF YOUNG

PEOPLE AND YOUTH WORKERS, from Lublin and the Lublin Province, in the field of civic education, implementation of their own initiatives, volunteering, labour market and career counselling – facilitated by the Youth Information and Development Centre (YIDC);

INTENSIFYING COOPERATION AND SHARING OF

EXPERIENCE AND BEST PRACTICES between young people and youth workers from the European Economic Area (Poland, Norway) countries and Ukraine through the organisation of cross-border events: youth exchange programmes, study visits and two editions of the Cross-Border Cooperation Congress.



A BILATERAL INITIATIVE

is a project involving at least two institutions or organisations representing different countries or regions. It is a form of international cooperation within which the cooperating entities, referred to as bilateral partners combine their effort and resources to accomplish certain goals or achieve specific outcomes. Bilateral initiatives are often part of broader collaborative relationships between countries.



Youth Spaces

- 1 Number of spaces financed by the EEA and Norway Grants (“Hej!”)
- 7 Spaces created and financed by the city

OCTOBER 2022 SAW THE OPENING OF THE FIRST YOUTH SPACE IN LUBLIN – “HEJ!”. A GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE WAS BROUGHT TOGETHER TO PARTICIPATE IN DESIGNING FROM SCRATCH, CO-DECIDING ON WHAT ACTIVITIES IT WOULD FACILITATE AND ESTABLISHING ITS OPERATIONAL RULES.

The idea behind this youth space is to provide young people with diverse participation options and to let them contribute to decision-making processes. It is not only a means of empowering young people, but also an essential element of civic education.

Hej!

“Hej!” is situated in the heart of Lublin, on 11 Peowiaków Street. It is open Monday to Friday between 10.00 am and 8 pm, and on weekends on an as-needed basis.

“Hej!” was meant as a response to the need reported by young people for an open, safe and free-of-charge space in the city, where they could develop their passions and interests, study or simply spend time with their peers. The space has been equipped in line with young people’s expectations. It features kitchen facilities, multimedia, as well as office and art supplies.

Each month “Hej!” is visited by nearly 700 young people, who take part in various workshops, meetings and other forms of activity offered neutral in ideology, politics and religion, “Hej!” enables young people to express their own identity in a natural and unrestricted manner. Tolerance and sensitivity to diversity are fundamental to feeling safe and confident – which is so important for young people.

Best practices from Norway

In August 2023, coordinators and young people affiliated with “Hej!” participated in a study visit to Oslo, the aim of which was to share experience and best practices in organising youth spaces. The participants visited a number of institutions working for youth activation: youth spaces and youth clubs, culture centres, libraries, the Education Centre on Utøya Island, and many more.



Youth space standards

Young people visiting “Hej!”, who live in other districts of Lublin, expressed the need for similar spaces to be established closer to where they live.

In 2023, together with a group of young people who took an active part in the process of creating “Hej!”, standards were developed for setting up other spaces of this kind. These standards apply to the conditions in which such spaces should function, taking into consideration the following issues: accessibility, safety, youth participation, space management, activity programmes, and rules of operation.

Youth space standards are the operational and organisational guidelines and rules for youth spaces.

