

Voluntary Nation Review Austria 2024 - Statements of Civil Society/Major Groups

Rares Voicu - European Youth Forum

Thank you, Chair.

My name is Rares Voicu, President of the European Youth Forum, speaking on behalf of the Major Group for Children and Youth.

Involving civil society and setting up an inclusive governance structure is one of the main principles of the UN Resolution on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in the implementation of the 17 SDGs at national level.

We welcome the fact that Austria has worked with civil society, including youth and academia in the preparation of this report.

However, we are concerned that there is no further commitment to long-term multi-stakeholder participation in the paper to include youth and civil society. Nor are there resources dedicated to developing a meaningful participatory process in collaboration with civil society and youth, such as in Ireland.

We therefore have three questions:

First, what measures do you have envisaged in the VNR for further improving the governance structure for continuous involvement of civil society organizations, and in particular youth organizations?

Second, Austria particularly emphasizes the cooperation with 300 scientists in the interdisciplinary project “UniNEtZ”, presenting 950 concrete measures for SDG implementation.

What were the biggest challenges and what are the key findings of the UniNEtZ project?

Third, in April 2024 a study conducted by the Austrian Institute for Economic Research (“WIFO”), showed that there are still significant gaps and challenges in gender equality.

What additional necessary steps will be taken to address existing gaps and challenges?

I thank you.