

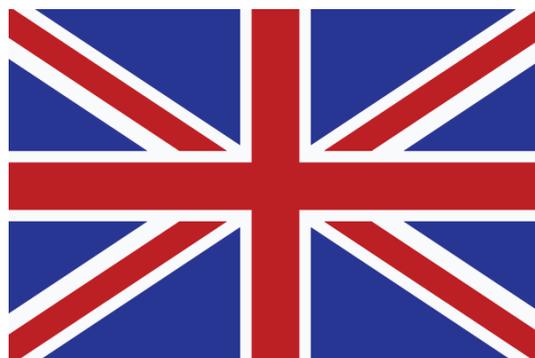


**Youth**Partnership

# COUNTRY SHEET

## ON YOUTH POLICY

### UNITED KINGDOM



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**Youth**Partnership  
Council of Europe  
European Commission



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## **Context of national youth policy**

The United Kingdom is comprised of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have 'devolved administrations', through which responsibility for a range of issues, including youth policy, is devolved to the legislatures of these countries. All four nations have recently developed new youth work strategies; in England this has been underpinned by recent legislation.

The Children Act 2004 provides the framework for youth policy in England, seeking to provide a new approach to the well-being of children and young people up to age 19. It aims for every child and young person to have the support they need to be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution; and achieve economic well-being. These five outcomes underpin all aspects of government policy relating to children and young people. The Act also introduced requirements for local authorities to cooperate with partners to achieve these outcomes. By April 2008, local authorities are expected to provide integrated youth support services, bringing together both universal and targeted services based on what young people need. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 includes a duty that local authorities must secure access for young people in their area to sufficient positive activities. The Children's Plan, published in December 2007, set out the government's vision for children, young people and families and includes measures relating to youth provision, children and young people's health, youth justice, and a focus on schools working in partnership with other agencies to deliver integrated services.

In Wales, *Extending Entitlement* provides the framework for youth support services, bringing together all services, support and opportunities for young people aged 11 to 25. Young People's Partnerships have been established in each local authority area to coordinate services for 11-25 year olds.

In Scotland, a national youth work strategy was published in 2007, setting out the role of youth work in achieving the broader aims of the Scottish Executive - that young people are nurtured, safe, active, healthy, achieving, included, respected and responsible. The strategy covers young people aged 11 to 25, and has kickstarted a 'Year of Action' for youth work.

In Northern Ireland, the Children and Young People's Unit was set up within government to ensure that the rights and needs of children and young people are given a high priority. The unit was responsible for developing a 10-year over-arching strategy which aims to ensure that by 2016, all children and young people are fulfilling their potential. The strategy covers

children and young people up to 18 (or 21 for those who are disabled or have been in care). The Department of Education developed a youth work strategy for 2005-08, which aims to promote the development, well-being, rights and participation of young people aged 4 to 25.

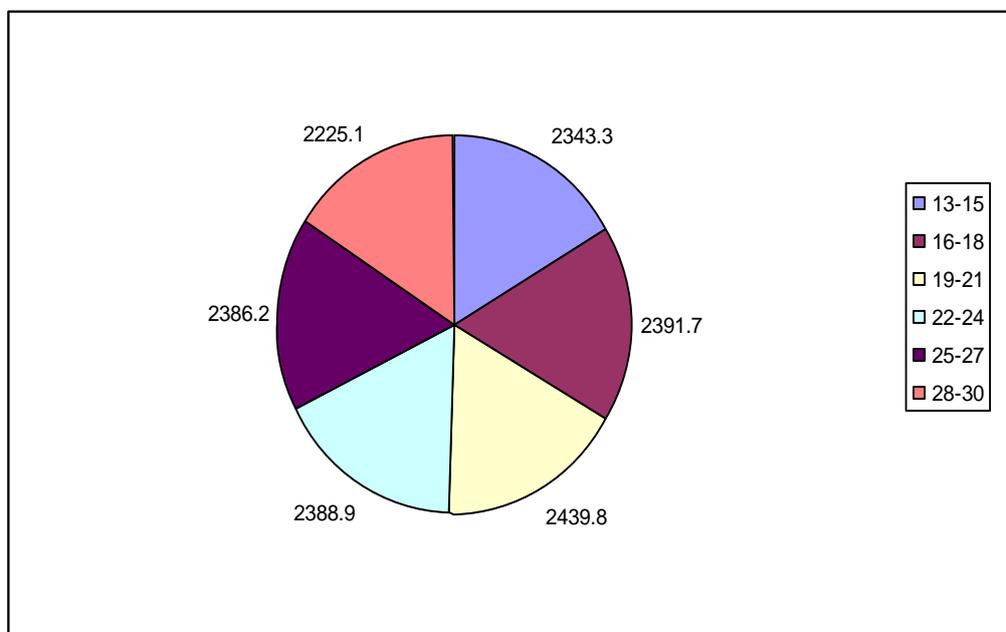
The financial year in the UK runs from 1 April to 31 March each year.

