



YOUNG EUROPE

THE PROJECTS AND PEOPLE OF THE
EUROPEAN YOUTH PARLIAMENT



Editorial

When I attended my first European Youth Parliament (EYP) event almost 20 years ago, the challenges that stood in front of me seemed very different from what we see now.

In a Europe that still endures war, fights to protect democracy, and strives to keep its communities banded together, people often turn to the youth when thinking of the “future.” We often hear calls to “build a better future for young people”. In the EYP, we believe such future is built by young people.

Our network spans thousands of young people across 40 countries, all united by the common goal of building a more inclusive, understanding, and peaceful Europe where young people are trusted and equipped with the skills to lead. This first issue of Young Europe celebrates this spirit. We have brought together stories from across the continent, capturing moments of cultural exchange, teamwork, innovation, and active citizenship. Inside this magazine, you will read the words of young volunteers and they will tell you about climate advocacy in the Arctic, rebuilding efforts in Ukraine, security talks in The Hague, and many other highlights that show what makes our network unique – the diversity of its people and the impact it carries beyond a single event.

Through Young Europe, we show our commitment to empowering a generation of Europeans to become informed, open-minded, and active citizens.

We invite you to see, support, and join this work.

Anya Suprunenko

**Executive Director of the
European Youth Parliament**



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European Youth Parliament (EYP)

In a nutshell, the European Youth Parliament, or simply “the EYP”, is a welcoming environment where young people from all over Europe come together and express their own opinions on political and social issues. The EYP is:

Engaging youth in peer-led learning opportunities:

At regional, national, and international events, the EYP is entirely youth-led, making it a unique platform that is truly for young people by young people. Becoming a participant is only the beginning; many go on to organise, moderate, fundraise, and take on the many roles that keep the organisation running.

Young people building a community that believes in democracy:

Our work is a direct gateway for young people to understand active citizenship, and all the benefits of exercising their democratic rights. This is not just our impression: 90% of our participants report that their participation increased their willingness to get involved in politics and society.

Promoting intercultural dialogue at a European scale:

While active in 40 countries, every year our 25,000 participants travel to all the corners of Europe, gaining new perspectives, learning about new cultures, and forming friendships across borders.

Our mission is to inspire and empower a young generation of informed, open-minded, responsible, and active citizens that shape society and drive impact.



The Schwarzkopf Foundation is the international umbrella organisation of the European Youth Parliament. It hosts the EYP International Office in Berlin. National branches of the EYP are present in almost 40 countries as independent youth NGOs.

The EYP network hosts **over 400 events** every year!

For example, in **just November 2025** young Europeans gathered in **18 countries** for **22 events**.





The most common format of EYP activities is the EYP session, which is a multi-day educational event that brings together young people from different regions or countries. Sessions take place at regional, national, and international level and vary in size from a few dozen to several hundred participants. Key elements include:

Teambuilding

Teambuilding embodies experiential learning and consists of interactive games and activities that enable participants to get to know each other and establish connections with their peers early in the event programme. Through teambuilding, we go from a group of strangers who have just met, to a well-bonded team ready to take on challenges together.

Participants dive into customised scenarios that challenge them to adapt, collaborate, and solve problems. A skilled moderator keeps the team focused and moving forward. Beyond the interpersonal aspect, Teambuilding often acts as the warm-up for the rest of the event.

Committee Work

Consensus and intercultural dialogue are at the core of Committee Work, where in peer-moderated working groups, inspired by the committees of the European Parliament, participants discuss current European challenges, with the aim of identifying key issues, their causes, and proposing solutions.

Guided by young moderators who were once participants themselves, committee topics can range from climate to foreign affairs, economics, human rights, equality, employment, healthcare, education, culture, science, and much more. At the end of Committee Work we end up with an insightful document that summarises the findings and conclusions of young people across a wide array of European affairs.



General Assembly

When each group has their proposals ready by the end of Committee Work, everyone comes together to debate their findings during the General Assembly in a lively, parliamentary-style setting! Young people present their ideas in front of their peers, and in doing so, they learn to build convincing arguments, critically assess different perspectives, and overcome the fear of public speaking.

During the General Assembly, participants experience the democratic decision-making process and the procedure of most parliaments in Europe, including, of course, the European Parliament. Once the debates are over, the finalised proposals can be shared with stakeholders, offering them a unique insight into the views of young people.





Cultural Activities

Bringing together young people from all over Europe is celebration of culture in itself, but EYP events go further by offering Cultural Activities that invite participants to share their traditions with one another. During cultural programme elements participants, for instance, showcase their talents through music, theatre, or dance – we call this the Euroconcert. Over dinner they present food and customs from their home countries – we call this the Eurovillage. Organisers also often design activities to discover the local history and traditions. Everyone learns a little bit more about the beauty of other cultures. Over 85% of our participants state that the EYP has positively contributed to their values of intercultural understanding, dialogue and cooperation.



Scan to read more about the EYP Methodology!

Youth Discussing Peace, Security, and Democracy

EYP International Sessions in The Hague, Turku, and Málaga

When questions surrounding peace, security, and democracy become more urgent in Europe, so does the need for open dialogue. In 2025, this dialogue reached from The Hague to Turku, all the way to Málaga, with the 101st, 102nd, and 103rd International Sessions of the European Youth Parliament which brought together over 750 young people from nearly 40 countries. While each event had its own unique theme and character, all three were united by the purpose of empowering young Europeans to tackle the defining issues of their time.

