

The Annual Report of the OSCE PA Special Representative on Youth Engagement

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**The distressing dichotomy between the
potential of youth and their actual
possibilities to meaningfully participate in
decision-making and leadership**

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Section 1

Obstacles and barriers for youth throughout the three dimensions of security

Introduction

1. The first annual report by the Special Representative on Youth Engagement to the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE highlights the obstacles and barriers that prevent meaningful youth engagement throughout the OSCE area, as well as possible solutions that can contribute to this aim, based on comprehensive dialogues with stakeholders and actors in the field of youth and youth inclusion. The report stresses the crucial importance of empowering the youth and enabling young people to participate in political decision-making. Furthermore, the report explores and indicates fruitful paths to pursue towards a more youth-inclusive future.
2. The purpose of this report is thus to provide an account of the situation of youth in the OSCE region over the period 2021-2022. The Special Representative on Youth Engagement was appointed one year ago, and developed several activities from that moment on to monitor and positively influence the position of young people throughout the OSCE area, including meetings with various stakeholders. This report has been prepared based on these conversations, surveys with OSCE Structures, input gained in organised webinars, and the contributions to youth policies by young parliamentarians.
3. The past two years have been extremely challenging for young people, throughout the OSCE region and beyond. Multiple crises have threatened - and continue to threaten - the interests and the position of youth. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed distressing inequalities that are deeply embedded in the social and political fabric, while frustrating civil engagement, access to education and social safety. Violent conflicts within the OSCE area and in neighbouring states come with regrettable repercussions on political and social life, security and economic security, human rights and civil rights, and the environment. Additionally, the effects of climate change are becoming more pronounced, affecting both physical and mental health, while threatening the wellbeing of young and future generations.

4. All these crises have in common that the interests and safety of young people, and notably young women and youth belonging to minorities, are particularly on the line. The lack of good education, the compromise of security, and the frustration of positive health conditions are factors that can cause severe and irreversible damage when encountered in the first, crucial phases of a person's life. When these risks materialise, young people will bear the burden and they will do so for the whole length of their lives.
5. At the same time, young people have proven to be vocal and decisive in their contributions to public debates regarding all the aforementioned issues. Youth mobilises and participates in public action, including online initiatives, to demand social justice, climate justice, gender equality, the strengthening of the rule of law, democratic inclusion, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, among other social, civil, and political issues. Despite the Declaration on the Role of Youth in Contributing to Peace and Security Efforts, that was adopted by the OSCE Ministerial Council in 2018, and UN Resolution 2535 (2020), the enormous potential of young people's contribution to peaceful conflict resolution has not yet been enabled to materialise sufficiently. And the same goes for young people's contribution to other issues.
6. Young people throughout the OSCE area encounter obstacles and barriers with regards to their access to formal decision-making processes including age-based discrimination, structural and legislative barriers, prejudices, and a lack of political will or opportunities. Youth that, nevertheless, succeeds in accessing decision-making and leadership roles, is regularly confronted with suspicion, intimidation, dominant behaviour, and prejudice.¹ In conflict areas, young people are confronted with more intrusive obstacles that require specific consideration.
7. Removing these obstacles and barriers and rendering them harmless, both in conflict regions and beyond, requires decisive action by the OSCE and the participating states. The present report describes various options for action in the OSCE's politico-military,

¹ Parliamentary Web Dialogue on "Youth contribution to strengthening of rule of law, democracy and human rights in the OSCE area": <https://www.oscepa.org/en/news-a-media/press-releases/2022/parliamentary-web-dialogue-on-youth-contribution-to-strengthening-of-rule-of-law-democracy-and-human-rights-in-the-osce-area>.

economic and environmental, and human dimensions of security, in relation to the issues they intervene with. It should be noted that the issue of youth engagement heavily affects all of the three dimensions of security that constitute the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. This is why the implementation of a youth perspective to the comprehensive security approach is admired, important, and even necessary.

8. The collection and availability of demographic data is crucial for the development and design of adequate (youth) policies, and for the identification of the issues that these policies should address. However, the availability of this data that covers the OSCE region particularly, was found to be lacking. Therefore, the collection and broad availability of data that specifically targets youth throughout the OSCE area should become a priority. Data collection should be broken down and focused on age more often, in order to reveal trends and issues that might stay hidden otherwise, at the expense of young people. Furthermore, this is also vital for meaningful monitoring and assessment of policy implementation. The related issue of establishing a formal definition of youth, which lacks until today, should become a priority as well.

9. The substantial relation between the issue of youth and the three dimensions of security comes as no surprise, for those familiar with the current demographic data that is, nevertheless available. Throughout the OSCE region, 40% of the population consists of young people under the age of 30, while 30% of the population consists of youth under 24.² In some participating states, this last percentage is higher than 50%, with Tajikistan as the highest outlier with 55%. These percentages raise questions about intergenerational justice, since they are not reflected in the compositions of national and international parliaments. In the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, only 21 out of 323 parliamentarians are below the age of 35 (6.5%).³ Throughout the world, just over 2% of the parliamentarians are below 30 years of age.⁴ Less than 1% of these young parliamentarians are women.⁵

² UN World Bank Data.

³ As of February 2022.

⁴ IPU Data.

⁵ *Be Seen Be Heard Report*: p. 6.

10. The distressing dichotomy between the potential and the actual contribution of youth, and the political establishment and the suspicion towards young people and their ability to engage in decision-making processes should be contested. Commendably, the uneasiness of this state of affairs was acknowledged by the President of the OSCE PA, Ms. Margareta Cederfelt, who stated that ‘we should consider the existing disparities between youth contribution and the powers in place, and the lack of recognition of the value that young people can add to democracy.’⁶
11. Most laudable, the words by the OSCE PA President resound in the efforts by OSCE Executive Structures, OSCE Secretariat, Institutions and Field Missions, the OSCE Special Representative on Youth and Security, and the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, for strengthening civil, democratic, peace and security issues. All these efforts constitute an important contribution to the resolution of the dichotomy.
12. Nonetheless, this dichotomy is still present throughout all the three dimensions of security of the OSCE’s comprehensive security approach. In all three dimensions, different obstacles that limit young people’s possibilities to intervene in political affairs have been noted, while young people have been active, and often successfully, to achieve change in all of these dimensions as well. Based on these dimensions, the remainder of this section will outline problems and possible solutions with regards to youth engagement.

The politico-military dimension

13. Recently, the OSCE has witnessed an increase of violent conflicts, in and beyond its region. These conflicts intervene with the lives of young people on several levels. Generally, the nature of these interventions with regards to youth is paralysing, with young people enduring grave consequences without decent possibilities for meaningful participation on decision-making levels and in peace-building activities. The latter is suggested by the fact that there is a lack of data on youth participants in peace processes as well as the conspicuous lack of youth related provisions in peace agreements.

⁶ Parliamentary Web Dialogue on "Youth contribution to strengthening of rule of law, democracy and human rights in the OSCE area".

