

Report of the OSCE PA Special Representative on Youth Engagement

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Introduction

It is a great honour to present this report in my capacity as Special Representative on Youth Engagement to the Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Porto. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to President Pia Kauma for the trust she has placed in me by appointing me to this position and for her unwavering support to youth-related initiatives throughout her tenure. Her commitment has been instrumental in elevating youth engagement to a strategic priority within the Assembly.

Allow me also to pay tribute to my distinguished predecessors: Ms. Farah Karimi of the Netherlands, Ms. Monika Zajkova of North Macedonia, and Mr. David Stogmuller of Austria. Each of them, in their respective terms, has contributed significantly to shaping the role of the Special Representative and to advancing the meaningful inclusion of young people in the OSCE PA's work. Their leadership has helped establish a strong and forward-looking foundation, one that I am proud to build upon.



Youth in the OSCE Region

Across the fifty-seven participating States young people face a paradox of unprecedented opportunity and profound uncertainty. Global connectivity has dissolved borders for ideas and careers, yet it has also magnified inequalities and accelerated the brain-drain that hollows out local communities. Conflicts from Ukraine to the South Caucasus continue to displace young lives; civic spaces shrink under restrictive legislation; misinformation seeps into online discourse; and the climate crisis looms as an existential backdrop to every future plan. Survey data from the European Training Foundation show that one in three tertiary graduates from South-East Europe now envisage long-term work abroad,¹ while youth unemployment in parts of Central Asia still surpasses thirty per cent.² Behind these numbers lie ruptured family networks, lost tax revenue and stalled democratic renewal. If we want resilient societies, we must convert brain-drain into brain-circulation – a theme to which this report returns.

Encouragingly, the OSCE's comprehensive security concept gives us a powerful toolkit. When we bring together parliamentarians, executive structures and civil society, we can break silo thinking and invest in the agency of young people themselves. Recent OSCE PA resolutions – most recently the Bucharest Declaration (2024)³ – recognise that youth policy is not an “add-on” but a prerequisite for sustainable peace.

Across the OSCE region, young people are navigating an increasingly complex landscape marked by profound geopolitical shifts, socioeconomic inequalities, environmental crises, and digital transformations. At the same time, they continue to face systemic barriers to political participation and representation. Despite constituting a significant portion of the population, youth remain underrepresented in formal decision-making processes. This disconnect not only undermines the inclusivity of governance structures but also deprives our societies of the insights, innovations, and energy that young people bring.

Young people are not merely the leaders of tomorrow—they are also the agents of change today. Their role in driving democratic engagement, social cohesion, and peacebuilding has been widely acknowledged in international frameworks, including the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security which will mark its 10 year anniversary this year. Yet translating these commitments into tangible opportunities for youth inclusion remains an urgent challenge.

[1] European Training Foundation (2020). Unlocking Youth Potential in South-Eastern Europe and Turkey: Skills development for labour-market and social inclusion.

[2] European Training Foundation (2023). Education, Skills and Employment — Trends and Developments: An ETF Cross-Country Monitoring Report 2023 — see Statistical Annex tables on unemployment rates.

[3] OSCE PA Bucharest Declaration - <https://www.oscepa.org/en/documents/annual-sessions/2024-bucharest/declaration-30/5029-bucharest-declaration-eng/file>

Special Representative Engagement

Since my appointment earlier this year, I have made it a priority to engage actively with a broad spectrum of stakeholders, both within and beyond the OSCE and OSCE PA framework. These engagements have included meetings with youth representatives, civil society



organizations, and institutional partners, aimed at strengthening dialogue and coordination around youth-related policies and activities.

In May, I had the opportunity to meet with the OSCE Chairpersonship's Special Representative on Youth, Peace and Security. Our exchange underscored the importance of synergies between our respective mandates, and I commend the Finnish Chairpersonship for prioritizing youth as a cross-dimensional issue. I fully support their initiative to develop an OSCE-wide Roadmap on Youth, Peace and Security, which will offer an important strategic framework for advancing youth participation across the three dimensions of the OSCE. The upcoming OSCE Youth Forum in Helsinki, scheduled for the end of July, will provide a key platform for young people to contribute directly to this agenda. I am pleased to confirm that both OSCE PA Special Representative on Youth Engagement and representatives of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians (NYP) were invited to participate in this important event.

