

## **AYA NGO sector is becoming more mature in Europe**

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A comparative analysis of European non-governmental organisations (NGOs) supporting teenagers and young adults (AYAs) with cancer reveals a sector that is becoming more established and collaborative, but still under significant financial and systemic pressure.

The report compares findings from ENTYAC surveys conducted in 2022 and followed up in 2026. The results highlight clear signs of growth. Nearly nine in ten organisations surveyed in 2026 have been operating for more than a decade, up from just over half four years earlier, indicating a more mature and stable landscape.

There has also been a modest increase in access to government funding, rising from 14% to 22%, though most organisations remain heavily reliant on fundraising and charitable donations. At the same time, awareness of peer organisations has strengthened, with 78% of respondents now reporting knowledge of similar groups in their country, suggesting improved collaboration across the sector.

The survey also points to a shift in focus, with NGOs placing greater emphasis on policy and legal issues affecting young people with cancer. These include access to age-appropriate care, employment rights and insurance barriers, signalling a move towards tackling systemic challenges alongside delivering frontline support.

However, the findings also raise concerns. Despite progress, longstanding challenges remain unchanged. Financial sustainability continues to be the most pressing issue, with organisations reporting ongoing difficulties in securing core funding and maintaining staff capacity.

In addition, the needs of young people with cancer have remained consistent. Access to mental health support, opportunities for peer connection, and help with education and employment remain critical gaps. Young people also continue to face challenges navigating transitions between paediatric and adult healthcare services, as well as dealing with long-term issues such as fertility and survivorship.

Encouragingly, the involvement of young people themselves remains a defining strength of the sector. Many organisations continue to embed lived experience in their work, with young people contributing to governance, advocacy and programme design.

The report concludes that while the European AYA cancer NGO landscape is evolving, progress is uneven. It calls for sustained investment, stronger collaboration and a continued focus on improving access to high-quality, age-appropriate care.

For UK organisations such as Teenage Cancer Trust and Young Lives vs Cancer, the findings reinforce the importance of amplifying young people's voices and addressing the practical and emotional challenges that shape their cancer experience.