

R12 Youth at the Table: Make Participation a Right, Not a Gesture

Proposer: Youth Forum URA
Agenda item: 8. Resolutions

Motion text

1 Young people across Europe bear the long-term consequences of political
2 decisions on climate,
3 housing, social rights, and fiscal sustainability, yet their influence in formal
4 democratic
5 institutions remains limited. While youth parliaments and councils are not a new
6 mechanism,
7 they exist in only around half of European countries and often lack a solid
8 legal basis, stable
9 funding, and institutional support to translate into decision-making.
10 Participation is too frequently
11 symbolic, dependent on political goodwill, short-term projects, or voluntary
12 effort.
13 This is not primarily a problem of youth disengagement, but of democratic
14 structures that
15 concentrate power in the hands of established actors and create unequal access
16 based on
17 intersecting forms of discrimination. Public authorities often outsource
18 participation to short-term
19 projects or underfunded organisations, while retaining decision-making power.
20 Without
21 consistent legal guarantees and accountability mechanisms, participation risks

22 reproducing

23 existing privileges and undermining trust when young people's input receives no
24 visible

25 follow-up. Existing legislative frameworks, including Article 165 TFEU, Article
26 11 TEU, and

27 Council of Europe standards on youth participation, already recognise the
28 importance of youth

29 involvement. However, these frameworks lack binding obligations, enforcement,
30 and consistent

31 implementation across Member States.

32 We therefore demand that youth participation becomes a guaranteed right,
33 anchored in law

34 through independent structures, adequate resources, inclusive access, and
35 mandatory

36 accountability.

37 We demand that EU institutions, within their competences:

38 ● Propose and adopt a Council Recommendation on a European Youth Participation
39 Framework, setting minimum requirements for independent, representative national
40 youth councils, youth parliaments and student unions.

41 ● Integrate these standards into EU youth cooperation instruments and reporting
42 cycles,

43 ensuring consistent evaluation of their implementation and impact.

44 ● Use EU funding programmes to incentivise Member States to implement these
45 standards, including participatory governance rules, transparency requirements,
46 and

47 inclusive access measures for marginalised youth.

48 ● Introduce Youth Impact Assessments for relevant legislative and policy
49 proposals,

50 particularly those with significant intergenerational impacts.

51 ● Ensure regular monitoring and public reporting on the implementation and
52 impact of

53 youth participation mechanisms.

54 We demand that Member States:

55 ● Adopt or update national legislation to create or recognise independent,
56 representative

57 national youth councils with a defined consultative role on youth-relevant
58 legislation and

59 budgets.

60 ● Guarantee stable, multi-year public financing for youth councils and
61 participation

62 infrastructures through transparent rules that protect independence and prevent
63 undue influence.

64 ● Establish or strengthen national youth parliaments with formal institutional
65 links to

66 parliament, including mechanisms ensuring parliamentary committees respond to

67 adopted youth resolutions and report on follow-up actions.

68 ● Protect civic space and youth organising by fully safeguarding freedom of
69 association

70 and assembly in law and practice.

71 ● Create monitoring and accountability mechanisms to track how youth
72 participation

73 inputs are reflected in final policy decisions, including regular public
74 reporting.

75 We as FYEG will:

76 ● Develop and deploy a shared advocacy toolkit for Member Organisations to
77 campaign

78 for the legal recognition, independence, and adequate funding of youth councils,
79 youth

80 parliaments and student unions.

81 ● Collect, consolidate and disseminate best practices on consultation rights,

82 accountability mechanisms, and public-authority response procedures.

83 ● Work with Member Organisations to advocate for youth participation reforms at
84 national

85 level, with a focus on the inclusion of marginalized youth and those facing
86 intersecting

87 forms of discrimination.

88 We call on the Green political family to integrate these demands into political
89 programmes and

90 legislative priorities at EU and national levels, ensuring their consistent
91 implementation across

92 other levels of governance. We call on them to act decisively to defend civic
93 space and youth

94 organisations against undue influence, recognising that independent youth
95 representation is a

96 basic right of young people.

97 We call on national parliaments, governments, and local authorities to stop
98 treating youth

99 participation as a temporary project and to legislate for permanent, inclusive
100 and independent

101 youth participation bodies, backed by stable public funding and a guaranteed
102 impact on decision-making.