



# YOUTH STRATEGY

2021 - 2027

European Union Delegation to Ghana

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## Definitions *(for this strategy)*

**Youth:** individuals between the age of 15 to 35 (African Union youth age range).

**Youth Inclusion:** involvement of youth in decision-making structures, particularly in policy discussions that seek to create positive social change.

**Youth Empowerment:** provision of resources to youth, including education and opportunities to take action, transform and take charge of their lives, which result in positive change.

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## Mission – General objective *(impact)*

The EU Delegation recognizes the potential of young people as essential drivers of change, especially in communities with limited resources and investment. The EU in Ghana seeks to **empower and equip young people in Ghana** with the necessary skills and resources to address the challenges facing their communities and the country as a whole, in particular through inclusion in decision-making process and structures and greater employment and education opportunities.

In alignment with the EU Youth Action Plan (YAP) and the Ghanaian Government's National Youth Policy (2022-2032), the EU Delegation aims to contribute to the development of a **new skilled and empowered generation of young leaders and entrepreneurs** in Ghana who will help promote socio-economic development and drive positive change across the country.

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## Specific objectives *(outcomes)*

In partnership with relevant stakeholders, including youth-led organisations, education institutions and private sector entities, our **specific objectives** are:

1. **Dialogue:** To create safe spaces for youth to engage in meaningful debates on issues affecting their communities and the country as a whole. These should be opportunities for youth to share their views on various policy issues relevant for their country and everyday challenges as well as to jointly develop innovative solutions to address them.
2. **Action:** To provide Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) with the necessary skills and resources to implement projects and activities supporting youth inclusion and employment. This includes supporting youth-led organisations and in minor proportions directly individuals.
3. **Study & Jobs:** To provide youth with opportunities to pursue quality education and have access to employment, including scholarships, training and support to young entrepreneurs. This includes academic and training opportunities both in Ghana and in Europe.
4. **Young Leaders:** To empower young Ghanaians to be responsible and engaged citizens and to exert their influence in the policy making and decision making process in Ghana; to promote positive values on key policy issues, including democratic governance, human rights, environmental protection and climate change. These young leaders should also be engaged as key partners on EU political priorities and programming in the country on the one hand and communication and visibility of EU on the other. This includes supporting and amplifying

outreach on EU activities and values as well as informing the country about EU programmes and projects and political engagement.

## **Objectives in detail:**

### **1. Dialogue**

#### **A. CREATION OF YOUTH SOUNDING BOARD**

The establishment of a Youth Sounding Board (YSB) in Ghana will be an important step towards creating a more inclusive society that values and prioritises the voices and perspectives of young people. The YSB should provide a forum for dialogue and engagement among youth on youth-related topics and Ghanaian policies. It should also address EU policies and EU-Ghana partnership.

#### **B. YOUTH CONSULTATIONS**

The EU will consult youth-led organisations and individuals on policy priorities and programmes in Ghana. This will include discussions on specific strategies and Action Documents, as well as discussions on the EU-Ghana partnership. This could take the form of an annual consultation in the lead-up to the EU-Ghana Partnership Dialogue.

#### **C. OTHER YOUTH ENGAGEMENT**

The EU will also promote other dialogue channels for youth, at national, local, regional and global levels. In Ghana, this could take the form of a ‘Town Hall’ Forum, an informal meeting with youth, local/traditional authorities and relevant government representatives to discuss community- and region -specific issues. This platform would allow youth representatives to share and debate pressing challenges and propose solutions in open debates with decision-makers (e.g. MPs, regional ministries, National Youth Authority).

At regional and global level, the EU will promote cross-cultural dialogue between youth representatives, both within the African continent and with EU counterparts. This should include supporting young Ghanaians to attend relevant forums and trainings in Europe (e.g. European Development Days; CSO consultation with EU) and facilitate regional discussions.

### **2. Action**

#### **A. SUPPORT TO YOUTH AND YOUTH-LED ORGANISATIONS**

Vocal, active CSOs is an essential component of a democratic system and of sustainable development in any country. Its capacity building is even more critical, given the significant role that CSOs play in reaching communities and addressing youth-centric challenges. The EU Delegation to Ghana acknowledge the need to support CSOs, namely those representing the youth voice, to build their capacities, and develop the skills and abilities needed to adapt and thrive in a fast-changing world.

The EU will **support and empower youth-led organisations and civil society organisations focused on youth**. This will take the form of both capacity-building activities and supply of small grants. The CSO capacity building training programme will enable CSOs and youth organisations in Ghana to access technical and financial resources, effectively implement quality interventions geared towards addressing youth-centric challenges, and build sustainable organisations that can make a significant impact in their communities. This could also include support through technical assistance and collaboration with Europe-based youth organisations and initiatives. The provision of small

grants could be foreseen for proposals submitted by young individuals having a direct impact on communities.

## **B. YOUTH AS CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITY**

As a cross-cutting priority of the EU's Joint Programming for Ghana 2021-2027, youth will be mainstreamed across a majority of programmes and projects. Firstly, this means that youth should be prioritised as **beneficiaries of EU projects** (e.g. in the Private Sector Development programme). By extension, project results and data should be disaggregated by age, with specific attention to the proportion of youth beneficiaries and their age range. Project communication and visibility activities will also target and engage youth to the extent possible, especially when public discussions (e.g. conferences, forums, dialogues) or networking events (e.g. fairs, receptions) are organised in the framework of a project or activity.