14. In the first place, conflicts typically entail the involvement of young people who find themselves on the battlefield because of decisions by ageing leaders. Data indicates that over 90% of the casualties in violent conflicts occur among young adult males.⁷ Meanwhile, young women make up an estimate of 10-30% of the military forces worldwide.⁸ This instrumentalization of youth justifies proper youth participation in decision-making and peace-building at the very least. Any other situation is inherently unjust.
15. Secondly, conflicts usually hamper access to education. Naturally, this affects young people in particular, since they still depend on the education system for their personal and professional development, and for their daytime activities. The (temporary) loss of this has far-reaching consequences for the personal development and social safety of youth, and particularly for women. Sadly, this is reflected in the current situation in Ukraine. The United Nations have warned, for example, that young Ukrainians in the conflict areas in Ukraine, and especially women and girls, are being actively targeted by organised crime groups and abused.⁹ This is why the Special Representative welcomes the intensification of the monitoring of abuses in and around Ukraine by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), with special attention for sexual violence.¹⁰
16. Thirdly, the inclusion of young people to peace-building processes is inevitable for sustainable peace. Young people bring innovative perspectives, and they are the ones that have a capacity for sustaining the peace and security, since they will outlive eventual temporary equilibriums. As the youthful Core Group of Experts (CGE) have outlined in their Perspectives 20-30 discussion paper, young people can contribute to shaping new, positive narratives and establishing more action-oriented peacebuilding and conflict transformation processes.¹¹ The broadening of support for initiatives such as Perspectives 20-30 in unstable regions would contribute to stability and peace.

⁷ https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/sowp/downloads/State_of_World_Population_2015_EN.pdf.

⁸ <https://www.undp.org/publications/practice-note-young-peoples-participation-peacebuilding>.

⁹ <https://www.un.org/press/en/2022/sc14926.doc.htm>.

¹⁰ <https://www.osce.org/odihr/518760>.

¹¹ *Perspectives 20-30*: p. 6.

Accordingly, the UNSCR 2419 affirmed that youth and youth-led civil society can play an important role in peacebuilding.

17. In addition to peace-building and conflict resolution, the potential of young people's contribution to conflict prevention should not be overlooked. There are inspiring examples in the OSCE region of initiatives that enable this potential to realise. The Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, set up a Youth Advisory Group (YAG) already in 2014, that meets quarterly to discuss the planning and the implementation of conflict prevention plans. Examples like this demonstrate the capacities of young people and the importance of their involvement. Among other factors, through the profound willingness and abilities of young people to cooperate and to overcome differences.
18. The issue of conflict resolution and prevention provides a disturbing outgrowth of the disbalance between the potential of youth, their interests, and their actual inclusion in political (peace) processes, despite various hopeful initiatives. This is not only alarming, but also fundamentally unjust. This injustice is intolerable and should be eradicated in the OSCE region as soon as possible, in order to reach intergenerational solidarity.

The economic and environmental dimension

19. The global crisis of climate change is worsening and constituting a major threat to the wellbeing of young and future generations. The lethargy and unwillingness of power holders in addressing this issue, affects and will affect youth and future youth in abominable ways. Worryingly, environmental governance also constitutes a prominent locus of the dichotomy between the actual and formal engagement of youth and the powers in place, and the lack of recognition of the value that young people can add.
20. While young people are heavily affected by the effects of climate change and environmental governance, they are often refused meaningful participation in decision-making on this issue. At the same time, young people have long been extremely vocal on the environmental theme, calling for transformative action and radical reforms in

order to cope with climate change. They are aware of the impact of this issue on their lives. Regrettably, many leaders and power holders seem to lack this awareness.

21. Research indicates that one way to improve young people's influence in the field of environmental governance is the establishment of formal, transparent and diverse youth engagement mechanisms in national policy development.¹² The United Kingdom, for example, has successfully experimented with youth climate panels.¹³ Moreover, the installation of akin mechanisms that are based on single issues have proven to positively influence youth voter turnouts.¹⁴
22. In this respect, there have been other encouraging initiatives within the OSCE region that established regular contacts with young stakeholders. The Programme Office in Nur-Sultan, for example, supported training seminars on climate change mitigation for young professionals and civil servants from Central Asia and Afghanistan in partnership with the German-Kazakh University. Partnerships like this can help build important bridges to resolve the aforementioned dichotomy, and NGOs might be fruitful partners too. The Special Representative underscores the appropriateness of NGOs as platforms for youth engagement.
23. Acknowledging the grave importance of adequate environmental governance, the Special Representative embraces the proposal by the CGE to decouple the environment from the economic dimension into a new, separate format in the OSCE security framework.¹⁵ This would indeed elevate environmental issues to a higher position on the OSCE's policy agenda, and help to mobilise participating States to cooperate on environmental issues and create the momentum for climate action, to the benefit of humankind in general and the young and future generations within the OSCE area and beyond in particular.

¹² *Be Seen Be Heard*: p. 30.

¹³ <https://www.local.gov.uk/case-studies/gloucestershire-county-council-youth-climate-panel>.

¹⁴ *Be Seen Be Heard*: p. 25.

¹⁵ *Perspectives 20-30*: p. 10.

24. Recognising the laudable efforts by the OSCE PA to address environmental concerns and the issue of climate change, the further inclusion of youth perspectives to these efforts could contribute to even more fruitful policies in this regard.
25. The COVID-19 pandemic stole momentum of environmental governance and had some profound effects on the prospects and the wellbeing of youth as well. The pandemic aggravated root causes of conflict and compromised the social safety of young people that were forced to stay at home in unsafe situations, with little social control. Furthermore, the access to education has been reduced significantly, affecting young people's development and job prospects. All of this has done young people harm that must be compensated. For example, through renewed climate decisiveness, improved mental healthcare, and investments in education. All three of these aspects are vital to meaningful youth engagement in the near and far future.
26. The COVID-19 pandemic not only had distressing effects, but also revealed problems that were caused and endured before, while had been less visible. This is the case for the great and growing socio-economic inequalities in the OSCE region and beyond, that became painfully visible as a result of the pandemic. Accordingly, Oxfam calculated that since 1995, the richest 1% of the world has captured nearly 20 times more of global wealth than the bottom 50% of humanity. At the same time, the emissions of the top 1% double that of the bottom 50% of humanity combined.¹⁶ This situation limits the possibilities of young people all around the globe to engage with politics significantly, since poverty frustrates the access to education and personal development, minimising opportunities for political occupations.
27. Drastic reforms are required to reach both socio-economic and climate justice. And these reforms are necessary for meaningful youth engagement. Meanwhile, youth can and must contribute to these reforms on all political levels. They hold the ideas, the understanding of the complexity of the digitised world, and the energy and the interests necessary for powerful participation and truthful change.