## 1. Statistics on young people

### Number of young people aged 13-30 in the UK

14,366,200: 23.5% of global population (60,975,400)

### Young people in the UK in 2006 by age bands (thousands)



### Number and Percentage of young people (13-30) by gender in global population

Male: 7,327,700 – 12% of global population

Female: 7,038,500 – 11.5% of global population

Source: National Statistics Office, [Mid-2007 Population Estimates: United Kingdom: estimated resident population by single year of age and sex](#)

## 2. Youth Ministry

The UK Parliament has devolved responsibility for a range of issues, including education and youth work, to administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Department for Children, Schools and Families' Joint International Unit has overall responsibility for representing UK youth policy within Europe and abroad.

### Ministry in charge of youth

England: The [Department for Children, Schools and Families](#) (DCSF).

Scotland: Department of Education and Lifelong Learning, Scottish Executive

Wales: Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Welsh Assembly

Northern Ireland: Department of Education

## **Ministers**

**England:** Rt Hon Beverley Hughes MP, Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families; **Scotland:** Adam Ingram MSP, Minister for Children and Early Years (includes responsibility for youth work and youth services).

**Wales:** Jane Hutt, Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills.

**Northern Ireland:** Catriona Ruane, Minister for Education **with responsibilities for youth services.**

## **Duration of mandate**

Maximum of 60 months

## **Youth Department in the Ministry**

**England:** the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) leads work across government to ensure that all children and young people:

- stay healthy and safe
- secure an excellent education and the highest possible standards of achievement
- enjoy their childhood
- make a positive contribution to society and the economy
- have lives full of opportunity, free from the effects of poverty

Changes to government departments in June 2007 meant that for the first time, all policy for schools, children's services, youth services, the Respect agenda and joint responsibility for youth justice, child health, sport and play, child poverty, alcohol and drugs are being brought together in one department.

### **- Number of people who work in this ministry in the youth department**

There are 340 staff working in the Young People Directorate of the DCSF.

### **- Director responsible for Youth in the Ministry**

Lesley Longstone, Director General of Young People Directorate –  
[lesley.longstone@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:lesley.longstone@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk)

### **- Contact person in the youth department competent for European youth policy**

Hermione Gough - [Hermione.Gough@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Hermione.Gough@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk); Nicola Sams, Joint International Unit –  
[Nicola.Sams@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Nicola.Sams@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk)

**Scotland:** Branch Three of the [Looked After Children and Youth Work](#) Division in the Education Department is responsible for policy on youth work.

**Wales:** [Extending Entitlement](#) is the Welsh Assembly Government's flagship policy for youth support services in Wales. It includes all services, support and opportunities for young people between 11 and 25, wherever they happen, whoever is delivering them and wherever the funding originates.

**Northern Ireland:** The [Children and Young People's Unit](#) within the Good Relations and Reconciliation Unit of the Office of the First Minister and Deputy Minister coordinates Northern Ireland's strategy for children and young people. It set up an inter-departmental group to take forward its work. The [Youth Services Branch](#) of the Department of Education is responsible for the youth service.

### **Other national public bodies who are directly involved in youth policies**

#### **- Other Ministries**

England: The DCSF works with other departments across government, particularly the Office of the Third Sector in the Cabinet Office (on matters related to volunteering), the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Home Office; **the** Ministry of Justice; Department of Culture, Media and Sport; Department of Health; HM Treasury; HM Inland Revenue and Customs; Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; and the Department of Work and Pensions. There is a similar cross-over between education and other ministries in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

#### **- Offices – other public or semi-public bodies**

**Children's Commissioners:** each country has a commissioner for children and young people (up to 18). Those in [Wales](#), [Northern Ireland](#) and [Scotland](#) have the general function of safeguarding and promoting the rights and interests of children, [England's Commissioner](#) is responsible for promoting awareness of the views and interests of children. [Local Government Association](#) (LGA): represents all 410 local authority districts in England and Wales (388 and 22 respectively). The [Welsh Local Government Association](#) is a constituent part of the LGA but retains full autonomy in dealing with Welsh affairs. The equivalent body for Scotland is the [Convention of Scottish Local Authorities](#) (COSLA) and for Northern Ireland, the [Northern Ireland Local Government Association](#). [Children and Youth Board](#): an

advisory group of 25 young people aged 8-18 set up to work with officials in the DCSF to develop specific areas of policy and gather the views of wider groups of young people.