Commemorating 80 years of peace in the Netherlands, The Hague brought around 250 participants to the historic city known for diplomacy and justice. **“Europe will be your responsibility, and I’m glad because I know Europe will be in good hands,”** said Andrius Kubilius, European Commissioner for Defence and Space, to the participants of The Hague 2025, setting the tone for an event under the theme “Young Vision of Peace and Security”.

Just months later, the International Session in Turku continued the momentum under the theme of “Piecing Together: Innovating, Reflecting, and Connecting”, marking 30 years since Finland joined the EU. **“Europe faces another defining moment. Once again, the tide of freedom is challenged. You are the doers, the thinkers and the builders of tomorrow’s Europe,”** emphasised Marta Kos, European Commissioner for Enlargement, to the participants. Across both events, young people split into diverse committees and drafted resolution booklets addressing challenges in Europe.

Finally, Málaga gathered over 270 young people from 34 countries in southern Spain under the theme “Uniting Shores through Changing Tides.” Addressing participants in a video message, Teresa Ribera, Vice-President of the European Commission for Clean, Just and Competitive Transition, highlighted the role of young people in shaping Europe’s future: **“You are the force that can transform challenges into opportunities, but also the energy we need to understand what European society wants.”**

Some of the calls for actions were to...

Enable fair migration and solidarity

Committee on Human Rights (DROI) at The Hague: Streamline legal migration paths, recognise prior qualifications, strengthen border oversight, expand NGO cooperation, ensure human rights safeguards.

Protect creators while enabling innovation in AI

Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) at Turku: Clarify and tighten rules on training data, require consent for using artists’ work, and expand ethics education so AI supports culture without strip-mining it.

Ensure the safeguarding of human rights in migration

Committee on Civil Liberties and Justice (LIBE) at Málaga: Strengthen legal safeguards for freedom of assembly, introduce EU-wide identification requirements for law enforcement, and reinforce accountability mechanisms to protect peaceful protest.



Scan for more from our
International Sessions!



750+

Young Participants

38

Countries

42

Committees

A Network Driven by its Values

Each event organised by the European Youth Parliament, every national branch and the thousands of volunteers are connected by the same invisible thread: the common values we share in the EYP Community.

We spoke with 26-year old Vedad Misirlić from Bosnia and Herzegovina, one of the volunteers in the EYP's Governing Body (Youth Board), to tell us all about the values of our network, and how it guides our work.

What do you value the most about the EYP and its diverse community of volunteers?

In such a vast, diverse network for youth civic education and engagement such as the EYP, it is hard not to feel all the cultural exchange and diversity we have in our network. I believe that in times such as these, understanding other people, where they are coming from, and what they stand for, is more important than ever, and EYP is a novel platform which allows for exchange of opinions in a structured and constructive way. We believe that the EYP is a great mirror of Europe, as we are active in almost all European countries. With turbulent times, it is more important than ever to foster intercultural exchange and understanding, to create a community and support system where people feel empowered and valued for who they are.

So how does the EYP help young people engage with European issues, with active citizenship, sustainability, and inclusion in mind?

Active citizens drive our society forward. Without all the engaging, motivated, and inspired young people, we would not be the network we are today. With the core values lying behind a peaceful European society, we aim to explore current topics at all sessions, creating an environment where young people will also have a chance to exchange their opinion on pressing European issues. Moreover, with a strong focus on having a sustainable structure for strategic development, we can help all the National Committees (national branches of the EYP) reach their desired goals, and support them in the best way possible. Inclusivity, accessibility, and sustainability are also things that we value deeply.

In the EYP we create...



A network that works as a catalyst for active citizenship.



A network that supports its volunteers and their personal growth.



A network that fosters a peaceful European society.



A network that pushes for inclusion and accessibility.



A network that operates within a sustainable structure for strategic development.



A network that offers a rich variety of methods, tools, and formats.

The EYP is a truly youth-led organisation, meaning that young volunteers of the network jointly steer its projects and shape its future, such as:

Governing Body (Youth Board)

responsible for the strategic development of the organisation, democratically elected by young people all over Europe.

Board of National Committees

in charge of running EYP operations in their own country, democratically elected by the members of their respective National Committee.

Event Leadership

volunteers behind organisational management, academic, and media output of specific events.

What does EYP offer in terms of personal growth and opportunities for young people to create their own path in the network?

We put huge emphasis on independence, and I believe that is something that resonates with a lot of young people around Europe. In our network, everyone can create their own EYP path, and learn from EYP how much they want. Whether someone wants to attend a few events, take something out of it, and move on to next projects in life, or whether someone wants to stay in the network for a longer period of time, attend sessions in other countries, or maybe even try out in leading a National Committee, or join one of the International Governance Structures, EYP will support this person, and that is imperative to our network.



2025 EYP Governing Body (Youth Board) Members

Finally, what stands out to you the most about the young people in the EYP and the energy they bring to the network?

I believe that one of the main things the EYP can offer is young people who truly care. They care about our network, about Europe, and about making a change. No matter which country I went to, no matter the size of the event, I always saw one thing in common: Young people who want to work, learn, improve, and step out of their comfort zone.

Vedad Misirlić

26 years old from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Member of the EYP Governing Body (Youth Board)



Working Towards a Sustainable Future



When it comes to sustainability, young people’s demand could not be clearer – Europe needs a greener future. For us it’s essential to provide youth with a platform to inform themselves on matters of sustainability, provide space for trialling innovative projects to make our own work greener, and equip young people with skills required to engage with advocacy on a local level.