¹⁶ Oxfam, 'Inequality kills. The unparalleled action needed to combat unprecedented inequality in the wake of COVID-19', January 2022, <https://www.oxfamnovib.nl/Files/rapporten/2022/bp-inequality-kills-170122-en.pdf>.

28. The OSCE PA could and should play a leading role in establishing these changes, for example through including youth in the decision-making processes.

The Human Dimension

29. The role of young people in strengthening the rule of law, human rights, and democracy in the OSCE region is of vital importance. An online policy debate in February, initiated by the Special Representative, gathered various visions and perspectives on the matter, thanks to the contributions of parliamentarians and experts from throughout the OSCE area.
30. Strengthening the rule of law, democracy and human rights is an inclusive process and can only be effective with the involvement of every stakeholder. There is an unprecedented opportunity to secure democracy through the engagement of the younger generations. Participation of all groups of society in decision-making processes is a prerequisite for stability and resilience of democratic societies. However, young people who aim to contribute to strengthening the rule of law, human rights, and democracy, are regularly confronted with different obstacles. Generally, young people suffer from the misperception that classifies them as political objects, rather than political subjects.
31. This misperception has several, formal and informal, outflows that form barriers. These barriers include age-based discrimination, reflected in voting ages and legislative barriers that directly or indirectly prevent young people to run for leadership positions. Research indicates that lowering the voting age to 16 turns young people into keen political participants, while voting at an early age result in habit-forming as well.¹⁷ Lowering the voting age in countries throughout the OSCE area will make political decision-making more inclusive, fair, and representative.
32. Naturally, the election of young people is one of the most direct ways to improve and ensure youth engagement in decision-making processes. The participating States should be encouraged to remove legislative barriers that prevent young people from running for office. This will result in increased participation, and an increase of trust among

¹⁷ *Be Seen, Be Heard*: p. 16.

young people in the political system and political institutions, while reducing the popularity of the idea that political participation falls short to make a difference. Preferably, the age limit for public office would be equal with the voting age. Underneath all this lays the fundamental principle that democratic participation is a right, rather than a favour. It is unacceptable to take on adult responsibilities, such as employment, while denying them the right to vote or the right to be elected. Additionally, the importance of the great contributions by youth to domestic election observations and their work in election bodies should not be overlooked.

33. Experts indicate that the introduction of quotas could contribute to the election of young people.¹⁸ The Special Representative encourages all the participating States to investigate and experiment with this concept. Most laudable are the efforts of Finland, taking a leading role on the issue of youth engagement based on the principle of youth ownership and involvement, through implementing an Action Plan on youth, as the only participating State in the OSCE region. The other participating States should follow this example, and the members of the OSCE PA should do everything within their powers to contribute to this aim.

34. Participating States have other responsibilities with regards to improving and enabling young people's contribution to strengthening of the rule of law, human rights, and democracy. Another key barrier that prevents this from happening sufficiently right now, is the lack of transparency, the complexity of institutions, and the flawed communication about this. As the *Be Seen, Be Heard* global youth report emphasises, transparency is a fundamental principle for meaningful youth participation.¹⁹ Information on institutions and procedures should be youth centred and formulated in a youth-oriented language. The CGE also acknowledged this, stating that 'a widespread lack of transparency is closely linked to the challenges and threats that will have an impact on our societies looking towards 2030.'²⁰ Adequate funding for youth organisations would contribute to this and should be welcomed.

¹⁸ Parliamentary Web Dialogue on "Youth contribution to strengthening of rule of law, democracy and human rights in the OSCE area".

¹⁹ *Be Seen, Be Heard*: p. 23.

²⁰ *Perspectives 20-30*: p. 12.

35. Civic education is another prerequisite for meaningful youth participation. In this respect, the Special Representative praises the efforts of various OSCE Executive Structures and mainly OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan for promotion of civic education among young people. The implementation of comprehensive civic education plans targeted at youth should become a priority in all participating States. Equal access to this education, as well as equal access to other opportunities, should be ensured.
36. It cannot go unmentioned that all the prejudices and barriers that young people are confronted with, are particularly challenging for young people whose identity intersects with other marginalised communities, such as Indigenous Peoples, people with disabilities, refugees and migrants, LGBTQI+ and women. They face additional challenges in gaining political influence and representation and the OSCE PA, as well as the participating States, should acknowledge this and address this in their policies.

Conclusions

37. Young people embody our present and future and therefore they carry the promise of perpetuating and improving the realisation of our shared ideals and principles, such as the rule of law, human rights, and democracy. That is why it is crucial that young people are provided with the opportunity to live up to this promise, by involvement in decision making processes and policy development.
38. It became apparent through experiences from throughout the OSCE area that the meaningful participation of youth is not only fair with regards to young people, but also beneficial for our societies in total.
39. Nevertheless, we still have a long way to go. There is a disturbing dichotomy between the potential, motivation and interests of youth to contribute to politics, and the recognition of this by power holders and the actual opportunities for youth to contribute to decision-making.
40. With the youth-related commitments made in the Helsinki Final Act, as well as OSCE Ministerial Council Declarations No. 3/14 (Basel), No. 5/15 (Belgrade) and No. 3/18 (Milan); the youth-related Resolutions of the OSCE PA, including the 2018 Resolution

on A Shared Priority: Fostering Peace and Security through Enabling Young People to Reach their Full Potential, and the 2019 Resolution on The Integration of Gender and Youth Perspectives in Efforts to Combat Climate Change; the UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, and the recently adopted UNSCR 2535 (2020), as well as the paths to pursue that were outlined in this section, the directions and objections of our efforts should be clear.

Section 2

OSCE Efforts on strengthening Youth and Security Agenda

Background of the OSCE Approach on Youth and Security

41. The core principles recognizing the importance of contributions of young people in the OSCE were first indicated in its founding document – the CSCE Final Helsinki Act¹ – recommending furthering the development of contacts and exchanges among young people. With the evolution of the Organization, modalities of its functioning, expansion of programmatic activities and establishment of field missions and institutions, youth-related engagement of the OSCE increased proportionally. Nevertheless, for many years “youth” was not regarded as a priority on the OSCE’s agenda despite the indication in various decisions and declarations of the OSCE structures.

42. In 2007, Spanish Chairpersonship organized the first OSCE Youth Forum in Madrid, an event gathering young people from participating States and Partners for Co-operation, which gave a new start to the attention to youth-related issues and resulted with the adoption of a declaration containing recommendations to OSCE participating States on the avenues of engagement on youth issues. Another pillar in the history of the OSCE engagement with youth is the adoption of 2014 a Declaration on Youth during Basel Ministerial Council³. The document acknowledged the potential of young people to support the implementation of OSCE commitments and “took note of the Swiss Chairpersonship’s initiative related to youth”. Similar wording was used the following year in the 2015 Declaration on Youth and Security⁴ adopted at the Ministerial Council in Belgrade, which again “took note” of both Chairpersonships’ efforts and “stressed the importance of promoting the implementation of the OSCE commitments on youth, particularly in the area of education”. In addition, in early 2015, the Serbian Chairpersonship appointed for the first time two Special Representatives on Youth and Security, mandated to bring young people’s perspectives into the OSCE security debate and enhance youth participation in OSCE activities. From that point on, all Chairpersonships to date have appointed one or several Special Representatives on

Youth and Security. The Serbian Chairpersonship also created the Informal OSCE Group of Friends of Youth and Security, subsequently chaired by Spain and then further extended to a Trika chairing with Spain, United States and Kyrgyzstan serving as Co-Chairs which currently meets at least three times a year to discuss with OSCE delegations and other relevant stakeholder issues concerning youth, peace and security⁵.