Overview of Activities

My predecessor, Mr. David Stogmuller, was actively engaged in several high-level events focused on youth empowerment. These included the OSCE-wide event on "Empowering Youth to Safeguard the Civic Space" (July 2024), which brought together diverse stakeholders to discuss the shrinking space for youth civic engagement, and Seminar on Youth in Politics and Decision-making hosted by the Permanent Delegation of Norway to the OSCE (July 2024).

Mr. Stogmuller also represented the OSCE PA at the UNOCT University Seminar on "The Nexus of Terrorism and Emerging Organized Crimes: Legal and Technical Challenges and Methods of Prevention," held in Doha on 16 November 2024. His intervention addressed the evolving nature of security threats and the importance of youth engagement in counter-terrorism discourse. Shortly thereafter, from 27 to 28 November, the OSCE PA was also represented at the UNOCT Youth Parliamentary Forum on "Promoting Youth Perspectives in Parliamentary Responses to Terrorism and Violent Extremism," also held in Doha. NYP member Ms. Jevrosima Pejović actively contributed to the discussions, underlining the indispensable role of young parliamentarians in shaping inclusive and effective counter-terrorism strategies.



These initiatives align closely with the priorities outlined in the work of the OSCE PA Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism (CCT), particularly the emphasis on youth radicalization as a critical security challenge. A Supplementary Item entitled "Preventing Youth Radicalization to Violent Extremism and Terrorism through Education and Media and Information Literacy," submitted by Mr. Kamil Aydın of Türkiye, Chair of the CCT, has been proposed for this Annual Session. This initiative further reflects our Assembly's dedication to ensuring that youth engagement remains central to comprehensive counter-terrorism efforts.

OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians

A core responsibility of the Special Representative has been to facilitate and coordinate the work of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians. Over the past year, the Network has grown in scope and impact, continuing to serve as a key platform for youth engagement within the Assembly.

In 2024–2025, the Network held formal meetings in conjunction with the Assembly's statutory gatherings:

Autumn Meeting in Dublin (October 2024), hosted by Senator Lynn Ruane, explored themes of restorative justice and youth empowerment.



The meeting featured a visit to Mountjoy Prison, where participants engaged in a 'World Café' discussion on the theme of truth and reconciliation in justice systems. This was followed by a public debate and reception at Trinity College Dublin, offering a dynamic platform for exchange between young parliamentarians, students, and civil society on inclusive justice, political engagement, and the role of youth in democratic renewal.



Winter Meeting in Vienna (February 2025), hosted by Mr. Stogmuller, focused on cooperation with the OSCE Secretariat and Group of Friends on Youth and Security, and featured a thematic discussion on youth migration and brain drain with expert Dr. Guido Tintori.

Upcoming Meeting in Porto (June 2025) will include a discussion on past activities, election of new leadership, and setting priorities for 2025/2026.

OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians

Beyond statutory meetings, the Network has remained highly active

September 2024: A thematic visit to Stavanger, Norway, organized by Vice-Chair Aleksander Stokkebø, focused on energy security, innovation, and youth participation. The programme, hosted by the Norwegian Parliament, included a series of site visits and high-level meetings with key stakeholders in the energy sector. Participants met with the Deputy Mayor of Stavanger, representatives of the Stavanger ,



Chamber of Commerce, Lyse Energy, Equinor, Nysnø Climate Investments, and the Norwegian Offshore Directorate. They also visited the historic Flørli hydropower station and engaged in a briefing at the NATO Joint Warfare Centre. Discussions centered around the intersection of climate goals and energy security, showcasing Norway's innovation in renewable energy and highlighting the contributions young parliamentarians can make in shaping sustainable energy policies. The visit also featured an internal meeting of the NYP to reflect on the outcomes and future activities of the Network.



November 2024: At the 2nd Ashgabat Conference on "Parliamentary Diplomacy in the OSCE Area: Dialogue as a Tool for Building Bridges for a Secure and Peaceful Future," Network members played an active role in facilitating Session 3 titled "Ensuring Equal Opportunities: The Role of Young People and Intergenerational Solidarity in Building a Prosperous Future."

OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians

The session served as a dynamic platform to discuss how inclusive governance and multigenerational cooperation can strengthen democratic resilience and long-term security. Then Special Representative David Stogmuller and Vice-Chair Aleksander Stokkebø delivered keynote addresses, emphasizing the need for greater investment in youth development and intergenerational equity. The session's outcomes fed into the broader conclusions of the conference and informed the drafting of a supplementary item on "Strengthening Parliamentary Diplomacy and Co-operation to Safeguard Future Generations" (Ms. Farah Karimi, Netherlands).

