

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, housing, social rights, and fiscal sustainability, yet
3 their influence in formal democratic institutions remains limited. While youth
4 parliaments and councils are not a new mechanism, they exist in only around half
5 of European countries and often lack a solid legal basis, stable funding, and
6 institutional support to translate into decision-making. Participation is too
7 frequently symbolic, dependent on political goodwill, short-term projects, or
8 voluntary effort.

9 This is not primarily a problem of youth disengagement, but of democratic
10 structures that concentrate power in the hands of established actors and create
11 unequal access based on intersecting forms of discrimination. Public authorities
12 often outsource participation to short-term projects or underfunded
13 organisations, while retaining decision-making power. Without consistent legal
14 guarantees and accountability mechanisms, participation risks reproducing
15 existing privileges and undermining trust when young people's input receives no
16 visible follow-up. Existing legislative frameworks, including Article 165 TFEU,
17 Article 11 TEU, and Council of Europe standards on youth participation, already
18 recognise the importance of youth involvement. However, these frameworks lack
19 binding obligations, enforcement, and consistent implementation across Member
20 States.

21 We therefore demand that youth participation becomes a guaranteed right,
22 anchored in law through independent structures, adequate resources, inclusive
23 access, and mandatory accountability.

24 We demand that EU institutions, within their competences:

- 25 ● Propose and adopt a Council Recommendation on a European Youth Participation
26 Framework, setting minimum requirements for independent, representative national
27 youth councils, youth parliaments and student unions.

- 28 ● Integrate these standards into EU youth cooperation instruments and reporting

29 cycles, ensuring consistent evaluation of their implementation and impact.

30 ● Use EU funding programmes to incentivise Member States to implement these
31 standards, including participatory governance rules, transparency requirements,
32 and inclusive access measures for marginalised youth.

33 ● Introduce Youth Impact Assessments for relevant legislative and policy
34 proposals, particularly those with significant intergenerational impacts.

35 ● Ensure regular monitoring and public reporting on the implementation and
36 impact of youth participation mechanisms.

37 We demand that Member States:

38 ● Adopt or update national legislation to create or recognise independent,
39 representative national youth councils with a defined consultative role on
40 youth-relevant legislation and budgets.

41 ● Guarantee stable, multi-year public financing for youth councils and
42 participation infrastructures through transparent rules that protect
43 independence and prevent undue influence.

44 ● Establish or strengthen national youth parliaments with formal institutional
45 links to parliament, including mechanisms ensuring parliamentary committees
46 respond to adopted youth resolutions and report on follow-up actions.

47 ● Protect civic space and youth organising by fully safeguarding freedom of
48 association and assembly in law and practice.

49 ● Create monitoring and accountability mechanisms to track how youth
50 participation inputs are reflected in final policy decisions, including regular
51 public reporting.

52 We as FYEG will:

53 ● Develop and deploy a shared advocacy toolkit for Member Organisations to
54 campaign for the legal recognition, independence, and adequate funding of youth
55 councils, youth parliaments and student unions.

56 ● Collect, consolidate and disseminate best practices on consultation rights,
57 accountability mechanisms, and public-authority response procedures.

58 ● Work with Member Organisations to advocate for youth participation reforms at

59 national level, with a focus on the inclusion of marginalized youth and those
60 facing intersecting forms of discrimination.

61 We call on the Green political family to integrate these demands into political
62 programmes and legislative priorities at EU and national levels, ensuring their
63 consistent implementation across other levels of governance. We call on them to
64 act decisively to defend civic space and youth organisations against undue
65 influence, recognising that independent youth representation is a basic right of
66 young people.

67 We call on national parliaments, governments, and local authorities to stop
68 treating youth participation as a temporary project and to legislate for
69 permanent, inclusive and independent youth participation bodies, backed by
70 stable public funding and a guaranteed impact on decision-making.