43. In 2017, the Austrian Chairpersonship put the focus on empowering youth to address violent extremism and radicalization and held a number of regional workshops on the topic. In addition, in May 2017, Spain hosted an OSCE Youth Conference in Malaga, which produced a “Decalogue” of recommendations⁶. The adoption of the Declaration on the Role of Youth in Contributing to Peace and Security Efforts⁷ at the 2018 Milan Ministerial Council provided further political impetus to the OSCE’s work with and for youth. The Declaration recognized the role youth can play in contributing to a culture of peace, dialogue, justice and peaceful coexistence, trust and reconciliation.

The Framework for strengthening efforts on youth and security in the OSCE

44. By 2018, OSCE institutions and other executive structures had increase their work on youth and security issues, gathering a big experience and capacities dealing with youth-related issues. Nevertheless, the organization lacked OSCE-wide strategic guiding document to ensure coherence in youth-targeted activities. So, at the initiative of then Secretary General Thomas Greminger a framework was developed to foster a more unified approach across executive structures. Following consultations with Youth Focal Points across the Organization, the Framework identified four thematic pillars where the OSCE has a comparative advantage:

- amplify youth voices to promote a secure present and future;
- facilitate people-to-people contacts among youth in the OSCE region to promote mutual understanding and advance more durable peace;
- promote the inclusion of youth through addressing key social and environmental challenges; and

- support the role of young people as catalysts to address current and emerging cooperative security challenges and threats.

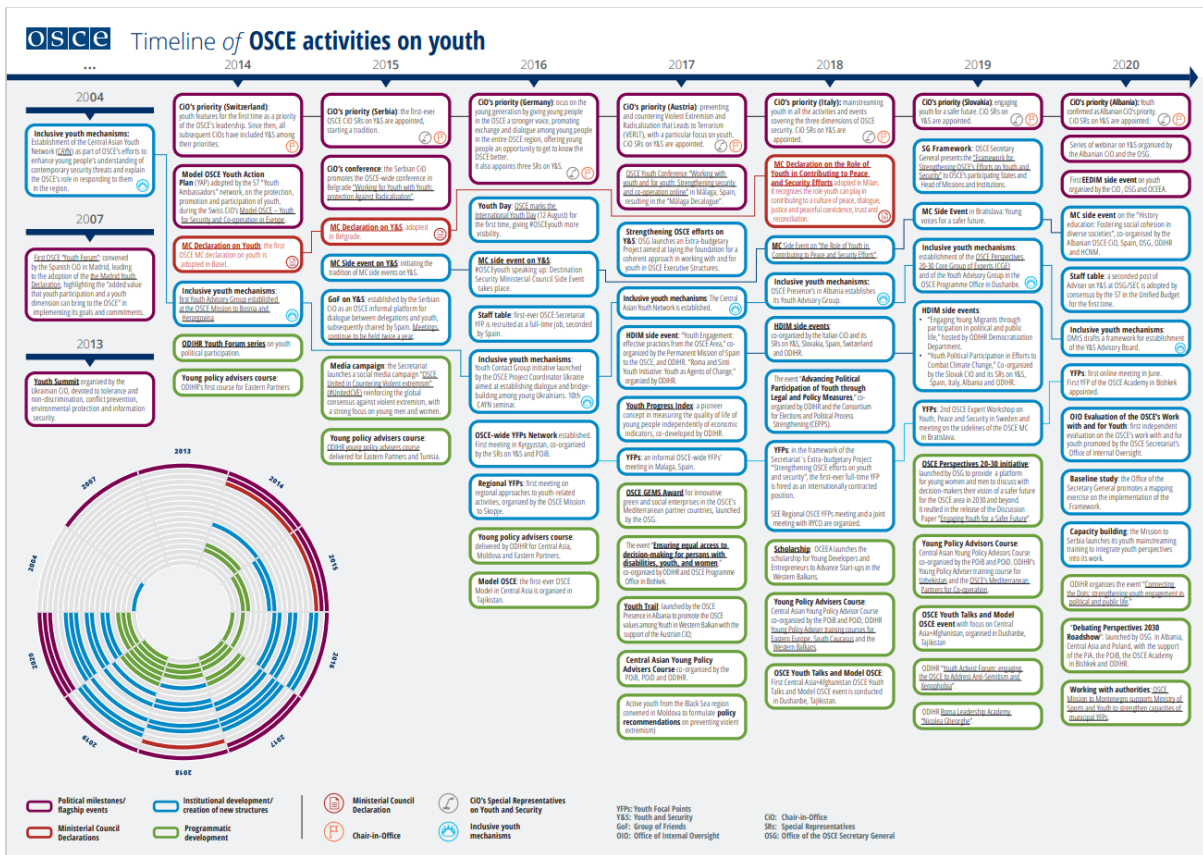
45. The Framework also provided executive structures with recommendations for actionable steps to deliver on the thematic pillars and to include youth into their activities and day-to-day work. These recommendations were grouped in seven clusters, aiming to:

- Create opportunities for integrating youth perspectives into consultation and policy dialogue platforms,
- Boost awareness, knowledge and innovation,
- Build capacity on Youth and Security,
- Better coordinate approaches through the OSCE Youth Focal Points Network,
- Encourage youth-sensitive human resource policies,
- Catalyse investment and solutions, and
- Ensure accountability.

46. In March 2019, the Secretary General presented the Framework to the Group of Friends of Youth and Security, noting that, while it was up to executive structures to implement the recommendations, they were all invited to consider integrating them into their work as appropriate.

47. Timeline of OSCE activities on youth, produced by the Office of the Secretary General, under the ExB project “Strengthening Efforts on Youth and Security”

(Figure on next page)



OSCE Secretariat and Institutions

48. Despite the absence of a unified Strategy and Action Plan on Youth in the OSCE, organization Executive Structures including the Secretariat, Institutions and Field Operations in South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia implement the OSCE commitments on youth by running youth-related projects and activities.

49. The OSCE Secretariat supports a coherent and consistent OSCE approach in working with and for youth, meaningfully engaging them and addressing their specific needs in all three dimensions of security. The Secretariat promotes the inclusion of youth perspectives in the security debate, including through the **“Perspectives 20-30”** initiative, which provides a platform for young women and men to discuss with decision-makers their vision of a safer future for the OSCE area in 2030 and beyond.

