

EUROPEAN UNION

Youth Initiative

JEF Finland has a goal to advance youth participation in the European Union with concrete proposals and solutions. European Union Youth Initiative is JEF Finland's own innovation that would give an opportunity for young people without a vote in the European elections to set items important to them to the agenda of the European Parliament.

The European Union Youth Initiative aims to help those youth who cannot yet vote in the European elections due to their age to voice their opinion on European matters. Young people in every member state will be granted an opportunity to refer annually one initiative to the European Parliament by vote. A digital portal will be created for them to propose initiatives and to vote on them. The initiative with the most votes in each member state will be adopted as a national youth initiative and its organising group/person will be awarded an invitation to present the initiative at the plenary of the European Parliament.

The European Union Youth Initiative is not a legislative proposal but a call for a plenary debate of which the European Parliament commits itself to honour. Neither the Parliament nor any other body cannot choose which initiatives are referred to the plenary as the voting result of the member states' youth will be respected in full. The European Parliament commits to reserve annually a certain amount of plenary debate time for each national initiative. The European Union Youth Initiative is not legalistic in nature which makes it easy to implement and lowers the threshold for youth participation.



How the European Union Youth Initiative works in practice?

A common digital system will be set up where the youth can propose their own initiatives and vote on initiatives proposed by the others. The European Parliament liaison offices in member states have been recently granted more resources to approach the youth so they would be a natural fit for agents promoting the European Youth Initiative together with local Civil Society Organisations. The European Parliament has indicated an aim to reach out to youth groups underrepresented in the current initiatives. For this outreach effort the European Union Youth Initiative would be an excellent tool.

An exact digital solution for proposing and voting initiatives should be left to the European Parliament and its liaison offices to decide. However, the platform should be easy to use and registration with identification should not create a barrier for participation in the eyes of the youth. The European Union Youth Initiative is also a fantastic tool for teaching about the EU in primary schools, vocational schools and upper secondary schools as it makes the students familiar with the EU institutions and decision-making processes.

UNDERSIGNED:

JEF Finland

Finnish National Youth Council Allianssi	OSKU ry (Finnish national union for students)
The Union of Local Youth Councils in Finland	Youth of the National Coalition Party
UN Youth of Finland	Sosiaalidemokraattiset Nuoret ry
European Youth Parliament Finland – EYP Finland ry.	Finnish Centre Youth
Youth League of the Finnish Norden Association	Federation of Green Youth and Students
Nuorten mielenterveysseura Yeesi ry.	The Left Youth of Finland
Suomen Partiolaiset – Finlands Scouter ry	Sosialidemokraattiset Opiskelijat – SONK ry
The Union of Upper Secondary School	Centre Students Finland
Students in Finland	Student Union of National Coalition Party
National Union of Vocational Students in Finland	(Tuhatkunta)
Swedish Speaking School Student Union of Finland	Left Students of Finland
National Union of University Students in Finland	STTK-Opiskelijat
Suomen opiskelijakuntien liitto – SAMOK ry	Akavan opiskelijat
	Swedish Youth of Finland, Swedish People's Party's youth organisation