

Pursuant to Article 3 of the Decision on acceptance of the initiative and the initiation of the certification procedure of Croatian cities for policies focusing on young people dated 11 December 2020, the “City for Youth” Certificate Awarding Committee has, at the meeting held on 16 December 2022, adopted the following:

DECISION

on the quality standards for local youth policies and awarding the City for Youth certificates

1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

This Decision lays down the quality standards for local policies aimed at young people, provides the mode of scoring cities in the process of evaluating local youth policies, and provides other activities of the “City for Youth” Certificate Awarding Committee in accordance with the Decision on acceptance of the initiative and the initiation of the certification procedure of Croatian cities for policies focusing on young people of the Association of Cities of the Republic of Croatia.

II THEMATIC AREAS

Application requirements

Article 2

Certificate application requirements are the following:

- that the city has established a youth council or another institutional form of youth representation/advocacy in the decision-making processes;
- that the city has adopted the European Charter on Local Youth Work; and
- that the mayor has appointed a coordinator who submits the application for the city to obtain the certificate.

The certification process shall be carried out by evaluating the quality standards for local policies in 8 thematic areas:

- Participation;
- Demographic Incentives and Measures;
- Employment and Housing;
- Mobility;
- Health and sports;
- Youth Work and Culture;
- Education; and
- Youth Outreach.

1 Participation

Article 3

Youth participation or the active participation of young people in society and politics refers to the mechanisms of encouraging youth activation in the community and in the decision-making processes. Within this thematic area, we aim to assess the extent to which a city creates a stimulating environment for active youth engagement.

Quality standards for local youth policies in the area of Participation
A strategic document that encourages youth participation exists at local level. <i>(e.g. local youth programme, target within the local government unit development plans, local government unit implementation programme, etc.)</i> (Note: if this document has expired, it needs to have been in force in the last 6 months or the procedure for drafting a new document needs to have been started in the last 6 months.)
A formal structure through which young people actively participate in the decision-making within the competence of the local government unit exists. <i>(e.g. young people are formally involved in the bodies of city councils, scholarship committee, City award committee, etc.)</i> (Note 1: the existence of a youth council alone does not meet this criterion.) (Note 2: only the systematic inclusion of young people is recognised, a city councillor under the age of 30 who is a member of a city body alone does not meet this criterion. A place for a youth representative needs to be systematically ensured.)
The city implements participatory budgeting. (Note: in the context of this criterion, participatory budgeting is understood as defined in the Glossary — “Instructions for Candidates” document.)
The city supports youth volunteering. <i>(e.g. encouraging the activities of volunteer centres or clubs, awarding a prize for the best young volunteer, additional points for city scholarships, etc.)</i>
The city encourages the active engagement of young people. <i>(e.g. participation training, awards or recognitions for the most active young person within the community, launching initiatives, organising of hackathons, installing boxes for communication with the city administration in spaces frequented by young people, etc.)</i>
New criterion: The city encourages the active engagement of young people with fewer opportunities. <i>(e.g. including youth representatives with fewer opportunities in city bodies, etc.)</i>

A youth centre managed on the principle of co-management exists in the city. <i>(e.g. young people make up at least 50% of the management/programme council members, etc.)</i>
The city encourages young people to participate and involves them in city or neighbourhood planning. <i>(e.g. organising a separate focus group with young people to discuss changes to spatial planning documentation, obtaining the opinion of the youth council on changes to spatial planning documentation, presenting spatial planning documentation changes in the youth centre, in schools, etc.)</i> (Note: public consultation does not meet this criterion.)
The city launches a call for informal youth initiatives. (Note: in the context of this criterion, informal youth initiatives are understood as defined in the Glossary — “Instructions for Candidates” document.)
The city encourages or implements educational programmes with the aim of encouraging participation. <i>(e.g. introducing young people to the work of local government units, budgeting, etc.)</i>
The city maps the needs of young people when adopting local youth policies. <i>(e.g. focus groups, online questionnaires, consultations, interviews, etc.)</i> (Note: working with the youth council and other institutional forms of youth representation/advocacy in decision-making processes alone does not meet this criterion.)
Other

2 Demographic Incentives and Measures

Article 4

Demographic incentives and measures relate to local community activities aimed at encouraging young people to stay in their local communities, stimulating birth rates and ensuring a high quality of life for young parents, children and young people.