In Scotland, [Dialogue Youth](#) is a partnership between Young Scot, COSLA, local authorities, the Scottish Executive and young people, intended to give young people a real say in the design and delivery of services that affect them. It has operated in every local authority in Scotland since March 2005.

### **Parliament commission in charge of youth issues**

None

### **2.1.2 Regional public authorities with competencies in the youth field**

Only England has a regional structure. There are nine [government offices for the regions](#) in England. These help implement policy for 11 central government departments, including supporting DCSF on its policies for children and young people, manage some programmes and budgets, and make links between different government policies which may affect children, young people and their families. Most Government Offices have established regional groups bringing together representatives with some responsibility for policies and services for children and young people.

There are also nine regional youth work units across England which support youth work and work with young people in the statutory and voluntary sector.

### **2.1.3 Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field**

Local authorities have a duty to secure services for young people in their area. In England, which has a two-tier structure in some areas, this applies to those authorities which are responsible for children and young people's services, known as 'first-tier' authorities.

## **2.2 Youth welfare services (comprising public and/or non public actors)**

Arrangements for the delivery of integrated youth support services will be in place in all first-tier local authorities in England by 2008. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires these local authorities (150 in total) to secure educational and recreational leisure-time activities, including youth work, to improve young people's well-being. Responsibility for youth support services rests with the director of children's services in each local authority.

There are 32 local authorities (Community Learning and Development Departments) responsible for youth services in Scotland and 22 in Wales, where Young People's Partnerships have been established in each area to coordinate services for 11-25 year olds.

In Northern Ireland, youth services are currently delivered through five Education and Library Boards, but it is planned to replace these with a single Education and Skills Authority in 2008.

A large amount of youth work in the UK is provided by voluntary sector organisations. Many of the large voluntary organisations obtain grant funding from government. The DCSF's National Voluntary Youth Organisation (NVYO) grant scheme (2005-08) funds 85 youth organisations, including British Red Cross, British Youth Council, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Endeavour Training, Girlguiding UK, Jewish Lads' and Girls' Brigade, National Association of Clubs for Young People, National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs, Rathbone, Scout Association, UK Youth, Unicef UK, YMCA and YWCA England and Wales. Following consultation, the DfES created the Children, Young People and Families Grant Programme in 2005 to support voluntary organisations that contribute to delivering the Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme.

Five existing grant programmes, including NVYO, were brought together into the new single programme from April 2006. The programme offers funding to third sector organisations whose work improves outcomes for children, young people and families and is in line with the overall strategic priorities of the Department.

## **2.3 Non-public actors/structures & youth services with competencies in the youth field**

### **2.3.1 Youth councils**

[British Youth Council](#) (BYC)

BYC promotes the active citizenship of young people under 26 in the UK and works with them to develop their skills and abilities to participate in decision-making and controlling resources, encouraging them to work together to take collective action. It has a membership of over 180 youth organisations and a network of over 400 local youth councils.

[UK Youth Parliament](#) (UKYP)

Aims to give the young people of the UK between the age of 11 and 18 a voice, which will be heard and listened to by local and national government, providers of services for young people and other agencies who have an interest in the views and needs of young people.

### **2.3.2 Youth NGOs**

[The National Youth Agency](#) (NYA - England)

Funded primarily by the Local Government Association and government departments, the NYA supports those involved in young people's personal and social development and works

to enable all young people to fulfil their potential within a just society. It does this by supporting those working with young people in a variety of settings; influencing and shaping youth policy; improving and extending youth work and youth services; and promoting young people's participation, influence and place in society.

#### [National Council for Voluntary Youth Services](#) (NCVYS)

The independent voice of the voluntary sector in England representing a diverse network of over 180 national voluntary youth organisations and regional and local youth networks. It seeks to ensure the development and recognition of a vibrant, sound and diverse voluntary and community sector that involves, empowers and meets the needs of all young people. It aims to inform and influence policy that affects young people; improve the quality of work with young people; and raise and maintain the profile of the work of voluntary and community organisations with young people.