50. The Project “Youth and Security” implemented by the OSCE Secretariat laid the foundation, proposed and implemented a unified and coherent approach in working

with and for youth in OSCE Executive Structures. The project began by carrying out an analysis of the status of youth inclusion in the OSCE, with two expert workshops organized in Vienna, which engaged relevant experts and practitioners, followed by presentation of findings to the Group of Friends (GoF). This developed a set of recommendations to improve and strengthen the approach to work with and for youth in the OSCE Secretariat, Institutions and Field Operations.

51. *The Youth and Security Extra-Budgetary Project also launched the “**Perspectives 2030 initiative**” platform, with the purpose to engage talented young experts and multipliers from the OSCE area in an inclusive process to develop, support and help realize a common vision for the OSCE in 2030 and beyond. It consisted in the creation of a Core Group of Experts (CGE) who developed their vision for a safer future in a policy paper, presented also at the Youth Forum in Bratislava and the OSCE Ministerial Council in 2019. As a follow-up, in 2020-2021, the 2030 Roadshow virtually brought together young women and men during the pandemic and provided a platform for engaging in peer-to-peer exchange of views on security issues. It took place in 5 participating States and the closing event will take place in person, in Andorra, on 27th July. Within this flagship initiative, **the Perspectives 20-30 Online Academy**, was launched in 2021 with the aim to provide greater visibility to the contributions that young women and men are making to the OSCE’s efforts to advance peace and security, as well as to increase the visibility of the OSCE’s work among young people. By conducting group research and participating in webinars and workshops, academy participants deepen their understanding of the OSCE and acquire practical skills in public speaking, conducting research, and drafting policy recommendations. The closing event of second edition is planned for 16 September. Finally, an external evaluation of the project is currently being conducted to inform the next steps of the Office of the Secretary General work on youth.*

52. Transnational Threats Department (TNTD) together with the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) assist OSCE participating States in strengthening the resilience of youth towards becoming involved in organized crime, corruption and drug use. COVID-19, developments in Afghanistan and the war in Ukraine (strong decline in remittances to Central Asia and East Europe) have enhanced socio-economic vulnerabilities especially among youth, exacerbating risks of

youth becoming involved in organized crime, corruption and drug use. Strengthening youth resilience towards these threats across the entire OSCE region will thus remain a TNTD/OCEEA strategic priority for the upcoming years. TNTD/OCEEA will continue to assist OSCE participating States (pS) by providing capacity building for educators and law enforcement and social media youth awareness campaigns on organized crime, corruption and drugs.

53. *TNTD/OCEEA are implementing a cross-dimensional OSCE-wide ExB initiative, which in view of the current developments in Afghanistan and its destabilizing effect on the region, was launched in Central Asia in December 2021 in co-operation with the OSCE Academy and in coordination with United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The project seeks to strengthen youth resilience towards organized crime, corruption and drugs through education and other social activities. The initiative applies comprehensive assistance to requesting pS, entailing: 1) strengthening capacities of educators (teachers and professors) to teach youth on the dangers of corruption, organized crime, cybercrime and drug use, capitalizing on existing UNODC materials; 2) improving the knowledge and understanding of young people on these threats through social media youth awareness campaigns, involving influencers and youth opinion leaders; 3) strengthening platforms for youth peer engagement in youth crime prevention through local and regional social and cultural events. In 2022, TNTD/OCEEA held national multi-stakeholder (government, schools, universities, civil society) events in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to i) gather information about effects of Covid-19 and Afghanistan on youth and ii) strengthen youth crime prevention and resilience by facilitating across-agency and –sector best practice exchange and cooperation.*

54. The Caucasus desk of the CPC, as part of the OSCE's engagement in the Geneva International Discussions, has over the past years brought together youth from conflict-affected communities. In these **OSCE Summer School / Autumn Academy** formats in particular young Georgian and Abkhaz had a chance to jointly learn about the OSCE and engage in dialogue. This peace-building process also continued during the pandemic. In 2019, the Desk organized an OSCE model conference in Batumi, Georgia, bringing together youth from Georgia as well as other participating States. This was the first Permanent Council simulation of its kind in the region and can be further replicated

with broader participation in the post-pandemic time. A major success was the identification of a core group of interested persons that continued to exchange during the pandemic through virtual meetings.

55. The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) aims to ensure youth political and public engagement across OSCE participating States to make democratic institutions more effective and inclusive. ODIHR activities for young people include the Young Policy Advisers Course, the Young Women's Leadership training, and the biannual School on Political Parties and Democracy. ODIHR also works to support young people in defending their human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion and belief. ODIHR's Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues works to strengthen Roma and Sinti youth activism and participation in all areas of life.

56. *The OSCE/ODIHR Young Policy Advisers course (PolAd) is designed to strengthen knowledge about democratic institutions and OSCE commitments in the field of democratic governance. It also aims to facilitate a deeper understanding of the role of policy advisers and the skills needed to undertake core tasks and policy-making functions. The objective is to ultimately strengthen democratic institutions throughout the OSCE region by building the capacity of young civil/public servants in the early and middle stages of their careers, thus ensuring long-term results. The Young Policy Advisers Course was developed in collaboration with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA), the Swedish agency for peace, security and development, in 2013 and is based on the FBA's Political Adviser's Handbook. ODIHR has since revised the training methodology and curricular content to suit specific audiences in the OSCE area. Course participants are young public servants (up to age of 35) working as political or policy advisers in ministries, presidential administrations, parliaments and other public/state institutions in OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation. Since 2014, the course has been organized twice per year.*

57. The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) focuses on youth from minority communities through a number of programmes and support to relevant language and education policies. In 2018, the Max van der Stoep Award was bestowed on a group of young people from Jayce, Bosnia and Herzegovina, who fought against

ethnicity-based segregation in their school. In Georgia, the HCNM has supported internships for national minority youth in mainstream political parties. In Central Asia, the HCNM initiated an extensive regional multilingual education programme in minority schools. In 2019, the HCNM organized a series of events at the United Nations in New York together with other regional organizations under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter that was dedicated to fostering the involvement and participation of youth in conflict prevention efforts.

58. *Every two years, the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Government of the Netherlands organize **the Max van der Stoel Award**. The prize of €50,000 is presented to a person, group or institution for extraordinary and outstanding achievements in improving the position of national minorities in the OSCE participating States. A special jury composed of distinguished experts of international repute and chaired by the High Commissioner chooses the winner of the Max van der Stoel Award.*
59. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media encourages youth engagement, in particular of young media professionals and students of journalism, in its projects, such as the Cyprus Media Dialogue, as well as in all its events and conferences. Youth is an important stakeholder in the promotion and protection of freedom of expression and freedom of the media. Young people are one of the key target groups in discussing and promoting media literacy issues. The Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media also promotes engagement with journalism students with a view to building and strengthening capacity among the next generation of media professionals.