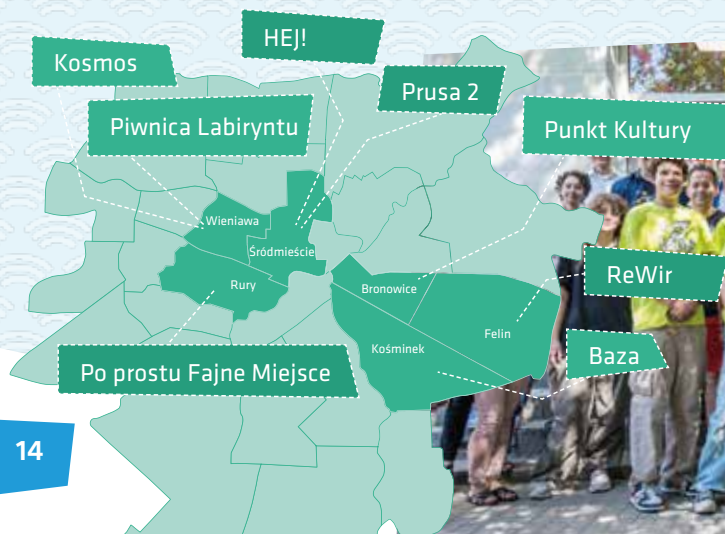
The network of Lublin Youth Spaces

The best practices developed during the implementation of "Hej!" were reapplied the principles for the functioning of other youth spaces. This allowed the city to announce a multi-year competition for NGOs to operate spaces dedicated to young people. The previously established standards allowed the creation of a coherent local network of Lublin Youth Spaces. Towards the end of 2023, seven new spaces for young people appeared on the Lublin map. They could function thanks to funding from the Lublin City budget – totalling PLN 2.3 million.

All these places are safe havens for young people, where they can spend their free time, put their ideas into practice and meet their peers. Youth spaces are dedicated for young people aged between 10 and 30.

YOUTH SPACE ADDRESSES

1. Youth Space "Po prostu Fajne Miejsce" [Simply a Cool Place], 5 Jana Sawy St. (Rury District)
2. Youth Space "Prusa 2", 2 B. Prusa St. (Śródmieście District)
3. Youth Space "ReWir", 8 Królowej Bony St. (Felin District)
4. Youth Space "Baza", 88 Długa St. (Kośminek District)
5. Youth Space "Punkt Kultury" [Culture Point], 21 Skibińska St. (Bronowice District)
6. Youth Space "Kosmos", 33 Racławickich Ave. (Wieniawa District)
7. Youth Space "Piwnica Labiryntu" [Labyrinth Basement], 5 J. Popiełuszki St. (Wieniawa District).
8. Youth Space "HEJ!", . 11 Peowiaków St.



- 22** Number of schools participating in the first edition (pilot)
- 20** Number of schools participating in the second edition
- 41** Number of schools participating in the third edition

A pilot edition of the School Participatory Budgets (SPB) competition was held in Lublin in 2021. This was the first step towards creating a self-governance programme for children and youth in Lublin. Since 2021, the SPB has been held every year.

The competition aims to develop and promote student self-governance, to increase the sense of influence on school issues among students, to expand cooperation for the co-creation of educational spaces, and to develop school and local communities.

A School Participatory Budget is a process in which the school community decides how to use a portion of the school budget. It is students, parents, teachers and other school staff who come up with their own proposals, develop projects and then make their own selection of the concepts they find the most interesting and needed. SPB decisions are not taken unilaterally by head teachers or other school authorities, but are the outcome of cooperation among and involvement of the whole school community.

As part of the SPB, schools receive substantive, mentoring, informational and promotional support throughout the process, which they carry out independently at the more advanced stages (establishing their own SPB rules and regulations, identifying the actual needs, conducting project marathons, voting, verifying project proposals, announcing selection results, and implementing the projects).



School participatory Budgets



Stages of the School Participatory Budgets

- 1.** Preparation and submission of the application – the form and deadline for submission are defined in the rules and regulations.
- 2.** Formal and substantive evaluation of the application based on the criteria listed in the rules and regulations.
- 3.** Announcement of the competition results.
- 4.** Submission of project proposals by the school community.
- 5.** Voting procedure and selection of the most popular school projects.
- 6.** Implementation of the project.

Edition 2022

*In the second edition, more than 200 projects were submitted, **37** of which were eventually implemented. In 2022, the School Participatory Budgets were implemented by 20 schools and centres. An amount of PLN 80,000 was allocated for this purpose as part of the Initiative, financed from the Norwegian and EEA funds.*

Based on the evaluation of individual educational establishments, as well as the first (pilot) and second editions of the SPB, it was found that the implementation of the process carries considerable educational value.