March 2025: I hosted the Network's visit to Slovenia, formally launching the 2025 cycle of the Youth Perspectives initiative under the theme "Brain Drain – Circulation of Talent for a Resilient Society." The programme included discussions in the Slovenian Parliament with young members of parliament, civil society representatives, students, and academic experts. We



explored the structural causes and long-term consequences of brain drain in various OSCE countries and exchanged national experiences on how to better facilitate circular migration and talent retention. The event resulted in the adoption of the Network's "Ljubljana Resolution on Facilitating Brain Circulation and Preventing Brain Drain in the OSCE Area" and laid the groundwork for the wider series of Youth Perspectives workshops held in 2025.

May 2025: Vice-Chair Federica Onori represented the NYP at the OSCE Gender Equality Conference in Vienna. She participated in a panel discussion on "Promoting Equal Opportunities for Women and Girls in the Digital Era," where she shared insights on the role of youth in closing the digital gender gap.

July 2025: Under Vice-Chair Onori's leadership, the NYP will host a side event in Porto focusing on the meaningful participation of young mediators in peacebuilding and democracy. The event will provide a platform for young peacebuilders, parliamentarians, and representatives of mediation networks to exchange experiences on inclusive conflict resolution and democratic governance.

Youth Perspectives Initiative

One of the main flagship activities of the Network – Youth Perspectives - this year marked its second convocation, enabling young people to engage directly with legislators in a structured dialogue format. Workshops were hosted in Andorra, Cyprus, Georgia, Montenegro, Norway, and Slovenia, producing concrete recommendations on youth migration and brain circulation. These informed the drafting of a Supplementary Item “Youth Perspectives on Facilitating Brain Circulation and Preventing Brain Drain in the OSCE Area” to be presented at this Annual Session.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow colleagues from the Network who hosted the consultative workshops in their respective parliaments, and encourage other colleagues both in the Network and broader in the Assembly to consider future engagement with the Youth Perspectives initiative.

Institutional Development

In line with my mandate, I have launched a consultation process to formalize the NYP as a structure within the OSCE PA. This initiative aims to provide a more stable framework for the Network's growing activities, ensure continuity in its work, and strengthen its institutional voice within the Assembly. The proposal was first raised during the Bureau Meeting in Copenhagen in April, where I presented the rationale and key objectives behind this formalization. It was followed by the submission of a detailed letter and background document to the Standing Committee, outlining proposed mechanisms for recognition and integration within the PA's structure. The formalization of the NYP would not only support long-term planning and broaden participation but also recognize the important role the Network has played in enhancing youth engagement across the OSCE region. I look forward to a substantive discussion with colleagues during our meeting in Porto and hope to gather their feedback and support in taking this important step forward.

Summary and Future Priorities

The reporting period has been characterized by a diverse and vibrant set of engagements. From contributions to policy-making and thematic advocacy to inter-institutional cooperation and grassroots youth inclusion, the Special Representative and the NYP have continued to expand the role of youth in the OSCE PA. These efforts reflect the OSCE PA's broader commitment to inclusive security and intergenerational dialogue, while also enhancing the visibility and impact of youth-led initiatives.

Looking ahead, the Special Representative and the Network of Young Parliamentarians intend to:

- Continue the Youth Perspectives initiative with a new thematic focus relevant to emerging challenges.
- Facilitate parliamentary discussion on the creation and strengthening of youth caucuses in national parliaments and political party structures.
- Advance the formalization of the NYP as a permanent OSCE PA body
- Enhance implementation of existing resolutions, especially pertaining to youth
- Foster youth engagement in peacebuilding, climate governance, and digital transformation.

Marking the tenth anniversary of the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, there is an urgent need to advance its implementation across the OSCE region. Despite this landmark resolution, only two countries in the OSCE area—Finland and, most recently, Kyrgyzstan—have adopted dedicated national action plans on YPS. This gap presents an important opportunity for parliamentarians to take a more active role in driving progress, whether by advocating for the development of such plans or by incorporating YPS principles into national legislative agendas.

In this context, I propose the establishment of an informal Working Group on Youth, Peace and Security within the OSCE PA as outlined in the Bucharest Resolution. This group would be open to any interested members and serve as a platform for peer learning, dialogue, and the exchange of best practices. It could also support legislative oversight and coordination with governments and civil society, fostering national and regional momentum toward meaningful youth inclusion in peace and security efforts.