#### [Youthlink Scotland](#)

As the national youth work agency in Scotland, Youthlink aims to be the collective voice of youth work and to represent the needs and interests of the youth work sector with regard to policy and practice, to government and other stakeholders.

#### [Youth Council for Northern Ireland](#)

Non-departmental public body funded by the Department of Education, which seeks to champion the well-being, rights and participation of young people by supporting the development of effective youth policies and quality youth work practice and promoting collaboration between youth organisations and all sectors with responsibility for young people.

### **2.4 Other structures**

The youth service provides opportunities for all young people in the target age range 13-19, and for targeted groups in the 11-13 and 19-25 age range to develop personal and social skills. The youth service is a complex network of providers including community groups, voluntary organisations and local authorities. The vital diversity of the different providers of youth services is underpinned by having in place a shared set of youth work values. The [Association of Principal Youth and Community Officers](#) represents the views of heads of local authority youth services in England.

## **3. Legislation**

## **Articles of the constitution concerning youth explicitly**

The UK does not have a formal constitution.

## **National legislation on youth**

### ***England***

The Education Act 1996 placed a statutory duty on local authorities to provide youth services for young people. Section 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted new sections 507A and 507B into this Act. Section 507B places new duties on local authorities to secure young people's access to positive activities and facilities for them. It introduces a requirement that a local authority in England must, so far as is reasonably practicable, secure access for young people to sufficient educational and recreational leisure time activities ('positive activities') and facilities for such activities. This duty applies to young people aged 13 to 19 (up to 24 for those with learning disabilities). These activities must include sufficient educational leisure-time activities and facilities for the improvement of young people's personal and social development – i.e youth work activities and facilities. Section 507B also requires local authorities to ascertain the views of young people in their area – including disadvantaged groups such as disabled young people - regarding existing provision, the need for further provision and their access to provision, and act on these views in discharging their duty.

Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 requires local authorities and their 'relevant partners' to co-operate to improve children and young people's wellbeing as defined by the five [Every Child Matters](#) outcomes: Be Healthy, Stay Safe, Enjoy and Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution and Achieve Economic Wellbeing. They are required to have arrangements for integrated working, planning and delivery in place; these arrangements are often described as a 'Children's Trust'.

### **Devolved administrations**

Scotland: Education (Scotland) Act 1980, Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992;

Northern Ireland: Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 and the Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1989: these placed a statutory responsibility of education and library boards to 'secure provision for the area of adequate facilities for recreational, social, physical, cultural and youth service activities.'

Wales: Learning and Skills Act 2000 (and subsequent Directions and Guidance 2002) required local authorities to have arrangements for the provision of a youth service in place.

Young people under 18 are also covered by Children Act 1989 (England and Wales); Children (Scotland) Act 1995; Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995; Children Act 2004 (Part 1 UK wide, parts 2-5 England and Wales).

## 4. National Programmes on youth

### England

**Youth work:** following the *Youth Matters* green paper (see below), the government introduced the [Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund](#) (YOF/YCF), worth £115m (€161m) over two years (2006-08), for young people to spend on positive activities. The funds are paid as grants to local authorities, but young people must make the decisions about how they are spent. The funds have been extended until at least 2011, with £220m available for the three years 2008-11.

*Aiming high for young people: a ten year strategy for positive activities* set out the Government's vision for improving youth facilities in response to clear ongoing demand from young people, parents and communities for more and better places for young people to go.

**myplace** was launched on 3 April 2008 to deliver over £270m of Government capital investment over the next three years through grants of between £1m and £5m.

Delivered by the Big Lottery Fund (BIG), **myplace** will deliver world class youth facilities driven by the active participation of young people and their views and needs. Facilities will need to be delivered in cross-sector partnership and offer young people a safe place to go, access to exciting range of positive leisure time activities and access to support services as and when they are needed.

Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) programme: this was a targeted programme in England providing diversionary and developmental activities from April 2003 to March 2007. It offered young people aged 8-19 at risk of social exclusion opportunities to participate in positive activities and access out of school activities throughout the year. Following *Aiming high for young people* (see below), the government committed a total of £222m (€310m) to fund Positive Activities for Young People during 2008-11.

