The new architecture of the Structured Dialogue was endorsed by Council Resolution "Overview of the Structured Dialogue process including the social inclusion of young people", of 20 May 2014, which introduced a one and a half year cycle that focuses on only one thematic priority. The Resolution enables the EU Youth Conference in the Netherlands to set the guiding framework, namely outlining the description of the existing challenges that young people are facing on the chosen priority. The guiding framework serves as a basis to launch the consultation that will be carried out among young people across Europe.

The council Resolution "Encouraging the political participation of young people in democratic life in Europe" of 23 November 2015, sets down the overall thematic priority for the V cycle of the Structured Dialogue as "enabling all young people to engage in a diverse, connected and inclusive Europe - Ready for life, ready for society".

Guiding framework on "Enabling all young people to engage in a diverse, connected and inclusive Europe, Ready for life, ready for society"

The cultural, ethnic and geographic differences that have long defined the world and Europe are changing and are being replaced by new realities, new opportunities and new challenges for young people. These challenges that young people face can be characterized by a number of related and overlapping issues as follows:
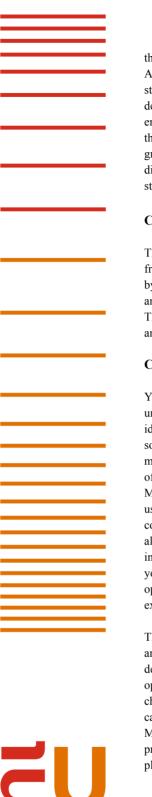
Challenges for an inclusive Europe

Young people tend to be perceived and portrayed in a negative way rather than promoting their constructive contribution to society. Moreover, young people are seen as a challenge instead of as an opportunity and a resource by older people. Media coverage is not balanced, and does not adequately reflect both negative and positive impact young people have on society.

The pressure put by a competitive society on young people (to have a paid job, not to fail, to look good/ be healthy, to live up to expectations etc.) can prevent them from realising their full potential and can, in turn, can lead to psychological, health and employment issues. Moreover, formal education is too theorical and does not encourage young people to be innovative and creative. Young people are lacking secure and free space, and positive role models to develop their talents. This makes it difficult for them to find a purpose in their lives. The challenge for young people is to have the space and opportunity to develop the personal, social and civic competences they need to cope with today's societal changes and have them recognised by institutions, family, peers or the young people themselves.

Marginalized young people are facing a lack of access to equal economic, legal and social opportunities and rights. This may be brought about by the existing norms, which have been constructed by

the society and reinforced by the way information is communicated. As a consequence, young people who are being excluded potentially start excluding themselves from society and therefore may experience deprivation and a negative outlook on life. Furthermore access to employment is particularly difficult for young people, especially for those with fewer opportunities, from minority cultural and ethnic groups and for young people with special needs. This is caused by discrimination, lack of quality education, forced migration, and the structure of the labor market.

Challenges for a diverse Europe

There is a lack of understanding and interaction among young people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This might be caused by the fear of the unknown, of losing personal and cultural identity, and is confounded by misinformation and the lack of critical thinking. This may lead to divided societies, the rise of extremism, prejudice and stigmatization, as well as feelings of insecurity.

Challenges for a connected Europe

Young people loose their sense of belonging when they do not feel understood, valued and respected by others. They also do not always identify themselves with existing cultural values and economic and social structures and as a result they become more vulnerable to manipulation and at risk of not being part of the community as well as of society.
Moreover young people are finding it difficult to effectively process, use and critically evaluate information. They may lack the competences to navigate the overload of information which is not always reliable, accurate and does not meet the needs of the individual. Without access to proper information and competences, young people can be misled and negatively influenced in their life options, opinion formulation, access to rights and the ability to exercise their active citizenship.

The challenges for a Europe that is diverse, inclusive and connected are complex, inter-related and not easily tackled. Consulting and debating with young people across Europe however, gives them the opportunity to consider and respond to questions as to how their challenges can be confronted and overcome. While these challenges can be adequately addressed by a determined effort on the part of the Member States, young people themselves, in presenting ideas and proposals and supporting peers, have a vital and invaluable role to play in meeting such challenges.