



**Saturday, 15 September 2018**

**On the International Day of Democracy, the Advisory Council on Youth calls for more efforts to restore and increase confidence in democracy in Europe.**

The sustainability of democratic values and systems relies on the creativity, competencies, social commitment, and contribution of young people as well as on their confidence in the future. However, across Europe we are observing worrying developments in this regard. The prevalence of misinformation has increased over recent years making it more difficult for citizens to form their opinions based on reliable information. These developments undermine the ability and willingness of people to participate in democratic life and weaken citizens' confidence in democratic institutions. To counteract this, quality public debate must be promoted, inclusive narratives must be at the core of politicians' messages, civil society organisations must be supported and information on political topics must be presented in an accessible and neutral way.

Moreover, young people still struggle to have an equal say in democratic decision-making processes which significantly restricts the inclusivity of the democratic system. The Advisory Council on Youth highly appreciates the work of Council of Europe in this respect and calls upon its member states to intensify efforts to include young people in decision-making processes. In that regard, the Advisory Council endorses the [Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life](#) as a tool to promote young people's meaningful contribution to the democratic system.

Young people's confidence in the future, their possibility to enjoy rights and to be agents of change are – now more than in a long time - crucial for the development of a society based on the values of human rights and democracy. To meet this aim, more human rights education, stronger youth organisations and improved youth work practices are required.

The Advisory Council on Youth therefore calls for the active implementation of the Council of Europe's recommendation on "[Young people's access to rights](#)" in all member states. We also reiterate the importance of taking sufficient measures to ensure the independence of democratic institutions as well as to restore and increase confidence in the democratic system and to preserve it for the generations to come.

*The opinions expressed in this statement are those of the Advisory Council on Youth and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Council of Europe or its member states.*