Topics about climate always remain on the agenda for our sessions, and in the past years we hosted a number of sustainability-oriented projects, such as:

Young European Multipliers for Climate Action

where a group of ten young volunteers spent the year bringing their perspectives on the energy transition to Members of the European Parliament and the broader public.

Climate Youth Action Plan Idea Competition

where volunteers across our network came up with ideas for making EYP events greener and then tested them in real life.

Sustainable Engagement Fund

helped national EYP branches across 25 countries implement greener travel frameworks, zero-waste event models, or local environmental education initiatives.

“Since 2013, our partnership with the European Youth Parliament has shown us just how powerful young voices can be in shaping Europe’s energy and climate future. Together, we have created spaces where young people not only learn about the complexities of the energy transition but also gain the confidence and the networks to make their perspectives heard by decision-makers.

This matters deeply to our joint mission: the energy transition will only succeed if the next generation is empowered to take ownership of it. By connecting knowledge with participation, and young people with leaders, we are helping to build a Europe where climate and energy policy is not just made for youth, but with youth.”



Dr. Stephan Muschick
Managing Director of the E.ON Foundation, a long-standing partner of the EYP on climate- and energy-related projects

Building a Resilient Tomorrow for Ukraine's Recovery

Rebuild Ukraine Ambassadors

Ukraine's recovery from war will be about shaping a future that is sustainable and resilient. Since 2022 our Rebuild Ukraine Ambassadors Programme makes sure that young people have a say in this process.

At the core of the project is the Rebuild Ukraine Lab – an event bringing together Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian participants from across Europe, we call this group the Rebuild Ukraine Ambassadors.

Here, Ambassadors exchange perspectives, work in international teams, and develop forward-looking proposals on how Ukraine should move forward with sustainability and EU accession in mind.

These insights are then shared with policymakers, civil society, and the wider public, and the group of Ambassadors are equipped with the skills to continue engaging with and promote the topic of Ukraine locally.

We interviewed one of the Rebuild Ukraine Ambassadors, 20-year-old Liudmyla Haliulko from Ukraine, to tell us more about the project.

To start, what can you tell us about the Rebuild Ukraine Ambassadors Programme and what motivated you to join as an Ambassador?

The Rebuild Ukraine Ambassadors Programme is unique, as there is no other programme which unites efforts of youth from Ukraine and all over Europe for the reconstruction of Ukraine. Rebuilding Ukraine will need many professionals, both Ukrainian and international, including young professionals. Becoming an Ambassador means contributing to Ukraine's victory, it gives individuals a sense of belonging to something historic. We are all responsible for our tomorrow and Ukraine is on the front line of this future-building. In combination with the knowledge of European peers, our work leads to truly innovative ideas.

What do the day-to-day tasks of a Rebuild Ukraine Ambassador look like for you and your peers?

My fellows and I were working in various focus groups: researching and writing our vision on the reconstruction of Ukraine in fields from education to cybersecurity. We researched, narrowed down challenges and then, alongside the experts, developed solutions to these challenges, creating a vision paper; a document with our recommendations for improving reconstruction programmes and processes. However, that's only part of our role as Ambassadors. The second part of the year-mandate is advocacy. The Ambassadors present the vision paper to policy- and decision-makers, civil-society representatives and academia. As an example, Ambassadors presented a paper to representatives of the European Commission and NATO, as well as during the European Youth Event.



We hear that for a young person, taking on a vast conversation like the sustainable reconstruction of Ukraine can be challenging. What helped you navigate this topic?

The Rebuild Ukraine Ambassadors Programme breaks down complex challenges like peacebuilding and recovery into small, actionable steps young people can grasp and lead. It shows how civic resilience and solidarity aren't distant ideals – they're practical choices made in communities. By grounding youth in co-responsibility and offering real ways to contribute, the programme helps them move from feeling overwhelmed to feeling equipped. It's not about fixing everything – it's about knowing where to start and why it matters.

Are there any standout moments for you that really brought home why programmes like the Rebuild Ukraine Ambassadors matter?

The highlight of my mandate happened during an advocacy visit to Brussels. In the European Parliament, there was a meeting with an MEP who was curious to hear about cultural topics, indigenous people specifically. We discussed how Ukrainians and indigenous people live side by side, and how they form a general Ukrainian identity based on values. I saw sincere interest and respect. I saw this person learning new information crucial for Ukraine's recovery. This meeting was more than just advocacy; it was truly a European moment of unity and understanding.

Liudmyla Haliulko

**20 years old, from Ukraine,
EYP Rebuild Ukraine Ambassador**



The 2025 rendition of the Rebuild Ukraine Ambassadors Programme also featured a study trip to Lviv, where our young Ambassadors connected with the people and organisations driving change on the ground to gain valuable insight into Ukraine's ongoing recovery and EU accession.



To complement this first-hand perspective from within the Rebuild Ukraine Ambassadors Programme, we spoke with Olga Baltag from the European Youth Foundation (EYF), who shared a broader view on how youth work has evolved in recent years and how youth-led initiatives, such as the EYP, contribute to strengthening European democracy.

Firstly, from your perspective how has the landscape of youth work changed in recent years, especially given crises such as the war in Ukraine?