Conclusion

Youth engagement is not only a matter of representation—it is a strategic imperative for peace, democracy, and sustainability. I am grateful for the continued support of OSCE PA members and colleagues, and I look forward to further enhancing the role of young people within our Assembly. By working together, we can ensure that the OSCE PA remains a pioneer in integrating the perspectives of younger generations into all dimensions of regional security.

Thank you for your attention and continued partnership.



Annex 1

Bio and Mandate of the OSCE PA Special Representative on Youth Engagement

LUCIJA TACER (SLOVENIA)

Lucija Tacer was appointed as the OSCE PA's Special Representative on Youth Engagement by OSCE PA President Pia Kauma (Finland) in March 2025.

In her role, Tacer represents the Assembly at events focused on youth issues, promotes engagement with young people in OSCE PA activities, and works to advance OSCE values with youth. The appointment was made in recognition of the work Tacer had accomplished with the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians.



The post of Special Representative on Youth Engagement was established following an event held by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in May 2021 as part of the PA's Call for Action – Helsinki +50 Process. At this event, young parliamentarians, representatives of youth wings of political parties and leaders of the OSCE PA met online for discussions on how to ensure a better presence of youth representatives in multilateral organizations.

Participants pointed out that with all the crises in the world, young people feel a palpable need to develop effective institutions based on innovative ideas and to promote a culture of empathy that includes all stakeholders, including youth. It was emphasized that without a strong youth movement there can be no vibrant civil society and with no strong civil society, democracy suffers.

MANDATE

- Advise the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and President on ways to promote the role of youth in peace and security and inclusion of young people in decision-making processes;
- Enhance co-operation and promote parliamentary diplomacy on Youth, Peace and Security agenda within the OSCE PA, particularly with young parliamentarians;
- Maintain and facilitate contacts with OSCE Chairpersonship and Executive Structures, as well as with other national and international stakeholders on matters related to youth engagement, participation, and advocacy;
- Represent the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly at relevant international conferences and events focused on youth issues.

Annex 2

List of activities of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians

OSCE PA Statutory Meetings		
Date	Event	Statutory Meeting
3 Jul 2022	Meeting of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians	2022 OSCE PA Birmingham Annual Session
24 Nov 2022	Meeting of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians	2022 OSCE PA Autumn Meeting in Warsaw
21-22 February 2023	Meeting of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians/Visit to Austria	2023 OSCE PA Winter Meeting in Vienna
30 Jun 2023	Meeting of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians	2023 OSCE PA Vancouver Annual Session
19 Nov 2023	Meeting of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians	2023 OSCE PA Autumn Meeting in Yerevan
20-21 February 2024	Meeting of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians/Visit to Austria	2024 OSCE PA Winter Meeting in Vienna
1 Jul 2024	Meeting of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians	2024 OSCE PA Bucharest Annual Session
1 Oct 2024	Meeting of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians/Visit to Ireland	2024 OSCE PA Autumn Meeting in Dublin
19 Feb 2025	Meeting of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians/Visit to Austria	2025 OSCE PA Winter Meeting in Vienna
30 June 2025 (scheduled)	Meeting of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians	2025 OSCE PA Annual Session in Porto

Thematic and ad-hoc activities		
Date	Event	Theme
3-4 February 2020	Future Leadership for Political Inclusion in the OSCE Region: A Seminar for Young Parliamentarians (Washington, D.C.)	Youth political participation and comprehensive security
13 December 2021 (online)	First Meeting of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians	Youth political participation
18 February 2022 (online)	Webinar "Youth contribution to strengthening of rule of law, democracy, and human rights in the OSCE area"	Youth and human rights, democracy and rule of law