Quality standards for local youth policies in the area of Demographic Incentives and Measures

The capacity of early childhood education and care institutions is at least 95%¹ of the total number of applications submitted to these institutions in the current school year.

(Note: both public and private institutions are taken into consideration, as well as the option of co-financing the attendance of institutions in neighbouring local government units.)

(Note 2: a certificate from the kindergarten about the number of applications received and the number of children enrolled and/or a statement about these numbers from the competent head may be provided as proof.)

The city ensures the existence of crèche group programmes in early childhood education and care institutions.

The city ensures the existence of programmes intended for children and young parents in the public institutions founded by the city (*libraries, museums, theatres*).

(Note: for the purposes of this certificate, persons up to 15 years of age are considered children.)

The city provides institutional support for working young parents.

(e.g. the option of a second shift in early childhood education and care institutions, ensuring all-day stay of children in schools, etc.)

The city finances or co-finances extracurricular activities of children outside regular institutional programmes.

(e.g. the city co-finances additional and extracurricular programmes in kindergartens, schools, museums, etc.)

(Note: for the purposes of this certificate, persons up to 15 years of age are considered children.)

(Note 2: sports activities are not considered under this criterion.)

The city provides financial compensation or another form of support for newborns.

The city encourages financial relief and benefits for young parents who are still in school (university students, secondary education students) or who are unemployed.

(e.g. discounted prices for kindergartens, discounted prices for extended stay, additional points for scholarships, etc.)

The city provides financial support to young people with fewer opportunities beyond the obligations under the Social Welfare Act.

(e.g. for young people leaving the system of alternative care, lower socioeconomic status, families with more children, people with disabilities, etc.)

¹ This percentage was determined on the basis of a survey conducted among cities by the Association of Cities of the Republic of Croatia.

The city finances or co-finances textbooks, school meals and other school supplies for children of primary school age.

The city has the status of a Child Friendly City.

The city (co-)finances medically assisted reproduction procedures.

Other

3 Employment and Housing

Article 5

Within this thematic area, we aim to assess the efforts of local communities focused on ensuring the conditions for quality youth employment through measures that encourage young people to develop their competences, as well as their efforts in creating the institutional framework to facilitate youth employment.

Quality standards for local youth policies in the area of Employment and Housing
The city provides support for youth employment measures. <i>(e.g. co-financing loans for young entrepreneurs, self-employment, first employment, tenders to subsidise the costs of companies founded by young people or employing young people, reducing utility charges, mentoring for employment, etc.)</i>
The city implements measures aimed at long-term unemployed young people. <i>(e.g. additional education, vocational training, support for employers employing long-term unemployed young people.)</i> <i>(Note: the city must either be the promoter of the measure or, if the promoter of the measure is another organisation or institution, the role of the city must be clear.)</i>
The city encourages the development and sustainability of the activities of entrepreneurial and start-up incubators that enable young people to develop entrepreneurship. <i>(e.g. co-financing of activities, continuous investments, etc.)</i>
The city encourages youth employment and traineeships. <i>(e.g. traineeships, tender for work through student employment offices, traineeships in public city institutions, etc.)</i>
The city is involved in connecting employers and young people. <i>(e.g. participating in the organisation of direct contacts, job fairs, etc.)</i>

The city (co-)finances or is a partner on programmes and projects by civil society organisations aimed at developing young people's competences relevant to the labour market needs.
The city maintains and makes available the spaces it owns for co-working. <i>(Note: investing in and maintaining these spaces on an ongoing basis has to be demonstrated.)</i>
The city finances or co-finances obtaining housing for young people. <i>(e.g. co-financing the purchase of building land, co-financing of building materials, co-financing of rents, lower interest rates for young people buying their first property, allocation of city-owned flats, co-financing the construction of family homes, etc.)</i> <i>(Note: this criterion is met only if young people are specifically identified as a priority target group.)</i>
The city has adopted a local housing programme focusing on young people as a target group.
The city ensures the existence of housing communities for young people exiting alternative care systems.
Other

4 Mobility

Article 6

In the context of this questionnaire, mobility is understood threefold: first as transport connectivity, then as facilitating the movement of (young) persons with mobility difficulties, and finally as international mobility for the purposes of learning and upskilling. The thematic area of Mobility assesses the efforts of a city in all three listed dimensions.