In recent years, youth work has been affected by many crises. The worrying trend of shrinking civic space, with increasing restrictions on the activities of civil society organisations, notably those led by young people, is becoming more evident, and ultimately undermines the democratic foundations of our societies. Youth centres, educational institutions, and public spaces continue to play a critical role in fostering participation, especially after COVID-19. Although digital engagement has grown, traditional offline spaces remain essential for discussions, deliberation, and for community-building. Rather than focusing solely on institutional politics, today's young people tend to engage with causes that reflect their values, such as climate change, mental health, and social justice.

At the same time, Ukrainian youth has proven that despite the war, youth work continues to exist, and active support is needed from decision-makers to ensure that young people benefit from opportunities for development.

In your view, how can projects led by young people, such as the EYP, help shape European democracy?

It is very important that young people take part in discussions on policy work and help shape it. The impact for young people (and the society as a whole) is evident – from empowering to become active citizens engaged in shaping the decisions that affect their lives, to development of essential skills, enhancing networking, creating partnerships and community engagement, youth-led initiatives are the driving force for creating inclusive and safe spaces for youth, including those affected by the war.

The EYP project is a direct contributor to the youth perspectives, bringing together young people from multiple countries to promote co-operation and solidarity at the European level.

And lastly, how did EYF experience the collaboration with the EYP? Was there anything that stood out about the event or its participants?

The fact that young people are taking ownership of such complex, yet relevant issues tackled by this project, such as judicial reforms, the energy sector, disinformation and (mis)trust in institutions, or social rights is a reason for hope.

The youth perspective on these topics is essential, and the rebuilding of a democratic, inclusive, and citizen-responsive Ukraine, with the contributions from young Ukrainians and their European peers, is shaping to be a reality for the current generations, not in the distant future. It is now up to the decision-makers to enact the changes that young people propose and see. I have no doubt that young people involved in these processes will hold stakeholders accountable for their actions and demand change whenever this is not taking place.



Olga Baltag

Project Officer, European Youth Foundation, Council of Europe

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this interview are those of the interviewee in a personal capacity and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Council of Europe or the European Youth Foundation.



Shaping Youth Opportunities Through Partnerships

Inside The Hague International Session with Eva Wildöer

Behind every successful EYP International Session is a team of organisers making it all happen. We spoke with Eva Wildöer, 23 years old from The Netherlands, the organiser in charge of partnerships for The Hague 2025, who shares with us her experience connecting youth work with stakeholders and seeing the impact of her work first-hand.

To start off, what made The Hague 2025 the event you wanted to work on?

There were multiple factors that drew me to The Hague International Session 2025, but one of the most important ones was the potential of the city itself. I knew I preferred the position of partnerships manager for this event from the get-go, precisely because of the wide array of organisations and institutions The Hague has to offer within the theme of peace and security (and justice by extension). These organisations could play an instrumental role in bringing the session to life for participants, and in making them realise their work is about much more than just this event, or just the EYP. They could truly become ambassadors of peace by reflecting on their work and ideas and discussing them with these key stakeholders.

Partnerships were a core part of your role. How do you see them shaping an event like this?

Partnerships facilitate crucial interaction with key stakeholders. During The Hague, we were able to have three sponsored topics in collaboration with the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, North Sea Port, and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). In this way, the delegates were able to present and discuss their policy proposals on digital resilience, port security and chemical disarmament directly with the key stakeholder. In addition, almost all committees received experts to discuss their ideas, and most delegates visited their home embassy in The Hague.

These interactions show delegates that they are not simply 'playing pretend', they are truly contributing to a more secure and just European society.



Eva Wildöer

**23 years old, from The Netherlands,
Organiser in charge of partnerships
for The Hague 2025**



Was there a moment during the event when you felt all the hard work was worth it?

One of the evening events was the Remembrance Evening, which was preceded by a Partner Reception at the same location. Although these were by far the busiest and draining events partnerships-wise, to see everyone interacting and seeing the sheer volume of partners that were willing to commit to our project was heartwarming. Additionally, it was a moment to thank them, and it gave us the opportunity to speak on a more casual level, instead of always discussing logistics.

The theme of the event was ‘Young Visions of Peace and Security’. What did that mean to you personally?

From my point of view, discussions about peace and conflict are the most difficult to have young people be represented in. States and institutions often applaud young perspectives but keep them limited to a certain set of themes that they deem appropriate, such as climate policy or the housing market.

I feel The Hague 2025 was our way to break through this barrier, and present peace and security discussions that are important to us as a young generation in a bottom-up way.

“This event felt like a jump into the next chapter of my life, fully equipped with all the lessons I learned in my time with the EYP.”



Promoting the European Elections

Communities are stronger when they come together! At the EYP, we see collaboration as great opportunities to promote our democratic values. A recent standout collaboration of this nature was the EYP joining powers with the European Parliament in 2024 to organise a local European Youth Event (EYE) in Berlin, and mobilise young voters ahead of the European Elections.

Thanks to our collective efforts, from the 18th until the 20th of April 2024, Berlin became a buzzing hub of youth dialogue. The elections carried a new significance for some of the youngest participants, as for the first time in several European countries, the voting age had been lowered to 16, marking a historic moment that gave thousands of young people a voice in shaping Europe's future.

“Over 1,000 young people came together for EYE Berlin 2024 to explore and experience Europe, connect, and exchange ideas. We were glad to support the EYP in the organisation of a project like EYE Berlin, which plays an important role in strengthening European citizenship among young people, helping them understand how the EU works, and empowering them to become active citizens.