Edition 2023

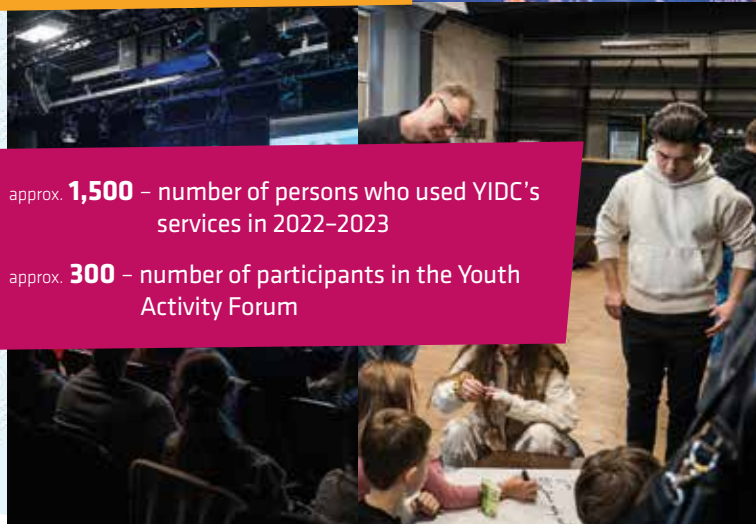
*The third edition of the School Participatory Budgets saw **41** educational institutions submit their applications. It is worth stressing that these included schools that had already taken part in previous years and many new educational establishments. Hence, they could share experiences and best practices, and form a support network.*

In the 2023 edition of the SPB competition, each establishment received PLN 4,000 to implement its projects, along with substantive, organisational and promotional support.



School Participatory Budget

provides insights into school finances, constituting an extraordinary civic culture and entrepreneurship lesson. Most importantly, it is a fully hands-on experience, not the usual classroom project. Having their voices heard regarding school affairs, students develop a sense of identification with their school and shared responsibility for it.



approx. **1,500** – number of persons who used YIDC's services in 2022–2023

approx. **300** – number of participants in the Youth Activity Forum



Youth Information and Development Centre

The YIDC supports young people from the age of 13 and those who work with young people on a daily basis.

Sempre a Frente Foundation has been running the Youth Information and Development Centre (YIDC) since 2013. It supports the development of youth information and encourages young people to embrace active citizenship, and also promotes social responsibility, initiative, and entrepreneurship.

Participation in the bilateral initiative called “Youth for the City, City for the Youth” has made it possible to significantly expand the scope of YIDC activities, offering support to young people from Lublin and the whole region. As part of the Initiative, the Centre makes its services available to more than 1,000 people each year, supporting school and university students, teaching staff and young people outside the educational system, regardless of their background, including young migrants and refugees.

PERSONAL-DEVELOPMENT

The Centre conducts **personal-development workshops** through non-formal educational methods, and provides information on career paths, social engagement and participation, well-being, volunteering and opportunities offered by the European Union. Youth workers provide young people with career, educational and civic counselling, while psychologists offer consultations on personal development and coping with difficult situations, the latter proving particularly relevant in the context of the current war in Ukraine.

YIDC activities are conducted in several formats – as stationary activities at the Centre, as off-site activities and remotely. Accurate and relevant information on opportunities to participate in the Centre’s activities is provided through social media, in three languages. Young people also have the opportunity to volunteer and undertake peer education activities, and to participate in the organisation of events and information meetings promoting an active attitude among young people.



Best practices

The implemented Initiative has enabled the **application of best practices** in the field of civic and anti-discrimination education in Norway, implemented by the European Wergeland Centre and other social organisations, inspiring and improving the quality of local projects. Several dozen workshops and training sessions have been conducted in the fields of psychosocial skills, cybersecurity and new technologies, time management, professions of the future, building career paths, launching one's own initiatives and active participation in democratic society, attracting hundreds of young people and the professionals supporting them in their daily work.