Quality standards for local youth policies in the area of Mobility
The city (co-)finances public or other transportation for young people. <i>(e.g. discounted monthly/annual fares, co-financing of unprofitable public transport routes, etc.)</i>
The city provides exceptional transportation for young people for extracurricular and leisure activities. <i>(e.g. transportation to sports practices, creative activities, transportation on weekends, etc.)</i>
The city invests in infrastructure that promotes sustainable modes of transport and maintains it regularly. <i>(e.g. introducing a system of public bicycles or scooters, constructing bicycle lanes, co-financing the purchase of the first bicycle, etc.)</i>

<i>(Note: sports and recreation infrastructure does not meet this criterion.)</i>
Access to public city institutions is provided for people with disabilities. <i>(Note: this needs to be proven by providing a photograph of each institution which provides access for people with disabilities.)</i>
The city provides transportation to young people with fewer opportunities. <i>(e.g. providing special vehicles for the transportation of people with disabilities, young people at risk of poverty, etc.)</i>
The city creates a stimulating environment for young people to participate safely in traffic. <i>(e.g. public discussions, workshops, campaigns, procurement of protective helmets, youth traffic unit, etc.)</i>
The city includes young people as participants in cooperation programmes with other local and regional government units. <i>(e.g. young people participating in official visits to other cities in the country and abroad, intercity cooperation of youth councils, etc.)</i>
The city co-finances youth international mobility for the purposes of education and professional development. <i>(e.g. pre-financing international mobility costs, separate lines in the funding budget, etc.)</i>
The city evaluates the participation of young people in international mobility programmes and projects in the context of non-formal education. <i>(e.g. additional points when awarding scholarships, evaluating Youthpass certificates, etc.)</i>
Other

5 Health and Sports

Article 7

Health is the state of good physical and psychological well-being and, as such, goes beyond simply the absence of illness. With the aim of increasing the quality of life, developing healthy lifestyles among young people, supporting sports activities and achieving prosperity in the community, in this thematic area we assess to what extent a city is committed to ensuring the activities that contribute to these goals, with a special emphasis on the accessibility of these activities to all social groups of young people.

Quality standards for local youth policies in the area of Health and Sports
The city creates the conditions for a suprandard in health care. <i>(e.g. salary bonuses, housing and transportation co-financing, financing expert teams etc. in the fields of paediatric care, gynaecological health, speech therapy, etc.)</i>
The city systematically supports the implementation of youth mental health programmes. <i>(e.g. establishing counselling centres, funding, project partners, etc.)</i>
The city systematically supports the implementation of youth reproductive health programmes. <i>(e.g. establishing counselling centres, funding, project partners, free gynaecological examinations, vaccination against HPV, ensuring the availability of protection against STDs, etc.)</i>
The city provides free hygienic items. <i>(e.g. hygiene pads in youth centres, student dorms, through cooperation with associations, etc.)</i>
The city works to prevent violence, addiction and other undesirable behaviours.
The city (co-)finances general health checkups for young people.
The city provides and maintains, on an ongoing basis, public sports and recreational infrastructure to which all interested young people have access. <i>(e.g. fitness trails, street workout, skate parks, swimming pools, quick bicycle service points, etc.)</i> (Note: children's playgrounds and parks do not meet this criterion.)
The city supports sports activities for young people. <i>(e.g. co-financing activities, membership fees, etc.)</i>
The city awards prizes for exceptional results in youth sports.
The city promotes healthy eating habits for young people. <i>(e.g. school fruit scheme, nutrition counselling, short supply chains for local products, etc.)</i> (Note: activities aimed at young people aged 15 to 30 and where the role of the city is clearly evident are taken into consideration.)
Other

6 Youth Work and Culture

Article 8

Youth work is a particular form of interaction between young people and professionals aimed at developing the personal and social competences of young people. It is one of the segments of contribution to solving some of the current social problems and is primarily reflected in structured ways of spending leisure time. Within this thematic area, the importance of culture is understood as participation in cultural and artistic activities, the often limited access to which may lead to fewer opportunities for young people to develop their social connections as well as the skills and knowledge that contribute to their personal development. In this thematic area, we assess to what extent a city provides a supporting environment for the development of youth work, cultural and artistic practices.