The European Youth Parliament and other youth-led organisations are essential to keeping European democracy vibrant and inclusive, creating spaces where young people can engage meaningfully and speak out on the issues that matter most to them.”

Sophie Lutz
Programme Coordinator at
the European Parliament

The local European Youth Event in Berlin was a space for valuable conversations that encouraged participants to build on the momentum generated by the event.

After three days of connecting with peers and decision-makers, young attendees walked away inspired to turn ideas into action within their own communities, and this is perhaps the most valuable outcome!





1200+

(Young) Participants

63

Countries Represented

9

**Embassies
Represented**

9

**MEPs
Participated**

66

Workshops

100 International Sessions – a Journey from 1987

An EYP International Session is our flagship event that takes place two or three times a year in different countries, bringing together hundreds of young people from every national branch to discuss the most relevant topics within Europe. Simply put, an International Session is the EYP experience at its largest scale, with its concept proven by its ability to withstand the test of time.

In 1987, the idea of EYP was born in a classroom in Fontainebleau, France.

I used to work at a secondary school in Fontainebleau. There was no English-speaking school in town, so I set up what was called the 'Anglophone section' at that school. The headmaster told me one day 'Mrs Carr-Allinson, how is it that your students are always the brightest in the class?', and I said 'Well, it's because they learn different languages, and they communicate with people of different nationalities.' I had this idea of the European Youth Parliament, and a good friend of mine always said, 'Whoever has a good idea, we'll sit down, have a cup of coffee together, and see what we can do.' So, I told them about the idea for the EYP, and they all said, 'We are going to help you with that!'

It was brilliant! I was so worried about it all. All the delegates stayed with host families in Fontainebleau, because we had no money to arrange any other kind of accommodation for them. And it was the very first time, so you never know whether it's all going to work out! I asked another educational organisation to come and do the team building, and they said they couldn't do that. They thought it was too difficult to make a bonded group out of the youngsters in just a day and a half. But I convinced them in the end, because on their own website they stated that no challenge was difficult enough. I said, 'if no challenge is too difficult, you have to do it', and they did it. And it all worked out.



Bettina Carr-Allinson
The Co-Founder of the
European Youth Parliament





EYP International Sessions (1988 – 2027)

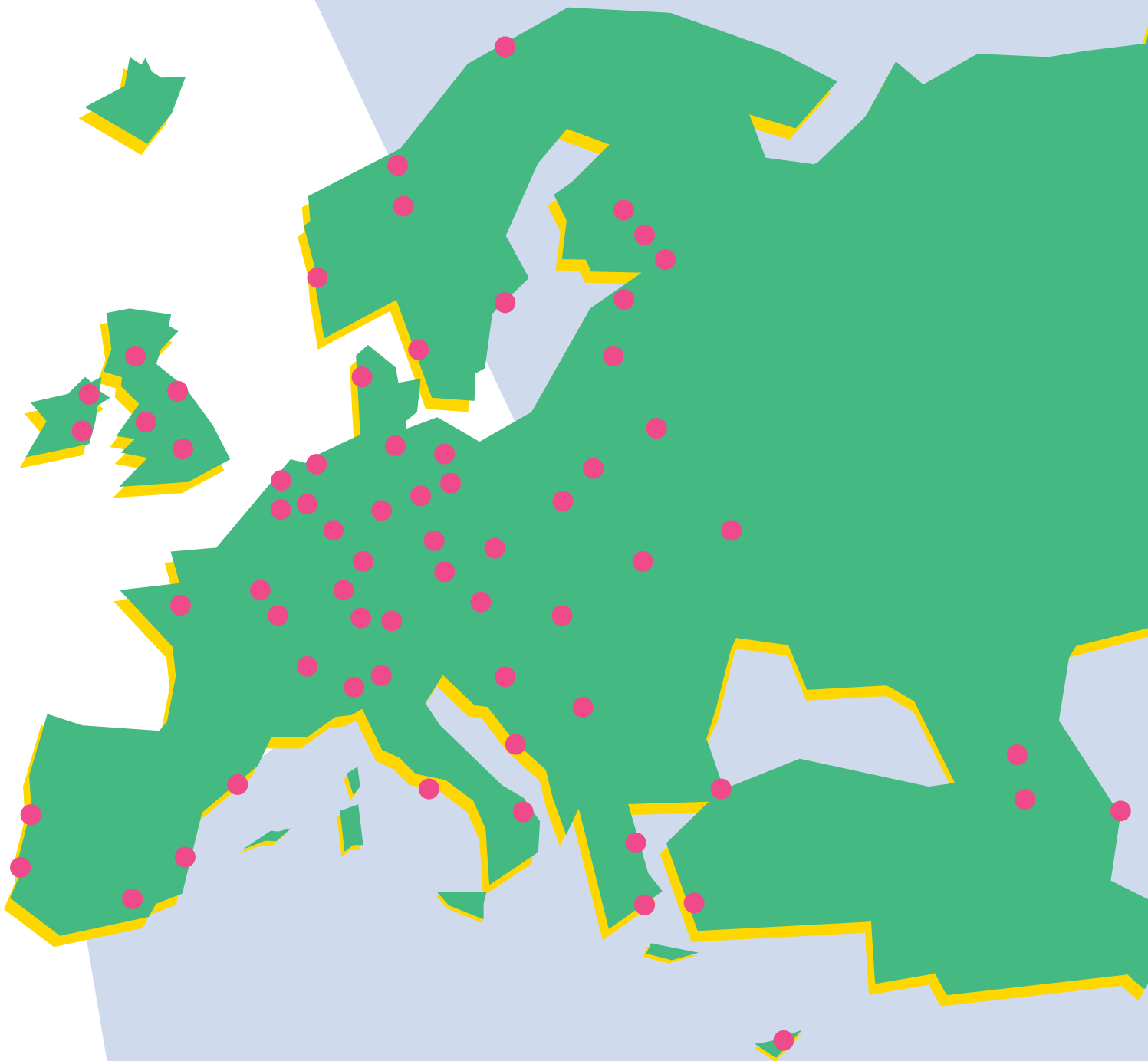
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82. 2016, Rennes
83. 2016, Laax
84. 2017, Trondheim-Røros
85. 2017, Brno
86. 2017, Tbilisi
87. 2018, Vilnius
88. 2018, Rotterdam
89. 2019, Yerevan
90. 2019, Valencia
91. 2019, Hamburg
92. 2021, Milan
93. 2021, Warsaw
94. 2021, Ljubljana
95. 2022, Novi Sad
96. 2022, Riga
97. 2022, Kortrijk
98. 2023, Tromsø
99. 2023, Baku
100. 2024, Thessaloniki
101. 2025, The Hague
102. 2025, Turku
103. 2025, Málaga
104. 2026, Pordenone
105. 2026, Niš-Novi Sad
106. 2027, Frankfurt
107. 2027, Porto