OSCE Field Missions

60. The OSCE Mission to Montenegro is involved in strengthening meaningful youth engagement and its positive influence on youth co-operation and reconciliation process. It achieves it through supporting capacity building, organizational development, and visibility of initiatives aiming at regional cooperation and reconciliation, such as the Regional Youth Co-operation Office, Local Branch Office in Podgorica and the European Youth Card Project. The Mission also supports relevant national institutions to set up structures and mechanisms, at both national and local level, to increase youth participation in public policy development and implementation.

61. *The Mission has a **cross-programmatic approach** in supporting Montenegrin institutions to prevent and counter violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism (P/C VERLT). In cooperation with relevant institutions, the Mission brought together more than 50 young women and men to discuss their role in P/C VERLT, as young people are the most vulnerable to violent extremism and radicalization and have the greatest potential to prevent it. The Mission also trained first responders - teachers, medical workers of local health centres, employees of centres for social work, as well as representatives of religious organizations, local media and local self-government units from throughout the country to strengthen their capacities to address the drivers of violent extremism and detect potentially radicalized persons. Montenegro continues to progress in the area of P/C VERLT, in line with the Joint Action Plan on counterterrorism for the Western Balkans and the bilateral implementing arrangement. In 2022, the Mission continues with these efforts and will further expand the target group to representatives of young athletes. The Mission is working on the development of intercultural competencies among young athletes to promote and develop them as role models for fostering youth and regional cooperation. Intercultural learning will be expanded in 2022 to other groups, such as journalists and civil society organizations.*
62. The OSCE Mission to Skopje works to respond to the needs and priorities of youth by engaging with young people nationwide to develop their capacities to influence national and local youth policies. To help enhance meaningful youth participation in policy dialogue and decision-making processes, the Mission supports the Agency for Youth and Sport, Municipalities, Local Youth Councils and the local branch of Regional Youth Cooperation Office. The Mission works with youth activists so that they can help raise awareness among young people of the corrosive social effects of hate speech and hate crime and build resilience to radicalization that can lead to violent extremism. The Mission also provides training courses and capacity building activities for law enforcement to help them work better with young people and thereby increase young people's trust in the police.
63. The OSCE Mission to Serbia implements systematic youth mainstreaming approach, to which end it developed Guidelines for youth mainstreaming and training for staff. It has a youth targeted portfolio, but it mainstreams youth perspectives across

programmatic areas: democratization, rule of law, security cooperation and media, as well as in regard to Human Rights processes. In 2022, the Mission aims to ensure the consideration of youth issues in every project being implemented (no Youth marker zero). One of the strategic goals of the Mission's overall strategy 2023-2025 is: Operationalization of Youth, Peace, and Security agenda and increase in regional youth co-operation⁸.

64. *In 2021, the OSCE Mission to Serbia implemented a **Local Government Fellowship Programme** in cooperation with six Local Self-Government Units in southwest Serbia where 10 young professionals increased their understanding of rule of law and democratic institutions at the local level while actively contributing to citizen-oriented governance. The Mission also provides similar professional opportunities to young people from minority communities, within national institutions since 2019. This flagship initiative Professional Practice Programme is recognized as the type of activity that the Mission committed to in its biennial Youth Action Plan. This programme will continue in 2022 and might expand, depending on availability of funds. In a strategic sense, the Mission also continuously supports the work of the National Youth Council of Serbia (KOMS) in various ways, including youth formal participation advancing and bilateral cooperation with the Albanian youth sector.*

65. The OSCE Presence in Albania recognizes the vital role of young people as agents of change. It promotes youth engagement, youth participation and education on democracy by helping youth to reach out to parliament, international organizations and to central and local authorities. The Presence strongly encourages Albania's young people to build their leadership skills, to participate in regional and national youth exchanges and to contribute in speaking out on all issues that matter to youth. Young people are supported to give their direct contribution in a wide spectrum of issues starting from youth representation, youth engagement and youth networking, and reaching out to issues falling under the first OSCE dimension such as raising awareness and boosting communities' responses against radicalization, and violent extremism.

66. *The Presence in Albania established a **Youth Advisory Group** in 2018 to address the challenges of working with youth and to promote a youth mainstreaming agenda. The Advisory Group is composed of nine young people from different regions of Albania with distinct academic backgrounds, interests and areas of focus. Meeting once a month, the Group identifies youth concerns, needs, challenges and priorities in their communities and proposes actions and initiatives to address them. Youth Advisory Group members receive mentoring and are exposed to the OSCE's work across diverse thematic programmes. They are also expected to promote OSCE values and mobilize youth through various communication channels.*
67. The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina supports the unique way young people can promote a positive outlook through advancing mutual understanding, reconciliation and regional co-operation, and their desire to protect the norms underpinning democratic governance. Nonetheless, rising levels of youth disengagement from political and public life and a growing sense of marginalization pose a major challenge. By increasing the democratic political culture of youth and their capacity for constructive dialogue, the Mission aims to increase the sustainability of their civic engagement and political participation. The inclusion of youth perspectives in the Mission's portfolios is ensured through the formal integration of a youth portfolio into its structure. The Mission's Gender and Youth Unit, the network of youth focal points, and the youth affairs page on the Mission's SharePoint platform are there to ensure that youth mainstreaming is central to all aspects of the Mission's work.
68. *Recognizing young people as key partners for positive change and promoters of peace and reconciliation, the Mission implements a wide range of activities for and with youth. This includes continuous engagement and integration of young people and their perspectives in efforts to counter violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, hate speech, bias-motivated incidents and hate crimes, segregation in education, as well as corruption. Particular importance is placed on giving young people an even greater voice in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the Mission's activities, which is carried out through the **Mission's Youth Advisory Group**. The Youth Advisory Group currently consists of over 40 dedicated young people*

with diverse perspectives from across BiH, and serves as the Mission's primary instrument for the effective inclusion of youth perspectives in its work.

69. OSCE Mission in Kosovo's engagement on youth is divided into three departments, (1) Department of Democratization, (2) Human Rights and Communities and (3) Security and Public Safety. Each Department has youth-focused activities that aim at inclusion and engagement of young women and men from different communities in different areas, including public participation, promotion of human rights, inter-community and inter-faith dialogue, using of information technology to increase youth participation, advocacy for youth participation in decision-making processes, peace building skills and capacities of young people, including lawyers through internship training programs, creation of a pool of trainers to facilitate human rights education, empowering young women through the Dialogue Academy, and other youth-related activities.
70. As half of Kosovo's residents are under the age of 27, all public decisions have a huge impact on young people. The Mission advocates for the establishment of youth-led mechanisms, such as local public safety committees, local youth in action councils and the inclusion of more young people in these mechanisms. Additionally, an emphasis is placed on empowering youth through inter-ethnic dialogue and collaboration.
71. *The OSCE Mission in Kosovo together with the OSCE Mission to Serbia support the OSCE Dialogue Academy for Young Women (Dialogue Academy, DA). The Dialogue Academy is an annual event that gathers 12 young women from Belgrade and Prishtina to attend a ten-day interactive training programme with focus on Dialogue, Mediation and Confidence Building. The activity contributes to continuous communication and joint follow-up activities of young women through an Alumni network with more than 160 young women who throughout the past six years implemented 15 different joint projects and transferred the knowledge gained at the Academy to their peers.*

In 2022, the Mission is supporting the Kosovo institutions to update legal and policy documents with the focus on the Law on Empowerment and Participation of Youth and with the aim to align them to youth needs, priorities and expectations. The Mission will facilitate comprehensive consultations in order to take the perspectives of relevant youth actors into consideration, and support the development of a comparative analysis

of the Kosovo youth sector, taking into consideration relevant regional, European and international experiences and models.