Quality standards for local youth policies in the area of Youth Work and Culture
The city launches a call which includes young people as a separate category. <i>(Note: only calls with a clearly separate category of young people are taken into consideration.)</i>
The city is a partner to associations implementing projects aimed at young people. <i>(Note: only official documents that clearly show the role of the city — e.g. contracts, agreements, etc. — will be considered as proof.)</i>
The city (co-)finances formal or non-formal education of youth workers. <i>(e.g. (co-)financing travel expenses, tuition fees, registration fees, etc.)</i> <i>(Note: in the context of this criterion, the term “youth worker” is understood as defined in the Glossary — “Instructions for Candidates” document.)</i>
The city awards prizes for achievements in extracurricular activities. <i>(Note: under this criterion, achievements in sports activities or school competitions are not taken into consideration.)</i>
The city provides access to cultural content for young people. <i>(e.g. discounted ticket prices, use of spaces free of charge, transportation to activities, etc.)</i> <i>(Note: this criterion is met only if it is clear that young people are a privileged social group in this context.)</i>
The city establishes youth centres or encourages their activities on an ongoing basis. <i>(Note: investing in the centre on an ongoing basis and the existence of a programme for young people need to be demonstrated.)</i>
In institutions where the city has founders’ rights, there are facilities and activities specifically designed for young people. <i>(e.g. in libraries, museums, galleries, theatres, etc.)</i> <i>(Note: persons between 15 and 30 years of age are considered “young people”).</i>

The city co-finances approved projects focusing on young people. <i>(e.g. in cases where the initial funding does not fully cover project implementation.)</i>
The city promotes and encourages young talent in all artistic fields. <i>(e.g. inviting young musicians to perform at events organised by the city, covering travel expenses for performances out of town, etc.)</i>
The city supports facilities and activities for young people with fewer opportunities. <i>(e.g. adapting books for young people with visual impairments, (co-)financing theatre plays for persons suffering from hearing disabilities, organising or (co-)financing festivals of equal opportunities, cooperating with associations that create facilities and activities for young people with fewer opportunities and that involve young people with fewer opportunities in this creation process, etc.)</i>
Other

7 Education

Article 9

Education is understood as both formal and non-formal education. Within this thematic area, we assess to what extent the access to education is provided to all social groups of young people in the city and to what extent is the quality of education encouraged.

Quality standards for local youth policies in the field of Education
The city (co-)finances formal and non-formal educational content aimed at young people. <i>(e.g. debate clubs, music schools, school volunteer clubs, etc.)</i>
The city offers scholarships for secondary and tertiary education students. (Note: the quality of the scholarship system will be assessed based on the documentation provided, which <i>must include</i> the total share of scholarships in the budget, the amount of individual scholarships and the total number of scholarships awarded.)
The city grants support to secondary and tertiary education students. <i>(e.g. for partaking in competitions, exchanges, fairs, etc.)</i>
The city awards prizes for outstanding achievements. <i>(e.g. academic excellence, exceptional results at competitions, etc.)</i> (Note: awards for success in sports and artistic fields are not included in this criterion.)

The city provides teaching/learning aid. <i>(e.g. through associations, scholarships recipients who help other young people, etc.)</i>
The city has a support system for young people in the NEET group. <i>(e.g. co-financing retraining or upskilling)</i> (Note: the term “NEET group” is understood as defined in the Glossary — “Instructions for Candidates” document.)
The city encourages working with talented young innovators, scientists, etc.
The city creates pre-conditions for implementing citizenship education programmes in schools or in the local community. (Note: in addition to the formal education system, the implementation of the citizenship education programmes through associations, city institutions, etc. is also acceptable.) (Note 2: for this criterion, activities related to primary schools are taken into consideration.)
The city creates pre-conditions for implementing sustainable development programmes in schools and in the local community. (Note: for this criterion, activities related to primary schools are taken into consideration.)
The city creates pre-conditions for implementing digital and media literacy programmes. (Note: in addition to the formal education system, the implementation of the digital and media literacy programmes through associations, city institutions, etc. is also acceptable.) (Note 2: for this criterion, activities related to primary schools are taken into consideration.)
Other

8 Youth Outreach

Article 10

Youth outreach refers to the use of adequate tools for delivering messages to young people, as well as proactive communication, two-way communication, and the general focus of the city on young people as a special target group, the communication with which needs to take into account all of their particular characteristics.

Quality standards for local youth policies in the area of Youth Outreach
The city ensures, on an ongoing basis, that information is available to young people via social networks.