Did you know?

After organising most of the first International Sessions in founding EU countries, such as France and Germany, the network's reach has grown significantly, hosting International Sessions in 32 countries.

Out of all International Sessions, three of them were hosted in more than one city, with a fourth one planned in 2026.

In 2016, the 81st International Session in Dublin-Belfast is the first time our flagship event was organised in two countries at once!



Youth Together for Arctic Futures

Young people in the Arctic, and particularly Indigenous youth, are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis yet remain underrepresented in international decision-making processes. Through this project, the EYP is proud to contribute to the Arctic Youth Dialogues in Brussels and the Arctic, where young people get to engage with stakeholders, directly influencing what the future of Arctic policy looks like.

By creating mutual learning and collaboration opportunities between Arctic and European youth, the EU-funded Youth Together for Arctic Futures project empowers young people to collectively find solutions to common challenges. It gives Arctic youth the tools and opportunities to influence their own futures and stimulates European youth to engage in this region more – recognising its great importance for all of Europe!

We asked our Project's Youth Board Member, 26-year-old Vilde Furuhaug Westby from Norway, to give us a deeper insight into the Youth Together for Arctic Futures project.

Which challenges does the project focus on, and how does it give young people a voice in Arctic communities?

The project frequently covers topics such as climate change, biodiversity, ocean management, economic development, governance at international and local level, and the empowerment of youth and Indigenous and rural communities. After participating in the project, I feel that local communities in the Arctic appreciate their youth as the future of their home communities.

What makes Youth Together for Arctic Futures particularly valuable for young people, and how do the different partners contribute to this experience?

The project is particularly beneficial in that the project partners are not 'just' youth organisations. There are youth organisations such as EYP, yes, but also those targeting all ages, such as the Arctic Mayors' Forum, the Saami Council, and WWF Global Arctic Programme. The broad coalition of partners means that the young people participating in the project have a unique platform on which they can advocate towards, get guidance from, and discuss with career professionals in the field of Arctic and EU governance. Having senior-level, 'friendly' faces in the room can be extremely helpful for young people as we aim for high-level impact on the issues that matter to us and our communities.



Vilde Furuhaug Westby

25 years old, from Norway,
Project's Youth Board Member

Do you think there is anything still missing when it comes to youth participation in Arctic decision-making?

I think what is missing for some communities still is to institutionalise that participation. Young advocates on the Arctic should have formalised pathways for mentorship and support, and a seat in Arctic delegations towards national and international bodies of governance to provide a long-term perspective.



Finally, is there a moment in the project that stood out for you personally, or a connection with other young people that felt particularly inspiring?

I think the standout moment for me in this project was meeting fellow youth advocates with backgrounds vastly different from mine and just feeling a deep sense of solidarity. These are people who want to make our world better; and sharing that feeling of passion and hope for a better future for the Arctic has been invigorating.

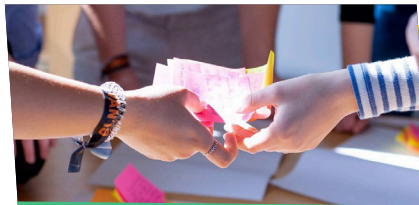


Empowerment through Training Opportunities

Skill development is at the heart of every EYP event! While many abilities are gained naturally through participation, like public speaking during General Assemblies, our network, and the International Office of the EYP, also provide international training events designed specifically to help young people develop new competencies, such as:



LEADERSHIP



**TIME
MANAGEMENT**



**MODERATION &
FACILITATION**



**PUBLIC
SPEAKING**



**CRITICAL
THINKING**



FUNDRAISING



**PROJECT
MANAGEMENT**



DEBATING



**PUBLIC
RELATIONS**



**MEDIA
LITERACY**



**CREATIVE
SKILLS**



**CULTURAL
AWARENESS**

The positive impact of the EYP is backed up by data! Every year we conduct a survey where our young volunteers from all over Europe share the impact that the EYP has had on their lives.