~ 1 500

Number of persons who used
IYDC's services in 2022-2023

~ 300

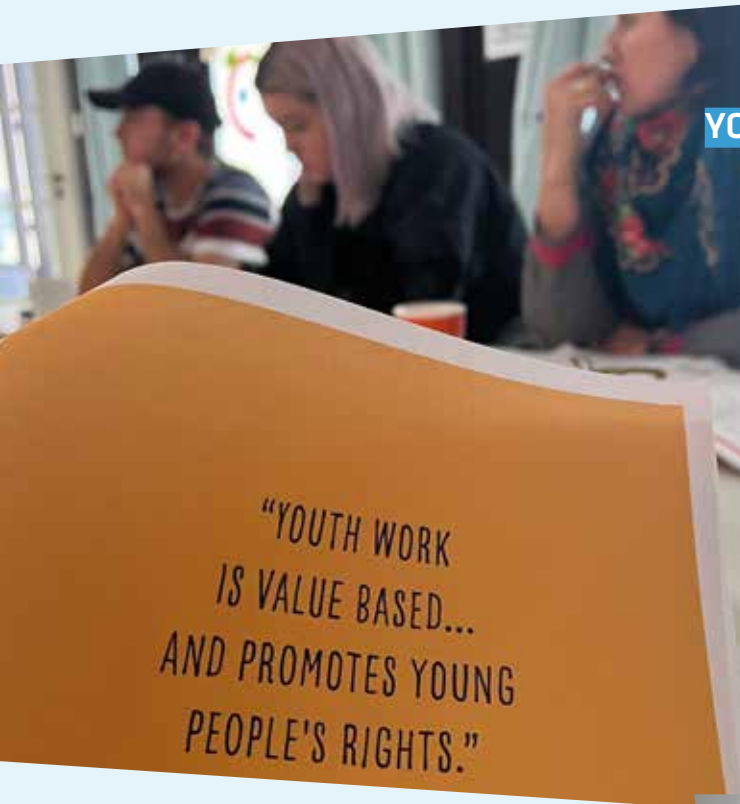
Number of participants
in the Youth Activity Forum



THE "YOUTHWORK SUMMER SCHOOL"

allowed the participants to acquire the skills necessary to work with young people in the following fields:

- inclusion of national, sexual and other minorities;
- inclusion of groups at risk of social exclusion;
- safety and protection of young people;
- team-based communication and cooperation;
- promoting the well-being of young people;
- new technologies.



YOUTH WORK

As part of cooperation between the Centre and the Social Participation Office of the Lublin City Office, a **youth worker school pilot project** was implemented as a training programme for professional youth workers and youth facilitators at culture centres and institutions, in newly established youth spaces, and in social organisations and institutions. Through a series of training sessions, those taking up work in the newly-established youth spaces in the city had the opportunity to get to know each other, and to gain new knowledge and skills relevant to their everyday professional activities.

The Youth Information and Development Centre also organises monthly **meetings of NGOs and institutions involved in youth activities** in the city, called “**śniadaNGO**” (“third sector breakfast”). It provides a platform where serious issues related to cooperation between NGOs, the city and young people are discussed in a relaxed atmosphere. In addition, participants can exchange contacts, experiences and best practices. Such meetings also help to address other relevant topics such as cooperation with the educational system, inclusion of young people with disabilities and support for volunteering in the city. One such meeting was attended by representatives of the European Wergeland Centre. Its aim was to facilitate experience-sharing between youth workers, establishing direct contacts between representatives of organisations, and building new partnerships.

śniadaNGO





Youth Activity Festival

As part of the Initiative, two editions of the Youth Activity Festival – an annual event integrating the youth community across the Lublin Province – were held (in 2022 and 2023).

Both were attended by nearly 300 young people, teachers and representatives of NGOs and institutions. The participants had the opportunity to exchange contacts, build relationships, and to gain new experience through specially designed team games based on non-formal education and new technologies. An important aspect of the Festival is the opportunity to meet inspiring people and representatives of other youth organisations, who are eager to talk about their achievements and give advice to young people.



