

100th International Session of the European Youth Parliament Welcomes 250 Young People in Thessaloniki

From July 20 to 28, the European Youth Parliament (EYP) will host its milestone 100th International Session in Thessaloniki, Greece. Marking 37 years of youth-led civic education, the event will bring together 250 young people from 37 countries to form policy proposals, engage with experts and speakers, and connect through social and cultural activities.

Throughout the event, themed “Harbour of Innovation”, fifteen *current European topics* will be addressed, resulting in specific policy proposals. Participants will be addressed by speakers such as Vice-President of the European Commission on Democracy, Dubravka Šuica, in a video message. While crafting their policy proposals, the participants will be aided by an array of experts. The programme also contains various social and cultural activities such as the EuroVillage, the EuroConcert and Anniversary Gala, and an Alumni Reunion.

Anya Suprunenko, Executive Director of the EYP, stresses: *“Celebrating the 100th International Session is a testimony of inspiration and commitment, a simple yet powerful concept of consensus, a vivid proof of our capability to find common ground, mutual understanding, and innovative solutions to seemingly unsolvable issues. The past has shown that young people’s recommendations are not only driving debate but can become political reality.”*

“This event provides one of the best settings for young people to reflect and make sense of politics. The fact we get to hold it in Thessaloniki, a city bursting with such diverse history and culture, makes it even more exciting” states the head of the Session’s academic team, William Eddershaw.

Topically, the Session will discuss some of the most pressing challenges in Europe: Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine, a cost-of-living crisis, and the promising yet challenging rise of AI, among others. Recent European election results have once again revealed a division on how Europe aims to meet its goals. For decision-makers it is now more than ever key to turn to the voices of young Europeans who are at the forefront of technological advancements and often possess unique perspectives on Europe’s future. The jubilee 100th Session serves as a crucial platform for this engagement, bringing together young people and political stakeholders to discuss and refine their perspectives.

Since its first International Session in 1988, the EYP has grown into one of Europe’s largest youth-led platforms for civic education. Sessions have been organised in 32 countries and 73 different cities, allowing over 20,000 young people to learn, exchange ideas and experience intercultural encounters. They have contributed considerably to the EYP’s mission to empower a young generation of informed, open-minded, and responsible active citizens who will shape society and drive impact.

The International Session Thessaloniki 2024 is funded by Erasmus+ and takes place in cooperation with Sparkasse and ESBG, the US mission to the EU, Insurance Europe, Hertie Stiftung, E.ON Stiftung and Stiftung Mercator.

About the European Youth Parliament

The *EYP* is a peer-to-peer educational programme that connects youth across borders and provides space for political debate, personal development, and the exchange of ideas. Since 1987, the network has empowered hundreds of thousands of Europeans to be active citizens and currently involves around 25,000 young people from more than 40 European countries in its activities every year. The *Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe* is the umbrella organisation of the EYP.

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