According to the survey, our young participants:

Over 90%

believe that the EYP has positively contributed to their skill development

Over 50%

state the EYP influenced the skillset needed for their field of employment

Over 70%

continue to have discussions with peers in their local communities, promoting EYP values

Over 60%

say that participating in the EYP significantly contributed to their knowledge of EU institutions

"In the EYP, seeing how you can take ownership of a project and have impact on people really makes you believe that you can do anything you want."

Leila Debiasi
25-year-old volunteer from Italy

"The EYP had a great influence on my professional career. Amongst others, it has taught me to analyse policy, facilitate discussions, and manage projects. All skills that are essential for my professional work today."

David Plahl
26-year-old volunteer from Germany



The Role of Cultural Exchange

A deep dive into Turku International Session with Rostyslav Lisovskyi

Behind every successful EYP session are volunteer facilitators who guide discussions and support the participants with navigating their proposals. We spoke with Rostyslav Lisovskyi, an 18-year-old from EYP Poland, and chairperson at Turku 2025, about his experience facilitating committees, his reflections on the session theme, and the role of cultural exchange in shaping participants' perspectives.

What drew you to take on the role of chairperson at Turku 2025?

Over the years, for me, the EYP has not just been a place for civic education and intercultural dialogue, but more a space for inspiration, transformation and growth. The session motto “Piecing together” represents the idea that achieving success requires collective effort; no single person holds the full picture, but when we combine our perspectives, something coherent and valuable emerges. “Innovating” is about challenging established ideas to create new means to educate, connect and facilitate, something I strived to do in my committee. “Reflecting” reminds me that growth only happens when we take time to think over the experience, to see what went right and wrong. And “Connecting” is the emotional core of it all – the empathy, support and encouragement that gives meaning to what we do as volunteers in the network.

How did your own background influence the way you approached this role?

Coming from a rural city in central Ukraine, I was raised with a deep appreciation for equality and education, values that shaped me as a person, and led me through my EYP journey. Growing up in a community where opportunities were limited taught me the importance of creating spaces where everyone's voice, especially young people's, is heard and respected.



What do you think is the value of cultural exchange at the EYP?

I believe that cultural exchange is what makes EYP meaningful. It goes far beyond language or traditions, more about learning to understand how people from different cultures approach communication and problem-solving. In the EYP, participants come from diverse backgrounds to work together toward common goals. This process teaches empathy and tolerance, skills essential for building a community.

The EYP is home to people from all nationalities and backgrounds! Our aim is to secure partnerships that enable us to bring people with more diverse backgrounds to our events. In the past years through various cooperations we welcomed a number of young people with refugee backgrounds.

“The fact that we are just teenagers and that we are able to think about such serious topics and work out solutions by working together as a team, on issues that people with much more responsibilities are normally working on, is mind-blowing.”

Saro, 17-year-old, Refugee Participant from Syria

Your committee focused on employment and refugee integration. Was there a particular moment that captured the spirit of the session for you?

My committee on employment worked on the topic of challenges in the legal system, long-term integration and recognition of prior learning of all refugees, whether displaced by war, climate change or oppression. As a refugee myself, who experienced some of these problems first-hand, it was an important task to truly capture what refugees go through every day. I believe the topic had a profound impact on participants, pushing them to confront the real reality and morality behind asylum policy. Many have come to Turku with a limited understanding of how legal status and qualification recognition affect integration, but after numerous discussions and an expert talk with a UNHCR representative, the issue evolved to more than just a bureaucratic challenge; it became about dignity, opportunity and equality. By the end, the participants not only produced thoughtful proposals, but also developed a stronger sense of compassion, and I couldn't be prouder of the work they did at the event.

Rostyslav Lisovskyi

**18 years old, from Ukraine,
Facilitator of the Committee on
Employment and Social Affairs at Turku 2025**



Once an EYPer Always an EYPer – Our Alumni Network

Since 1987, more than 100,000 young people have participated in activities organised by the EYP, and many of them have continued to become leading voices within their communities.

Our alumni network brings together intelligent and compassionate people who have grown into professionals in their fields yet remain dedicated to shaping the future and giving back to the EYP. Be it through mentorship, knowledge-sharing, or reunion events, we continue to involve our alumni in meaningful ways that strengthen the organisation and inspire the next generation of participants.

We spoke to Maria Manolescu, an EYP alumna from Romania, who joined in 2004 and now works as a Legal Officer at an international organisation, to hear about the valuable work of our alumni community, and the impact of the EYP at large.

What do you think of the next generation of EYPers who have come after you?

My nephew attended his first EYP event 20 years after I attended mine. I heard the same things I and my fellow first-time delegates had experienced: 'life-changing experience.' The fact that generation after generation has similar experiences is testimony of the success of the EYP model.

As someone who has organised alumni activities, what is it like and what makes these moments different from typical networking events?

We aim to bring together EYPers who are no longer actively involved both through local meetups, as well as a weekend-long event once a year, on the sidelines of EYP International Sessions. It is an opportunity to experience the 'EYP spirit' again, just like when we were active EYPers attending events. A feeling of acceptance and belonging in the midst of strangers who are genuinely curious to get to know you. It is very different than professional networking events, and certainly a rare opportunity to meet people from not only different countries, but also various professions in one place.

Tell us about your EYP journey, what skills or lessons have stayed with you in your professional life?

I joined EYP when I was 14. I was actively involved for some 15 years and think one of the main reasons for it has been that EYP continuously offered new opportunities to learn new things, to develop and grow, in a safe environment. Proactivity, creative problem solving, working with and managing different personalities, and project management are all things I've learned from EYP. These have been among the most essential tools that enabled me to successfully progress through my legal career, and I believe they can be an asset in almost any other field.