Local Animator Academy



Local Animator Academy is another programme to facilitate the acquisition of new skills relevant to the labour market and to support the youth initiatives.

THE ACADEMY IS A SERIES OF TRAINING SESSIONS, WORKSHOPS AND INSPIRING MEETINGS WITH YOUTH ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR, REPRESENTATIVES OF LUBLIN-BASED NGOS AND INSTITUTIONS.

Through the programme, young participants become leaders of their communities, implementing their first projects for the local community. Those who have completed the Academy actively use the knowledge they have acquired and put their creative ideas into practice. An example of such activity was the organisation of an inter-generation event aimed at bringing together two generations: young people and seniors.

International cooperation



Utøya is an island near Oslo, which on 22 July 2011 faced an attack by far-right terrorist Anders Behring Breivik. After the attack, the island became an Education Centre, focusing on human rights and democratic citizenship in close cooperation with the European Wergeland Centre.

1. YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES

The European Wergeland Centre, Lublin's partner under the bilateral initiative called "Youth for the City, City for the Youth...", conducted two youth exchange programmes online and two offline, dedicated to young people from Ukraine, Poland and Norway.

These exchange programmes had some positive impacts on local communities. After they ended, their participants continued to keep in touch, using their new contact network to strengthen efforts to promote youth participation.

2. YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES IN OSLO AND ON THE ISLAND OF UTØYA

OSLO, DECEMBER 2022

The three-day exchange was themed: "Inclusion now!". Its objectives were to create a space where young people could share their experience of promoting inclusivity in society, and to ensure that youth participation is real and meaningful.

The visit to the Norwegian capital coincided with the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony, offering the exchange participants a unique opportunity to speak with a representative of one of the award-winning organisations, Sasha Romantsova, executive director at the Ukrainian Centre for Civil Liberties.

OSLO AND UTØYA, SEPTEMBER 2023

The second exchange was themed: "Tolerance, Inclusivity and Engagement for a Better Tomorrow!". The objective was to increase the understanding of how to work practically on inclusion and cooperation.

The exchange programme included workshops, and seminars conducted by trainers from the European Wergeland Centre, who have substantial experience in human rights education, democratic citizenship and intercultural understanding.

over **900** Number of attendees

7 workshops

4 youth exchange programmes: 2 offline and 2 online

8 discussion panels

3 Partners Forums

11 study visits

4 Funders' Fairs

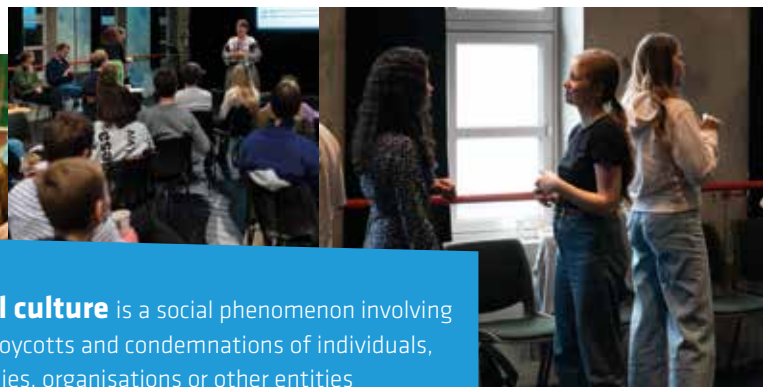
3. ONLINE YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES

The online exchange programmes were implemented in the autumn – in October and November 2023.

The first was themed: **“How to manage conflict in personal and professional relationships? Building a culture of communication using practical tools based on nonviolent communication (NVC)”**. The event focused on using the Nonviolent Communication (NVC) model as a strategy for strengthening a culture of dialogue – inter alia, through a better understanding of one’s own needs.

The second exchange was themed: **“Inclusivity and cancel culture in youth activism”**. This time, the focus was on relationships with other people and on a sense of belonging, these two being recognised among basic human needs, crucial to everyone’s well-being.

