

## Eurocarers Young Carers Working Group Meeting

**2 June 2022**

Hybrid / Face to face + ZOOM

### **DRAFT MINUTES**

#### **Participants**

Jessica Lerner – Sweden  
 Akylina Despoti – Greece  
 Jonna Skand – Finland  
 Inge Romeijn – Netherlands  
 Tirsia Kroon - Netherlands  
 Stefania Buoni - Italy  
 Monique Jacques - Belgium  
 Elayne O'Hara - Ireland  
 Shauna Tighe – Ireland  
 Sean Collins - Ireland  
 Marie Keating - Ireland  
 Saul Becker – UK  
 Stecy Yghemonos – Eurocarers Secretariat

#### **Introduction**

Saul Becker and Stecy Yghemonos co-chaired this 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Eurocarers Young Carers Working Group (EYCWG). They kicked off the discussion by recalling the achievements of the group in the last few years in the areas of communication and policy influencing, namely via a successful European Carers Day 2021 campaign and Third International Young Carers Conferences (May 2021), the inclusion of young carers in the list of at-risk groups in the Staff Working Document accompanying the Child Guarantee, etc. Saul and Stecy explained that one of the objectives of the meeting is to brainstorm with participants about the group's future ambitions and goals. The meeting therefore started with a discussion about the strengths and weakness of the EYCWG, as perceived by its members.

<b><u>Strengths</u></b>	<b><u>Weaknesses</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity to meet other young carers</li> <li>- Feeling of not being alone</li> <li>- Perspectives from different countries and regions</li> <li>- Opportunity to develop pan-EU message</li> <li>- Learning experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Irregular meetings (only once a year on average)</li> <li>- Feeling that we have achieved all realistic policy objectives</li> </ul>



When discussing possible aspects that could be explored in the future when it comes to the situation and needs of young carers, the following topics were identified:

- The development of a quality certification for (young carer-friendly) hospitals;
- The need to increase awareness among professionals about young carers and improve their awareness and training;
- School certification for young carer-friendly establishments (similar to what exists in Scotland, Netherlands and the UK) – this could be the subject of an EU-wide initiative for schools that know about young carers, how to support them, prevent the negative impact and mental health outcomes in a positive way;
- Mapping and assessment of existing school-based surveys regarding (adult) young carers. In that regard, colleagues explained that a communication campaign is being carried out in Finland to educate teachers about the realities of young carers;
- Possibility of creating a Young Carers Research Working Group; and
- Need to highlight the positive impact on informal care on young carers as well (in terms of confidence, maturity, etc.)

Some participants highlighted the importance of promoting (mental) health education at school to support young carers and allow them to self-identify and understand that some of the situations they experience at home may not be 'normal'.

### **Key outcomes from the meeting**

- Participants reiterated the importance of the EYCWG;
- They suggest that Eurocarers/the EYCWG could work on a guide explaining how to establish a national YCWG;
- Need to promote and disseminate practices aiming to raise awareness and improve the training of professionals;
- Collect and disseminate existing school-based surveys about young carers (Saul will lead that process with Eurocarers);
- Prepare a "Don't ignore us" statement from the EYCWG in the framework of Eurocarers policy work on the upcoming EU Care Strategy;
- Explore specific impact of cost-of-living crisis on young carers;
- Involve EYCWG in preparatory steps towards European Carers Day 2022 on gender equality.