Maria Manolescu

**36 years old, from Romania,
Legal Officer and EYP Alumna**

Our alumni, many of who have gone to become prominent leaders in their communities are testament to the impact of our work. Below are just a few examples of (former) EYPers:

Andrej Plenkovi

Prime Minister of Croatia

Freya Van den Bossche

Former Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium

Lorenzo Parulli

From Italy, Diplomat in the European External Action Service

David Mitchell

From the United Kingdom, Comedian, actor, and writer

Gloria Rehm

From Germany, Award-winning operatic soprano

Tapio Schrey

From Finland, Partner and Director, Boston Consulting Group

Lenka Petrakova

From Slovakia, Lead Architect and Associate at Zaha Hadid Architect

Giorgi Tabagari

From Georgia, LGBT Activist and Founder of Tbilisi Pride

“It has been a long time since I participated in the EYP activities, but I still nurture and treasure the friendships I made within EYP, and I still have good memories of those times. At the EYP session, I had an opportunity to practice democracy and active citizenship and acquire skills in public speaking and debating, negotiating, and finding a consensus, which I still use in my social, political, and state governance career.”



Rustem Umerov
EYP alumnus from Ukraine, joined in 2001,
now Minister of Defence of Ukraine



Sophie Honey, former UK Ambassador to Slovenia



Sophie Honey
@SophieHoneyUK

I was at first session of [#EuropeanYouthParliament](#) in [#Thessaloniki](#).. The German delegation of 16 & 17 yr olds suddenly burst into tears and rapturous applause all at once. Made me realise the hugeness of what had just happened..



Foreign, Commonwealth & Development ... @FCDOGo... · Nov 9, 2019

30 years ago, the Berlin wall fell.

Hear the stories of two diplomats who witnessed this historic moment

...



Scan to join our alumni in
the EYP Circle of Friends!



The EYP continues to be an engaging space for its alumni long after their time as young volunteers.

Happy Hours and reunions organised in Europe and beyond offer opportunities for networking and reconnecting. Our mentorship programme connects EYP alumni who can offer career guidance and advice based on experience with young volunteers starting a new phase of academic or professional life. Alumni Talks feature prominent EYP Alumni in topical webinars that everyone can join and learn from.

Not to mention, with our new Alumni United project, supported by the E.ON Foundation, we will work on developing communities and spaces to exchange for alumni, both regionally and professionally. These activities include:

Mentorship Programme

Alumni paired with active EYP volunteers to offer professional guidance, advice and mentoring.

Reunions & Happy Hours

Local and international socialising events across Europe.

Circle of Friends

Community of alumni and supporters who believe in giving back to the organisation that shaped them.

Knowledge Exchange

Professional communities enable alumni in shared fields or regions to collaborate, share career insights and industry perspectives, as well as contribute with their expertise to network events.

Understanding Fundamental Rights

Young people are passionate and knowledgeable about a lot of topics. Our role at the EYP is to give youth the platforms they need to turn their ideas into real impact. Our FOCUS project raises awareness of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (CFREU), empowering young people to know and use their rights in everyday life. Supported by the European Union, the FOCUS project brings together several partners, together with the EYP.

We asked Luka Đorđević, a 25-year-old volunteer from EYP Serbia, who worked closely with the FOCUS project, to speak with us about the project, youth participation, and the change the project aims to create.

In your eyes, what makes projects like FOCUS so valuable for young people stepping into civic engagement?

I believe that projects like FOCUS give young people the opportunity to not only learn about their civic rights and obligations, but also a space to advocate for them from an existing starting point. By establishing the first steps together and creating the basis for their future work, they can focus on the progress and the impact they can have.

How do you see this experience influencing young people's long-term engagement?

Equipping young people with all the necessary tools to continue this dialogue outside of the boundaries of the project is exactly what this experience was created for. Participants are now tasked with a personal message - show that fundamental rights are not only something to be read from a piece of paper. They are something you live through, and act upon.

Could you walk us through how activities under FOCUS help young people engage with the Charter of Fundamental Rights?

Through the YouthRights programmes, including Dialogues, social media posts, and the Vision Lab, young people discussed, shared their knowledge, gathered information, and collaborated on a vision paper, exploring how the Charter can be more reachable and applied in the day-to-day life. Participants were encouraged to analyse the CFREU from a standpoint of shared, lived experiences, and not just as a legal document, and left the programme with tools and practical knowledge on how to adapt what they learned into knowledge-sharing opportunities.

The FOCUS project includes the EYP, Democracy Reporting International, Alda Europe, Verfassungsblog, and Are We Europe.

Luka Đorđević

**25 years old, from Serbia,
Volunteer at the EYP Office**



Get Involved!

Thank you for reading the first issue of “Young Europe – The projects and people of the European Youth Parliament”. If you have taken interest in the work of the EYP, here’s how to:



Partner with us

We are always open to exploring ways of partnering up and achieving shared objectives. Together we can initiate dialogue on topics that are meaningful to young people and Europe at large.



Participate at an Event

If you are a young person or represent a school, we encourage you to get in touch with an EYP branch in your country and experience the contents of this magazine for yourself!



Support our Mission

If our goal to empower young Europeans to be open-minded, tolerant and active citizens is something close to your heart, you can help our work with a donation!

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