72. The OSCE Model for Youth organized by the OSCE Mission to Moldova builds confidence and strengthens dialogue between young women and men from both banks of the Dniester/Nistru River by enhancing their negotiations skills and understanding of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security and conflict resolution process. The Mission also supports gender hubs in five regions of Moldova, which offer a venue where youth can talk about gender equality as well as the prevention of domestic violence cases.
73. The OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek (POiB) implementing both directly and indirectly youth-targeted projects in all three OSCE dimensions. In 2020, the POiB developed and adopted its Youth Mainstreaming Strategy for 2020-2024, which provides a strategic approach to integrating youth-related considerations in all stages of the project cycle. It includes an Annual Action Plan, which is updated and reported on internally each year. The POiB has a Youth Focal Point supported by Youth Contact Points from each Department and the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, who provide support with implementation of the Youth Mainstreaming Strategy and coordination of other youth-related efforts. The work implemented the Office covers, but not limits to following: Providing expert support with the review and development of strategic documents in the field of youth policy; Developing the capacities of youth centers and specialists to work with and for youth in effective and sustainable ways; Strengthening the professional knowledge, dialogue and exchange of good practices among young civil servants and diplomats from Central Asia and beyond; Preventing drug abuse and crimes among youth through awareness raising activities; Improving the understanding of youth about their role in green economy, environmental protection, anti-corruption, anti-money laundering; Providing electoral assistance, upholding economic, social and cultural rights with a focus on the rights of people with disabilities, addressing gender-based and domestic violence, empowering women, building inter-confessional tolerance, upholding freedom of speech, preventing radicalization in prisons and supporting the rule of law, etc.

74. *Considering that financially literate youth is the key to the financial security of the country, the POiB assists the host State in developing **the financial and legal literacy among young people** in the country. This includes efforts related to preparing youth to take part in the annual International Olympiad on Financial Security among Eurasian group (EAG) member states on combating money laundering and financing of terrorism.*
75. *The OSCE Academy in Bishkek works towards becoming a regional centre for higher education and research, contributing to peace and stability with its study programmes and research projects, while strengthening connectivity in the region. The Academy provides a regional and international public forum for young professionals and students in the spirit of co-operation. The Academy now also foresees the development of its first BA programme (in Economics). Apart from its study programmes, the Academy also offers a wide range of further opportunities for young people to engage in academic exchange and to enhance their professional skills. Over the last 12 months, four professional certificate training courses were organized, on topics such as Climate Change and Peace and Conflict, and on Project Management. The total number of young professionals trained by the Academy over the last year is 73 (47 women and 26 men).*
76. *The OSCE Programme Office in Nur-Sultan supports the Central Asian Youth Network, bringing together students from the region each year to discuss and share perspectives on regional security, stimulating critical thinking and encouraging a co-operative approach in line with OSCE values and principles. Since 2004, CAYN has been bringing together young leaders from Central Asia, Afghanistan and Mongolia to build and foster regional connectivity to understand contemporary security threats and the OSCE's role in responding to them.*

Section 3

Progress, conclusions, and recommendations

Progress

77. In the report that was provided by the Special Representative to the previous Winter Meeting, four action points for the efforts of the Special Representative were indicated: (1) Establishing high level political attention and strategy on youth inclusion, starting with good data on youth, reliable data analysis, and concrete and targeted policies; (2) Establishing improved coordination on youth issues with and between the Secretariat of the OSCE, ODIHR, RFoM, HCNM and OSCE Field Missions; (3) Establishing better accountability mechanisms, at least a transparent and impactful reporting of the work of OSCE on Youth to the Parliamentary Assembly; and (4) Establishing a network of young parliamentarians across the OSCE region to represent youth in the assembly and promote integration of young people in decision-making processes.
78. Regarding action point (1), the Special Representative has initiated meetings with key stakeholders in the domain of youth engagement. These meetings include discussions with the OSCE Group of Friends, CiO Special Representatives, national parliamentarians, and different delegations of participating States to the OSCE. Furthermore, the Special Representative initiated a webinar in February on “Youth contribution to strengthening the rule of law, democracy and human rights in the OSCE area”. This webinar delivered particularly relevant insights that have contributed to the quality and content of this report. Additionally, the Special Representative together with the Senator Marilou McPhedran from Canada hosted a side event during the OSCE PA 29th Annual Session in Birmingham on Youth in Conflicts and War Zones.
79. Regarding action point (2), the Special Representative maintained regular contacts with the OSCE Secretariat, as well as with the Youth Focal Point, who is coordinating the

work of the OSCE Youth Focal Points Network. The OSCE PA Secretariat participated in the monthly meetings of the Youth Focal Points Network, while the OSCE PA Secretariat will host an in-person meeting of this network in July in Vienna. Furthermore, a number of joint initiatives were discussed with institutions (RFoM and OSCE Academy), for example a course for young journalists. The Special Representative participated in the OSCE South East Europe Media Conference on Journalism in Times of Crisis. Additionally, the Special Representative delivered an opening address to the OSCE/ODIHR Young Policy Advisor Course in March 2022. During her visits to Albania, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, she engaged with OSCE Field Missions, stressing the importance of their work, while officially visiting government officials and parliamentarians as well.

80. Regarding action point (3), the Special Representative aimed to contribute to the aims of transparency and accountability through providing regular reports to the Parliamentary Assembly during the Winter Meeting, the Bureau Meeting in April, and the Annual Session. The current report will also contribute to this goal, also through its implementation of a survey that was conducted among the OSCE Institutions and Field Operations.
81. Regarding action point (4), then, the Special Representative did initiate the establishment of the network of young parliamentarians. In the Parliamentary Assembly, over 40 parliamentarians are under the age of 35. Since last December, three meetings of the network have been organised. An online meeting in December, followed up by an in-person visit of the network to Vienna, and a third meeting in Andorra. A fourth meeting is scheduled in Birmingham in July on the side-lines of the OSCE PA Annual Session, while plans are discussed for additional meetings next year. The enthusiasm with which the initiative has been received reflects its importance and relevance to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Accordingly, several parliamentarians expressed their interest in hosting future meetings, and the possibility of a meeting in Sofia during the OSCE PA Autumn Meeting has been discussed. These efforts sparked the discussion on the possibilities of integrating the young parliamentarians network to the formal structure of the OSCE PA and enhancing engagement of the young parliamentarians in the work of the Assembly to represent the interests of young people. There is a proposal to invite a representative of the network to the PA Bureau meetings

as an observer, as well as plans to facilitate discussions and cooperation between the network and General and Ad-Hoc Committees of the OSCE PA.