The phenomenon of cancel culture is present among young people at and outside schools. It complicates matters when it comes to managing emotional situations, a sense of belonging and well-being, and even causes radicalisation.



Cancel culture is a social phenomenon involving public boycotts and condemnations of individuals, companies, organisations or other entities

LITTLE BIG BOOK OF DEMOCRACY

The youth exchange activities led to the preparation and publication of The Little Big Book of Democracy. The book – with its sample exercises and work methods – is a basic guide for youth workers. The contents of the publication are divided into three parts: teaching democracy, human rights and how to talk about controversial issues. Each of these includes an introduction to the topic,

important things to remember when conducting thematic workshops and seminars, and presents some additional activities related to the topic.

pdf version online:





4. STUDY VISITS AND WORKSHOPS

As part of the block of activities concerning international cooperation, the Lublin Municipality, as the leader of the bilateral initiative called “Youth for the City, City for the Youth...”, organised a number of study visits and workshops. These were attended by young people, employees of the Lublin City Office, representatives of formal and non-formal educational institutions, and representatives of NGOs. Their objective was to share experience and best practices between young people and youth workers from Poland, Norway and Ukraine.

a) 2022

In 2022, due to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the study visits and workshops focused on the issues of integrating young migrants in cities, schools and peer groups. This topic was extremely relevant for all partners of the Initiative. Lublin received a large number of young Ukrainians at that time. Ukrainian cities were facing two challenges of two extremes: some of them – a large inflow of new residents, while others – their mass outflow. Partners from Norway acted as experts, offering their long-standing experience in working with migrants and young people. Together, they sought ways to support young people looking for safety in another country or city, and also to facilitate their integration.

In September 2022, **A STUDY VISIT** to Oslo was

held. It was attended by 10 young volunteers representing the Lublin Social Committee who had been particularly involved in helping refugees from Ukraine. The diverse study visit programme included a visit to the headquarters of the European Wergeland Centre and meetings with representatives of the following organisations: Sex and Politics, Stopp Hatprat, the Norwegian Council for Children and Youth, and Caritas Norge.

Also in 2022, a two-day **WORKSHOP** was held for teachers and principals of Lublin schools that had welcomed children and young people from Ukraine into their communities, as well as having collaborated with representatives of Ukrainian teaching staff. Experts from Norway and Poland shared their practical experiences in integrating young people from other countries into the school community. The workshop attendees also shared their own experiences with one another.

b) 2023

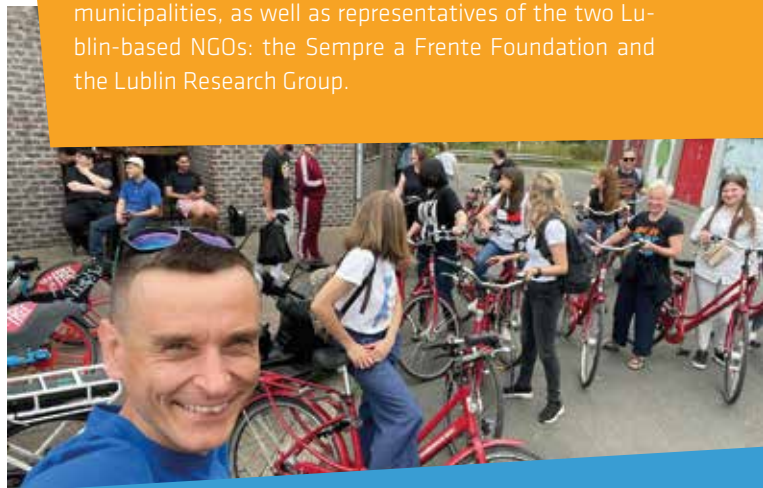
Activities undertaken in 2023 focused on shaping Lublin's youth policy and supported the process of developing this document. Over four study visits, the main focus was on such issues as defining programme parameters, and the functioning of entities and bodies supporting youth activities in various urban areas.

