

# Youth Participation Working Group

**Date:** 21 May 2026 | **Time:** 11:00 – 12:00 CET | **Location:** online

## Participants

Iris Strasser (SIC AT), Benedicte Chevalier (SIC BE), Anna Tsiarta and Μapiάvva Ιωάvνvou (SIC CY), Dominique Facciorusso (SIC DE), Laura Balle Kromann (SIC DK), Tea Čičić (SIC HR), Tracy Hogan (SIC IE), Marieva Karnaki (SIC GR), Liudas Mikalkevičius (SIC LT), Ilda Sukurica (SIC LU), Kristin Kjønnøy Slettvåg (SIC NO), Natalia Wójcicka (SIC PL), Marisa Lucas and Ruth Ferrony (SIC PT), Liv Agdalen (SIC SE), Lea Vaupotič (SIC SI), Carolina Fruscione (EUN), Chiara Antonelli (EUN).

Recording of the meeting can be found [here](#).

## Objective

The objective of the meeting was to invite Youth Coordinators to exchange best practices for recruiting young people to participate in SIF.

## Minutes – background information

The Safer Internet Forum (SIF) is a key annual international event where young people, policymakers, researchers, parents and caregivers, teachers, NGOs, and other relevant actors come together to discuss the latest trends, opportunities, risks and solutions related to child online safety and making the internet a better place. In this context, young people play an important role in voicing their perspectives and contributing to making the internet a safer environment for themselves and their peers. Every year SICs recruit youth representatives interested in taking part in SIF. This session invited Youth Coordinators to exchange best practices for recruiting young people.

Youth Coordinators were invited to respond to the following guiding questions:

- How do you currently recruit youth panelists for SIF?

- When do you usually start your recruitment?
- Which variables do you take into consideration when nominating a youth panelist for SIF?
- What has been the most effective approach so far?
- What are the main barriers you face?
- Do you have any recruitment tips for SIF you would like to share with colleagues?

### **How do you currently recruit youth panelists for SIF?**

SIC NO launches the call for nominations as soon as they receive the one from EUN, clearly outlining the criteria in order to set expectations from the beginning and prioritising new candidates for each edition of SIF. SIC DE prioritises young people who express a strong interest in EU and political affairs. SIC IE selects candidates who have demonstrated consistent engagement in the national panel throughout the year, ensuring a high level of commitment during the SIF preparatory cycle. SIC PL asks interested candidates to record a video in English on a topic of their choice from a list provided by the youth coordinator. SIC PT recruits young people who are already engaged in other activities and programmes such as the Digital Leaders initiative.

### **When do you usually start your recruitment?**

SIC LT used to recruit candidates during the summer break, but this year the selection was completed already in February to allow sufficient time to prepare the youth panellist and submit the nomination before summer. SIC NO recruits young people as soon as the call is launched by EUN and before the summer break. Some SICs found it useful to begin the recruitment process even before the official launch of the call for nominations in June.

### **Which variables do you take into consideration when nominating a youth panelist for SIF?**

SICs agreed that they generally consider the young person's ability to express themselves in English, their interest in online safety topics and EU politics, and their

willingness to contribute to shaping policy in these areas. SICs also try to maintain a good gender balance by alternating between female and male nominees.

### **What has been the most effective approach so far?**

SIC LT and SIC PT found peer- to- peer interactions particularly effective, especially when former SIF youth panellists share their experiences with young people. SICs agreed that most young people interested in participating in SIF had previously spoken with, or heard experiences from youth panellists who had attended the event. It was highlighted that peer – to - peer approach strengthen confidence as young people respond differently to their peers than to adults.

### **What are the main barriers you face?**

SIC PL highlighted that some young people who could potentially be strong candidates do not express their interest in participating in SIF because of the language barrier. As a good level of English is a necessary requirement to be considered as a youth panellist, some do not feel confident enough in their English skills to apply.

SIC LT noted that some young people who would be a good fit as youth panellists sometimes need encouragement to apply, as they feel they do not have the necessary skills to contribute meaningfully.

### **Do you have any recruitment tips for SIF you would like to share with colleagues?**

SIC CY invites young people who are already part of other youth groups or involved in youth activities to express their interest in becoming SIF youth panellists. This approach is particularly helpful for newly created youth panels.

SIC NO reiterated the importance of setting expectations clearly from the beginning of the selection process so that young people understand how demanding the preparation for SIF can be and can decide whether to apply.

SIC PT suggested inviting former SIF youth panellists to speak with young people and provide information about SIF.

## Additional Information

The next YPWG meeting will take place on Thursday, 25 June 2026 at 11.00 CEST.

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