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11 Mar 2022	Visit of OSCE PA young parliamentarians to Austria	Co-operation with OSCE executive structures on Youth, Peace and Security agenda
2-3 June 2022	Visit of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians to Andorra	National Youth policies and the role of parliaments in youth inclusion in decision-making processes.
5 Jul 2022	Side Event "Youth in Conflicts and War Zones" - OSCE PA Birmingham Annual Session	Youth in conflicts
12-14 November 2022	Visit of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians to Yerevan	Role of young politicians and parliamentarians in tackling security challenges in the OSCE area
13 Dec 2022	Hearing in the PACE Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy on the report "Establishment of a "youth partner" status with the Parliamentary Assembly" (Paris)	Exchange of OSCE PA best practices on youth engagement
5 April 2023 (online)	Webinar "Dialogue on Future Generations"	Youth and Future Generations
16 May 2023	Regional Seminar on the Role of Neutral States in Strengthening Security, Stability and Dialogue in the OSCE Area (Ashgabat)	Youth and Security
15 June 2023 (online)	Webinar "Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 and Youth, Peace and Security Agenda: Role of Parliamentarians"	Youth, Peace and Security
1 Jul 2023	Side-event - Youth, Peace and Security Agenda and Canada experience "working with youth and for youth"	Youth, Peace and Security
4-5 October 2023	4th Counter-Terrorism Coordination Meeting of Parliamentary Assemblies and 2nd Parliamentary Policy Dialogue	Youth and VERLT
26-28 October 2023	Visit of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians to Albania	Democracy, Security Challenges and regional co-operation in Western Balkans region
14 Nov 2023	OSCE PA Side-event "Youth-Led Innovations and Entrepreneurship in Shaping Parliamentary Agendas" OSCE Youth Forum in Skopje	Youth in Innovations and Entrepreneurship
21 Nov 2023	Regional Conference "The Role of Youth in Addressing Climate Change" (Ashgabat)	Youth and Climate Change

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1 Jul 2024	Side-event - Empowering Young Parliamentarians: Fostering Cooperation in Energy, Environment, and Digitalization for a Secure and Sustainable Future - OSCE PA Bucharest Annual Session	Youth, Energy, Environment, and Digitalization
8 Jul 2024	Empowering Youth to safeguard the Civic Space - Joint OSCE, CiO, ODIHR, RFoM, HCNM and OSCE PA event	Civic participation
9 Jul 2024	Seminar on Youth in Politics and Decision-making - hosted by the Permanent Delegation of Norway to the OSCE	Political participation
4-6 September 2024	Visit of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians to Stavanger, Norway	Energy Security and Youth
16 Nov 2024	UNOCT University Seminar on "The Nexus of Terrorism and Emerging Organized Crimes: Legal and Technical Challenges and Methods of Prevention" (Doha)	Youth and VERLT
27-28 November 2024	UNOCT Youth Parliamentary Forum on "Promoting Youth Perspectives in Parliamentary Responses to Terrorism and Violent Extremism" (Doha)	Youth and VERLT
27-28 November 2024	2nd Ashgabat Conference - Session 3: Ensuring Equal Opportunities: Role of young people and intergenerational solidarity in building a prosperous future (Ashgabat)	Youth and Future Generations
14-15 March 2025	Visit of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians to Slovenia - "Brain Drain - Circulation of Talent for a Resilient Society"	Youth and Migration
6-7 May 2025	OSCE Conference on Gender Equality – Vienna NYP Contribution to the Session “Promoting equal opportunities for women and girls in the digital era”	Gender Issues
2 July 2025 (planned)	Side-Event: Meaningful Participation of Young Mediators in Peace, Democracy-Building, and Conflict Resolution OSCE PA Porto Annual Session	Youth and Mediation

Youth Perspectives Initiative

Period	Theme	Countries engaged (Parliaments hosted events/workshops)
April-May 2024	Youth Perspectives on the Future of International Relations, Multilateralism, and Sustainable Development	Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Italy, and Norway
April-May 2025	Youth Perspectives on Facilitating Brain Circulation and Preventing Brain Drain in the OSCE Area	Andorra, Cyprus, Georgia, Montenegro, Norway, and Slovenia

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List of activities of the OSCE PA Network of Young Parliamentarians

Policy Contributions and Declarations		
Date	Title	Type
4 Feb 2020	Joint Declaration on Future Leadership for Political Inclusion in the OSCE Region: A statement of Young National Legislators	Declaration
3 Jun 2022	Joint Declaration on Promotion of Youth Participation in the OSCE Area (Andorra la Vella)	Declaration
6 Jul 2022	2022 OSCE PA Resolution on “Effective Youth Engagement Towards Secure, Inclusive and Democratic Societies” (Birmingham Declaration).	OSCE PA Resolution
3 Jul 2024	2024 OSCE PA Resolution on "Youth Perspectives on the Future of International Relations, Multilateralism, and Sustainable Development" (Bucharest Declaration)	OSCE PA Resolution
15 Mar 2025	Ljubljana Resolution on Facilitating Brain Circulation and Preventing Brain Drain in the OSCE Area - A Statement by the Young Parliamentarians of the OSCE PA	Declaration
July 2025 (TBC)	Supplementary Item on "Youth Perspectives on Facilitating Brain Circulation and Preventing Brain Drain in the OSCE Area"	Draft Resolution