**Volunteering:** national youth volunteering organisation [y](#) has £117m (€164m) funding between 2008-11 to develop a National Youth Volunteering Programme for young people aged 16 to 25. The Department for Education and Skills (now DCFS) Millennium Volunteers

programme transferred to v in April 2007. The organisation has been tasked with reaching a target of one million new volunteers by 2010.

**Information, advice and guidance (IAG):** The government established the [Connexions Service](#) in England in 2001, with the aim of providing a comprehensive service to meet young people's need for information, advice and support. A key feature of the programme is delivery of services to a young person through a single point of contact – the Connexions Personal Adviser. A total of 47 partnerships are currently responsible for Connexions; from April 2008 responsibility for securing delivery of services will pass to 150 local authorities working through children's trust arrangements.

**Extended schools:** the government has allocated funding to enable schools in England to provide a range of services to help improve outcomes for young people and to ensure they receive services and support tailored to their needs. This ranges from providing a stronger focus on young people's physical and emotional health to providing access to multi-agency services and integrated working. It also includes the provision of more opportunities for out of school activities, volunteering and linking to other initiatives in schools to develop more active approaches to citizenship.

**Targeted Youth Support:** young people aged 18 or under at risk of poor outcomes might be in need of additional services to help them make a successful transition to adulthood. Targeted Youth Support recognises that young people might have multiple needs and aims to bring together those services that are required to meet the individual's needs – this could include, for example, education, health, social services, behaviour support, youth justice etc. As for all children in need, Targeted Youth Support uses the Common Assessment Framework to identify a young person's needs and the services that might need to get involved to support him or her.

#### Action plans i.e. official strategies

England: [Youth Matters and Youth Matters Next Steps](#) (2006); [Aiming high for young people: a ten year strategy for positive activities](#) (2007, age range 0-19). *Youth Matters* set out plans for a 'radical reshaping of universal services for teenagers – with targeted support for those who need it most – to be delivered everywhere from December 2008.' *Aiming high* set out a strategy to improve leisure-time opportunities, activities and support services for young people in England. It has a particular stress on improving local youth facilities, increasing young people's influence over activities and provision (including direct control of

some budgets) and developing the youth workforce. The plans set out in *Aiming high* were strengthened in the [Children's Plan](#) published in December 2007 and the *Children's Plan: One Year On* published in November 2008, which set out an entitlement for young people to participate in positive activities, and allocated additional funding for facilities for young people, shaped by their views. It also announced initiatives to improve youth policy and provision in a range of areas, including health and youth justice, and outlined an enhanced role for schools working in partnership with other agencies to deliver integrated services for children, young people and their families. The Youth Crime Action Plan outlines the government's new "triple track" approach to youth crime (those aged under 18), focusing on prevention and early intervention before problems occur, intensive support and challenge for those at risk of prolific offending, and tough enforcement action where behaviour is plainly unacceptable.

Scotland: [Moving forward: a national youth work strategy](#) (2007, age range 11-25). *Moving forward* sets out the role of youth work in delivering the broader aims of the Scottish Executive, including getting more young people into education, training or employment; tackling sectarianism; and supporting young people dealing with issues related to drugs or alcohol. It provides an additional £8m (€11.2) funding for 2007-08 and sets up a standards council for community learning.

Northern Ireland: [Strategy for the delivery of youth work in Northern Ireland 2005-08](#) (age range, 4-25). This sets out the youth service's vision of the future where all young people in Northern Ireland are able to enjoy themselves, realise their potential and participate as active citizens in a secure and peaceful society; know their rights and responsibilities and have these rights protected and promoted; and are valued, understood and involved and feel safe and supported. It identifies four key themes: effective inclusion youth work; participation; resources and funding; and implementation.

Wales: [Extending Entitlement: supporting young people in Wales;](#) [Young People, Youth Work, Youth Service: national youth work strategy for Wales](#) (2007, age range 11-25). *Extending Entitlement* is based on the expectation that all organisations providing services for young people should work together to provide a network of support and experiences to all young people, with additional support for those who need it. The youth work strategy describes the role of the youth service, incorporating organisations in the statutory and voluntary sectors, in helping achieve the *Extending Entitlement* vision.