<i>(e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Viber, WhatsApp, TikTok, etc.)</i> (Note: in order to meet this criterion, a minimum of one post aimed at young people per month, over the last 6 months is required.)
The city's official website has a special section for young people. (Note: this section must be regularly updated.) (Note 2: this criterion does not apply to special sections containing information about the youth council.)
The city ensures young people and the topics relevant to them are present in the local media. <i>(e.g. the city uses its channels to share posts from local media, articles from the city newspaper, etc.)</i>
Supporting organisations responsible for youth outreach. <i>(e.g., (co-)financing the activities of info centres, youth clubs, partnerships with associations providing these services, ongoing (co-)financing of programmes dedicated to young people, etc.)</i>
The city employs a local youth policy officer and this information is easily accessible to young people. <i>(e.g. contact details on the city's official website)</i> (Note: this must be evident from the internal regulations and/or in the job description.)
The city (co-)organises events for informing young people about the opportunities available to them within the local community. <i>(e.g. association fair, scholarship fair, coffee with the mayor, info days, high school fair, university of college fair, etc.)</i>
On an ongoing basis, the city informs schools, institutions and civil society organisations about the opportunities available to young people in the local community. <i>(e.g. sending information to schools, newsletters, invitations to events, etc.)</i>
The city actively promotes youth spaces. <i>(e.g. promotion of youth centres, youth clubs, business incubators, as well as their programmes, etc.)</i>
The city makes its official website accessible to persons with disabilities. <i>(e.g. visually impaired persons, persons who are hard of hearing, persons with dyslexia, etc.)</i>

The city provides visibility for the topics of young people with fewer opportunities in public spaces.

(e.g. public discussions on employment possibilities for young people with fewer opportunities, promoting of organisations working with young people with fewer opportunities, etc.)

Other

III SCORING

Measure evaluation method

Article 11

All proposed measures must either be implemented or be in the process of implementation at least 6 months prior to application.

The Certificate Awarding Committee reserves the right to assess the relevance of the practices listed under the thematic areas.

The applicant shall provide adequate proof of compliance for each of the listed measures.

The city shall be the promoter of each proposed measure (financing, co-financing, providing space, etc.).

The fact alone that one or more members of a city body are young people does not meet the criteria for the measures concerning the inclusion of young people in some city bodies; rather it is necessary for the bodies to adopt a by-law or general act which provides for a seat for a youth representative or representatives within the body. (e.g. the fact alone that a member of a city council, who is a member of the scholarship committee, is under 30 does not meet the criterion of including young people in the scholarship committee. This criterion is met if the instrument of establishing the committee provides for a certain number of seats for the representative(s) of the youth council/youth centre/youth organisation, etc. in that committee).

A proposed measure may concern citizenship in general, not only young people, but young people need to have certain advantages in the scope of the proposed measure in order for the measure to be taken into consideration for scoring.

Even though young people are defined as a social group between 15 and 30 years of age, the proposed measures may also target a wider age group (e.g. up to 35 or 40 years) if this is so defined by a by-law or a general act.

If one measure incorporates several elements (e.g. scholarship system — includes scholarships for in-demand professions, evaluates hours of volunteer work, etc.), it can be nominated in several areas, provided it is followed by a clear explanation.

Following the evaluation, the Committee may ask for additional evidence of the implemented measure in order to determine its quality.

Measure evaluation

Article 12

Candidates shall be evaluated on every nominated measure for which they have provided proof. A maximum of one point per criterion is possible.

On the basis of the results obtained from the survey the Association of Cities has conducted among cities, the following criteria system for awarding the certificate was defined:

- cities up to 10,000 inhabitants — a minimum of 60% total;
- cities from 10,000 and 35,000 inhabitants — a minimum of 70% total;
- cities above 35,000 inhabitants — a minimum of 80% total of the quality standards for local youth policies reached

All cities must meet a minimum of 50% of the criteria in each area.

IV CERTIFICATE AWARD DECISION

Article 13

The Certificate Awarding Committee shall decide on the award of the “City for Youth” certificate.

V FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 14

The only body authorised to interpret the provisions of this Decision is the Certificate Awarding Committee.

Article 15

Upon the entry into force of this Decision, the Decision on quality standards for local policies aimed at young people and the awarding of the “City for Youth” certificate dated 11 January 2022 shall expire.

Article 16

This Decision shall enter into force on the first day following that of its publication on the Association of Cities of the Republic of Croatia website www.udruga-gradova.hr.

Zagreb, 16 December 2022

“City for Youth” Certificate Awarding Committee

PRESIDENT

Nives Kopajtich Škrlec, dipl. iur.