In March 2023, representatives of the Lublin City Office, together with those involved in the development of Lublin's youth policy, visited **THE CITY OF WARSAW** to learn how Poland's capital approached the development of its youth policy, share experiences and best practices in this regard, and expand knowledge on how to conduct public consultations on youth policy. The visit included meetings with representatives of foundations and associations. They also visited places where young people can pursue their passions or take part in free workshops.

At the beginning of April 2023, **A STUDY VISIT TO KRAKÓW** was held, devoted mainly to outlining the process of developing youth policy in Kraków and presenting the "Young Kraków 2.0" programme. The participants had the opportunity to meet with representatives of departments of the Kraków City Office and NGOs involved in youth activities. A participatory model of developing youth policy, cooperation between the city and NGOs, and promotion of entrepreneurship among young people were presented. An important part of the programme was a visit to youth spaces and the Kraków Climate Education Centre.



In May 2023, **ANOTHER STUDY VISIT** to Oslo was held. This time, it was devoted to youth policy. The meetings were attended by the Lublin City Office employees involved in youth activities, representatives of three Ukrainian cities implementing youth policy in their municipalities, as well as representatives of the two Lublin-based NGOs: the Sempre a Frente Foundation and the Lublin Research Group.



The last **STUDY VISIT** – the European Youth Capital in 2024. The meetings, hosted by Ghent City Council's Youth Team, focused on the programme offering addressed to young people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds. The participants met with representatives of the European Youth Capital Office and the Youth City Council, and visited several exemplary youth integration and activity facilities, operating permanently or temporarily in Ghent.



3. CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

THE MAIN THEME OF THE 2022 CONGRESS

was “Security and Solidarity”. Russia’s aggression against Ukraine and the refugee crisis it triggered demonstrated the strength of the ties between local communities from Ukraine, Poland and democratic Europe as a whole. As the future European Youth Capital, Lublin also established a platform for young people from Poland, Norway and Ukraine to hold panel discussions and workshops.

THE CONGRESS FEATURED:

- panel discussions on building youth policies, intercultural integration of young people, and networks for international cooperation and solidarity;

- thematic workshops relating to the prevention of discrimination among young people and to the experience of migration;
- the Partners Forum and Funders’ Fairs, with speeches delivered by representatives of FRSE – Erasmus+ programme and a representative of the Polish-German Youth Cooperation;
- study visits presenting youth spaces operating in Lublin and how they work with young people.



Norway Grants’ youth priorities

The European Wergeland Centre participated in the Cross-Border Cooperation Congress in Lublin, where it held a panel discussion jointly with the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Warsaw.

The aim of the panel was to share good practices and lessons learned on how young people, civil societies and local communities solve problems in times of crisis. The opinions and insights of those attending the panel were heard by Bjørn Erik Brustad, Minister of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Warsaw, who also spoke about the future of the Norwegian Grants programme.

THE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION CONGRESS 2023

was entirely devoted to the theme of youth, its motto being: "The City of Youth". Several hundred people from the following 14 countries participated in panels, workshops and study visits: Belgium, Belarus, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Georgia, Indonesia, Moldova, Norway, Ukraine, Hungary, the United Kingdom and, of course, Poland.

THIS YEAR'S CONGRESS INCLUDED:

- panel discussions on the needs of young people, the role of youth workers, and the School Participatory Budget; recommendations were also developed on the most important issues and social problems facing young people;
- workshops addressing issues related to developing youth policies, starting a business, and building a tourist offering attractive to young people;
- Funders' Fairs devoted to the presentation of grant competitions conducted by the Foundation for the Development of the Education System and the International Visegrad Fund, and presentation of the Interreg NEXT Poland-Ukraine 2021-2027 Programme;
- the Partners Forum, during which the services of youth organisations were presented along with opportunities to get involved in projects for the benefit of young people;
- study visits introducing participants to the academic and economic aspects of the city, as well as youth activities implemented in numerous youth spaces.