## **Programmes and actions for specific target groups**

- [New Deal for Young People](#) – a mandatory programme of help designed to address the problems of long-term unemployment in 18-24 year olds.] now out of date?
- [Youth Justice Board](#) – oversees the youth justice system in England and Wales. It aims to prevent offending and reoffending by children and young people under the age of 18, and to ensure that custody for them is safe, secure, and addresses the causes of their offending behaviour.
- [Teenage Pregnancy Strategy](#) – intended to tackle both the causes and the consequences of teenage pregnancy. It aims to reduce the under-18 conception rate by 2010 and increase proportion of teenage parents in education, training or employment.
- Tackling Knives Action Programme – a short-term programme aiming to tackle youth knife crime in priority areas. The programme has recently been expanded from April 2009 to cover 17 police force areas who will tackle knife crime and other forms of serious youth violence (including gangs and guns) among 13-24 year olds.
- Youth Alcohol Action Plan – setting out how the government will address public concerns about youth drinking through a strong partnership with parents, schools, health services, industry and the police.
- Young Runaways Action Plan – intended to ensure that services are in place to meet the needs of the estimated 100,000 young people under 16 who run away each year across the UK.
- Youth Taskforce Action Plan – intended to tackle youth anti-social behaviour with a package of measures over 2008-11, including prevention, challenge and support measures for those at risk of offending.
- Young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) – the government has a target to reduce the proportion of 16-18 year olds who are NEET by two percentage points by 2010.

## **5. Budget / Public expenditure allocated to youth**

### **National level**

England: local authorities in England budgeted approx £403m (approx €578m) on youth work in 2006-07. An additional £43m (€48.5m) was available for Positive Activities for Young People, a targeted programme providing developmental and diversionary activities for young people aged 8-19. In addition to the £115m (€161m) for 2006-08 provided for the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds, the government announced two further initiatives in the 2006 Budget: a £2m (€2.8m) Youth Challenge Fund to reward and recognise innovative

projects developed through YOF/YCF and a Youth Media Fund of £6m (€8.4m) over two years. *Aiming high for young people* committed £184m (€264m) of new money for 2008-11. The [Children's Plan](#) allocated additional funding of £160m (€224m) for 2008-10 for facilities for young people, shaped by their views. The Dormant Bank and Building Society Accounts Bill (introduced in parliament in November 2007) will, if passed, make provision for the proceeds of dormant accounts to be invested in the community, particularly youth facilities. £100m has been made available over 2008-11 to implement a package of measures set out in the Youth Crime Action Plan, and £218m is available over the same period to support implementation of the Youth Taskforce Action Plan.

Scotland: Scottish Executive allocation to Community Learning and Development Departments for community education, including youth work, for 2006-07 was approximately £121m (€169m) in 2006-07. About half of this was expected to be spent on youth work. *Moving Forward* youth work strategy allocated a further £8m (€11.2m) for 2007-08.

Northern Ireland: 2007-08: Youth and community relations: current expenditure £30.7m (€43m); investment £6.4 (9m €). Source: [Building a Better Future: draft budget 2008-11](#).

Wales: local authority expenditure of £29.6m (€41.4) on youth service in 2003-04.

Regional level

[London youth offer](#): A total of £79m (€110.5m) over 2008-10 to relaunch London youth services, targeting hardest-to-reach young people, was announced in September and November 2007. Update?

A range of other organisations also provide some funding for youth work, including the [Big Lottery Fund](#).

## **6. European Dimension of youth policy**

### **6.1 Council of Europe programmes or activities**

UK-wide involvement in [All Different All Equal](#) (ADAE) campaign. The government allocated approximately £40m (€56m) funding for each of the years 2006-07 and 2007-08, and the campaign drew in resources from other sources. ADAE was adopted as the theme of Youth Work Week for 2007.

### **6.2 European Union programmes**

[British Council Connect Youth](#) is the UK National Agency for the Youth in Action Programme. There are five elements: Youth for Europe (youth exchanges, youth initiatives and youth democracy programmes), European Voluntary Service, Youth in the World, Youth Support Systems, and Support for European Cooperation. There is a specific bilateral programme (Causeway) which aims to promote understanding between the young people of Britain and Ireland.

[Eurodesk UK](#). There is a network of partners across the UK who have access to Eurodesk information and communication tools, and can advise young people and those with them about opportunities. Details of local partners are also available. From January 2008, Eurodesk will be managed from within the British Council – contact [Maria.Holmlund@britishcouncil.org](mailto:Maria.Holmlund@britishcouncil.org)

**Other EU programmes implemented in an important way for youth purposes**

The [European Social Fund](#) operates separately in the four countries of the UK.