Youth will also be increasingly involved in the **design phase of EU programmes and projects**, especially those with a strong youth component. This implies consulting youth organisations and representatives and ensuring that their perspectives are taken into account in the final project design and implementation.

## **3. Study and Jobs**

### **A. EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

The EU Delegation recognizes the transformative impact that international scholarship opportunities have on young people, both for academic development, personal growth and employability. Through the **Erasmus+ scholarship programme**, the EU provides scholarships to Ghanaian students (40+ students in 2022) interested in pursuing higher education in European universities. In addition, EU Member States have further bilateral scholarship opportunities. However, these programmes are not always well-known, especially in rural communities or smaller education institutions.

For this reason, the EU will promote more effective **communication and outreach** on Erasmus+ and other scholarship opportunities to study and train in Europe, notably through the organisation of a yearly Erasmus+ information event (e.g. Roadshow). The EU will also help Erasmus+ alumni maintain a strong network and facilitate dialogue opportunities with prospective applicants.

Alongside these initiatives, the EU will support **training and education** to promote employability among young Ghanaians. This includes Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes and the EU-Ghana Pact4Skills programme. The Ghanaian-European Centre for Jobs, Migration and Development recently set up (2023) will serve as an important contact and information point in that regard, providing information on education and employment opportunities in Ghana and in Europe – both for returning and prospective migrants.

### **B. EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

With the rise of digital technology and increased access to capital for entrepreneurs of all types, entrepreneurship has become a popular career choice for youth in Ghana. However, many lack the necessary skills and support to successfully launch and run a business. Ghanaian youth is also suffering a **shortage of jobs**, with many young people remaining unemployed for several months or years after graduating and sometimes turning to the informal sector for revenues.

Responding to this context, the EU in Ghana will **promote youth entrepreneurship** and support these young entrepreneurs to gain professional skills and access to finance, all the while improving

the regulatory environment in which their businesses operate. This support (especially under the Private Sector Development programme) will focus on a number of promising sectors, notably: pharmaceuticals, digital and green, creative industries (fashion, music, animation and videogames). Existing support to large employment sectors, such as agriculture, will also continue.

## 4. Young Leaders

### A. EU GOODWILL AMBASSADOR

To amplify its messaging and **reach a wider youth audience**, the EU Delegation is joining forces with an EU Goodwill Ambassador for sustainability, employment, youth and women. This partnership aim to i) amplify EU messaging on values, priorities and programmes and ii) reach new audiences, in particular Ghanaian youth. The Goodwill Ambassador will be selected on a yearly basis, with an option to renew for one more year, and the partnership will be anchored in a Code of Conduct and Letter of Commitment. EU Goodwill Ambassadors will be selected on the basis of their commitment to EU values as well as engagement on priority sectors, including **youth empowerment and inclusion**. Activities will include:

- Raising awareness and promoting EU values and initiatives in Ghana.
- Communicating actively on social media, in the press and other platforms.
- Organising activities relevant to the EU, such as information and awareness days.
- Connecting and exchanging with relevant networks and stakeholders.

### B. PARTNERSHIP WITH YOUNG INFLUENCERS

As part of its commitment to promoting youth development and empowerment, the EU Delegation will strengthen the ability **of young Ghanaian influencers** to shape public opinion through their social media presence. They can be powerful agents for change in promoting shared values on national and global issues as well as the priorities and activities of the EU. The EU will work to create partnerships with young influencers, both to promote youth leadership and to expand the reach and impact of EU communication.

This partnership should include support to these influencers, from **financial resources to in-kind training and capacity building**. This could take the form of interactive workshops and training sessions on EU priorities and/or global challenges, such as climate change and democracy. The EU should also support a selected group of young influencers to participate in EU and international events and conferences, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's Conference of the Parties (COP) and European Development Days. Mentorship programmes on social media use, disinformation or other relevant topics could also be considered. Finally, the EU Delegation will actively involve young Ghanaian influencers in its social media campaigns (e.g. Climate Diplomacy Week, International Human Rights Day, etc.).

## Targets and partners

- **Youth organisations, youth-led organisations and young leaders** are the main partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries of the objectives and activities outlined above.
- **Government actors, political actors, civil society and international organisations**, who are crucial in implementing youth inclusion, both at community and national level.

- **Faith-based religious and traditional leaders**, who play an influential role in Ghanaian culture and society, including by regularly engaging with the youth.
- **Private sector** representatives, who are essential to provide employment opportunities for young people in Ghana.
- **Universities and schools, which** provide quality education and training opportunities and are entry points to access Ghana's youth population.
- **Media**, a powerful tool to reach out to Ghanaian youth.
- **Influencer and celebrities**, who exert an important influence and take up significant space in young people's everyday lives.

### **Resources** (*input*)

Financial resources will be pooled from the following sources:

- **Support Measures - Annual Action Plan (AAP) 2022**
- **Pact4Skills - AAP 2022**
- **Private Sector Development - AAP 2023**
- **Civil Society thematic programme**
- **Other funds, such as Sub-Saharan Africa Multi-Annual Indicative Programme 2021-2027**
- **EU Delegation's Press and Information (P&I) budget**