Conclusions

82. As a result of the various crises that threaten the OSCE area and regions beyond, the safety and wellbeing of young and future generations is on the line. These current global challenges, including the post-pandemic recovery and international conflicts and wars, primarily represent multi-faceted threats for young people and justify concerns about the economic fallout and the negative impact of such crises on youth employment, education, and social protection systems.
83. There is a distressing dichotomy between the potential and the actual contribution of youth to contribute to the resolution of the various pressing issues, and the political establishment and the suspicion towards young people and their ability to engage in decision-making processes.
84. Therefore it is important to strengthen youth input in the OSCE by ensuring meaningful and inclusive youth participation, identifying the needs of young people, and engaging them in efforts towards a safer and sustainable future, including through securing concrete commitments from national and local governments to empower young people. In all the three dimensions of the OSCE's comprehensive security approach, different obstacles that limit young people's possibilities to intervene in political affairs are present. At the same time, young people have been active, and often successfully, to achieve change in all of these dimensions as well.
85. In the politico-military dimension, conflicts hamper young people's access to education, frustrate their safety, and particularly the safety of women and young people that belong to minorities, while youth are refused meaningful participation in peace-making processes and conflict resolution. This is particularly concerning, since the inclusion of young people to peace-building processes is inevitable for sustainable peace.

86. In the economic and environmental dimension, environmental governance constitutes a prominent locus of the dichotomy between the actual and formal engagement of youth and the powers in place, and the lack of recognition of the value that young people can add, while the distressing effects of climate change are particularly concerning for young people and future generations. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic had distressing effects on the wellbeing of youth, while the pandemic also revealed problems that were caused and endured before but had been less visible. Education occupies a critical place for young people in relation to peace and security, and is a key interface that shapes and defines the relationship between young people and public institutions, while the COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected and is still affecting access to complete education and training programs, enhancing the need to prioritise education recovery to allow young people to positively and fully take part in the civic, economic, social and political development of their communities, and to make informed decisions on the most sustainable security choices. Drastic reforms are required to reach both socio-economic and climate justice, and these reforms are necessary for meaningful youth engagement.

87. In the human dimension, then, the role of young people in strengthening the rule of law, human rights, and democracy in the OSCE region remains of crucial importance. Nevertheless, the obstacles and barriers that young people face who want to speak out and make an impact, including age-based discrimination, structural and legislative barriers, prejudices, and a lack of political will or opportunities, continue to frustrate meaningful participation of youth to contribute to these aims. At the same time, widespread political participation from every part of society, including youth and underrepresented parts of the society, are a necessary precondition for democracy and the rule of law. Youth suffer from the misperception that classifies them as political objects, rather than political subjects. Lowering the voting age and the introduction of youth quotas in elections are profound means to change this misperception and to contribute to meaningful youth participation on all political levels.

Recommendations

The Special Representative on Youth Engagement:

- I. Encourages the OSCE participating States to join international efforts to uphold the role of youth in contributing to a culture of peace, dialogue, justice, trust and reconciliation.
- II. Recommends the implementation of a youth perspective to the OSCE's comprehensive security approach, which is important, and necessary.
- III. Stresses the importance of collecting relevant and trustworthy data on youth throughout the OSCE region, which is crucial for the development and design of adequate youth policies, and for the identification of the issues that these policies should address.
- IV. Emphasises that the development of a general definition of youth that could guide the efforts within the OSCE on youth participation is admired and much needed, and recommends the introduction of appropriate language, channels and forms of communication between institutions and youth, ensuring the involvement of young people in the drafting process and the development of innovative tools to encourage political dialogue and capacity-building between young people and institutions, with a the aim to ensuring the implementation of inclusive law-making processes and the systematisation of youth representation.
- V. Acknowledges that the issue of conflict resolution and prevention provides a disturbing outgrowth of the disbalance between the potential of youth, their interests, and their actual inclusion in political (peace) processes, despite various hopeful initiatives, and stressing that this is not only alarming, but also fundamentally unjust, calls upon the OSCE participating States to eradicate this injustice in the OSCE region as soon as possible, in order to reach intergenerational solidarity.
- VI. Recommends the members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the participating States to OSCE to pay special attention to policies regarding the position and role of youth in (violent) conflicts and peace-building efforts.

- VII. Highlights the importance and significance of the installation of Youth Advisory Groups, particularly within the context of conflict resolution and prevention, but also beyond.
- VIII. Welcomes the intensification of the monitoring of abuses in and around Ukraine by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), with special attention for sexual violence.
- IX. Urges the OSCE participating States to create innovative online platforms, awareness campaigns and education programs to support the peaceful resolution of conflicts, counter and prevent violent extremism and radicalization, promote computer literacy and online security awareness, and recognize the fundamental role of youth inclusion in addressing the current politico-military issues and the dynamic challenges posed by emerging technologies.
- X. Strongly recommends that every participating State develops a Youth Peace and Security national action plan that addresses the specific needs of youth and ensures opportunities for their participation in resolving peace and security issues.
- XI. Calls upon the OSCE PA to do everything within its powers to contribute to the aim of the domestic development of action plans on Youth, Peace, and Security.
- XII. Underscores the appropriateness of civil society organizations as platforms for youth engagement, and calls upon the participating States to maintain and adopt adequate policies that facilitate NGOs and their work.
- XIII. Embraces the proposal by the CGE to decouple the environment from the economic dimension of security into a new, separate format in the OSCE comprehensive security framework, given the grave importance of adequate environmental governance.
- XIV. Recommends the OSCE participating States to enable youth to contribute to the transition to green economies, via the instauration of youth consultation, the enhancement of cooperation with the private sector and the engagement of young people in designing youth-related institutional policies and strategies on peace and environmental action.

- XV. Insists the assessment of the implications for young people of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels, including the design of a strategy for making youth concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic, and environmental domains.
- XVI. Recommends the participating States to lower the voting age, in order to make political decision-making more inclusive, fair, and representative.
- XVII. Encourages the participating states to remove legislative barriers that prevent young people from running for office, since this will result in increased participation, and an increase of trust among young people in the political system and political institutions, while reducing the popularity of the idea that political participation falls short to make a difference.
- XVIII. Calls on the OSCE to adequate its youth commitments to international standards and trends, and not stay behind but, instead, take the lead.