The year 2023 saw the culmination of Lublin's multi-annual activities addressed to its young residents, while the granting of the European Youth Capital (EYC) title and the implementation of the activity programme became an opportunity for the city to grow dynamically and to strengthen the role of young people in the city. Lublin, as a leader among Polish local governments in international cooperation, has involved young people and youth workers from several European countries in its activities, thus intensifying the sharing of experience and integration processes.

THE BILATERAL INITIATIVE CALLED “YOUTH FOR THE CITY, CITY FOR THE YOUTH – PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES TO ENGAGE AND ACT IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES”


implemented in partnership with an international organisation, the European Wergeland Centre based in Oslo, and a Lublin-based NGO, Sempre a Frente Foundation, played a key role in the broad implementation of the European Youth Capital Programme. Youth spaces were created, contributing to the development of places that foster activity and creativity among young people.

Summary

THE SCHOOL PARTICIPATORY BUDGET PROGRAMME

ensured youth participation in decision-making processes, involving them in the preparation and implementation of various projects for the benefit of the school community. Numerous events were organised, involving young people in a variety of artistic and social activities. In addition, youth exchange and study visit programmes, both at the national and international levels, have allowed the participants to broaden their horizons, facilitating global experience-sharing..

Supporting the activities of NGOs for young people and developing international cooperation in the field of youth activities are other outcomes of the implementation of the EYC 2023 Initiative and programme. As a result of all these multifaceted efforts, Lublin not only confirmed the legitimacy of the title it was granted, but also laid a solid foundation for further involvement of young residents in the city's social and cultural life.



The implementation of the Initiative would not have been possible without the involvement of each of the Initiative's partners – who had specific roles to play – in the planning and implementation of the projects. The following entities partnered with the Lublin Municipality – the Initiative Leader – to implement these projects: the European Wergeland Centre (Oslo) and Sempre a Frente Foundation (Lublin).

Initiative Leader and Partners

The Lublin Municipality

Lublin is the largest city in eastern Poland. It leads in Poland in terms of local-government international cooperation. Lublin is a city of youth and a robust academic and cultural centre, with more than 60,000 students (including more than 9,500 foreign students). As a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which caused a refugee crisis, the number of young people living in Lublin has further increased. As the European Youth Capital 2023, Lublin has implemented programmes to support the thorough development of young people and engage them in decision-making processes.

A network of youth spaces has been created, school participatory budgets have been launched, and the following programmes have been implemented: the City Academy civic education programme, the Youth Inspires Districts micro-grant programme and grants for NGOs.

The city also organises training sessions and workshops for young people and youth workers, as well as internships and international exchange programmes.



European Wergeland Centre

The European Wergeland Centre (EWC) is a resource centre on education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic citizenship. The Centre's work builds on Council of Europe recommendations and policies, such as the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, which was developed to ensure that the values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law are promoted in and through education.

The EWC's main aim is to strengthen the capacity of individuals, educational institutions, and educational systems to build and sustain a culture of democracy and human rights. It was established by the Council of Europe and Norway in 2008 and serves all 46 member states. The EWC is governed by a board composed of representatives of the Council of Europe and Norway. Their offices are located in Oslo.



Sempre a Frente Foundation

Sempre a Frente Foundation has been supporting children and young people since 2010, implementing a range of prevention, support, education and information programmes. It focuses mainly on promoting and supporting the mental health and protection of children and young people, engaging them in volunteer and participatory initiatives, and developing the psychosocial, civic, digital and professional skills of young people and youth workers. It is committed to driving systemic changes in the field of child and youth support, and to building youth policies and dialogue between young people and decision-makers. The Foundation provides assistance especially to young people who are underprivileged, come from difficult backgrounds or experience violence. The Foundation cooperates with schools, universities, municipalities and other NGOs from Lublin, the whole Lublin region and across Europe.





Youth for the City

City for the Youth



Youth

CITY



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