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Strasbourg, 3 November 2026

THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY!
Youth Day at the World Forum for Democracy

4 November 2026
10:00–16:00
European Youth Centre, Strasbourg

PROGRAMME

in partnership with



PROGRAMME - ROOM 0.1

9:00 Arrival and registration at European Youth Centre in Strasbourg

10:00 Opening of the Youth Day at the World Forum for Democracy with:

Tobias FLESSENKEMPER, Head of the Youth Department, Council of Europe

Getting to know each other / Aim and programme of the Youth Day

10:20 Introduction to the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life by Marcus MELAU, Advisory Council on Youth, Council of Europe

10:30 Local youth participation and its importance in transforming democracy (working groups)

12:15 Plenary session: Summary of discussions

12:30 Lunch break

13:50 Group photo

14:00 “Strasbourg talks” with:

- Youness EL HASSNAOUI, Deputy Municipal Councillor, City of Strasbourg
- Pap NDIAYE, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of France to the Council of Europe
- Mathieu MORI, Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Council of Europe
- Claudia LUCIANI, Director for Democracy, Council of Europe

15:00 Taking action at local level and exploring potential cooperation to revitalise democracy and youth participation

15:45 Closing remarks by Diamando ZISIMOPOULOU and Marcus MELAU, Advisory Council on Youth, Council of Europe

16:00 End of programme

THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY: YOUTH DAY AT THE WORLD FORUM FOR DEMOCRACY

This event is being organised as an extension of the World Forum for Democracy by the Council of Europe's Youth Department, with the support of the City of Strasbourg, the Grand Est Region, the European Collectivity of Alsace and the French Government.

The aim of the event is to:

- Promote cooperation amongst young people involved in issues relating to democracy and youth participation at a global level;
- Introduce participants to standards relating to youth participation – in particular the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life – as a basis for global reflection on supporting local action to revitalise democracy;
- Create a space for reflection and engagement on future actions aimed at revitalising democracy;
- To familiarise participants with the work of the Council of Europe's Youth Department and opportunities for cooperation in the field of youth participation.

This event will bring together 135 young people:

- 50 participants, members of the youth delegation to the World Forum for Democracy, selected by the Council of Europe's Youth Department
- 50 participants and representatives of City of Strasbourg, European Collectivity of Alsace and Region Grand Est.
- 35 participants from the Génération Francophonie delegation, organised by the Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse (OFQJ) in partnership with the youth mobility organisations of Quebec, Germany and Belgium.

The event will be held in English and French with simultaneous interpretation.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The 2026 edition of the World Forum for Democracy

The World Forum for Democracy is a unique platform for discussing solutions to the major challenges faced by democracies around the world. By identifying and analysing experimental initiatives and practices, the Forum highlights and encourages democratic innovations in order to strengthen the foundations of democratic societies. The Forum thus contributes to the evolution of democracy towards more participatory and inclusive structures and institutions.

The 14th World Forum for Democracy will be held in Strasbourg on 2 and 3 November 2026, under the title "Rupture or renewal? Democratic security for our future", as part of the New Democratic Pact for Europe. This New Democratic Pact for Europe, which is firmly focused on the future, is the Council of Europe's response to these new challenges. Backed by the Council of Europe's member states since 2025, the Pact provides a framework for reflection on the future of European democracies and on how they can prepare for the challenges ahead. Over a two-year period, the Council of Europe conducted a wide-ranging consultation with its member states, regions, territories, civil society and universities in order to better anticipate the future of democracy in Europe.

The 2026 World Forum on Democracy will mark the culmination of the Pact's consultation phase and will focus on "democratic foresight" – that is, the ability of our democracies to anticipate the future in order to strengthen democratic security in Europe. With this in mind,

the 2026 World Forum on Democracy will bring together political decision-makers, representatives from civil society and academia, young people, the general public and experts from all walks of life. Over the course of two days, participants will take stock of European democracies, envisage possible futures based on forward-looking scenarios, and commit to taking concrete action at all levels of governance. The discussions will draw on work carried out by specialists in policy planning and strategic analysis, exploring not only future threats but also the options still available to enable democracies to grow stronger. The discussions and debates will focus on both immediate threats and long-term resilience: how can democracies withstand upheavals whilst renewing themselves?

The Youth Department will bring together a delegation of around 50 young people from all over the world to take part in the World Forum for Democracy, sharing their perspectives as part of the consultation on the New Democratic Pact for Europe. To ensure that young people's participation in the World Forum for Democracy meets the highest standards in terms of preparation and support, the Youth Department is organising a training session for the youth delegation on 31 October and 1 November 2026 at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg, which will be followed by their active participation and contribution to the World Forum for Democracy (2–3 November 2026).

THE EUROPEAN CHARTER ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL AND REGIONAL LIFE

The fourth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Reykjavik, May 2023) recognised the importance of investing in a shared democratic future, by ensuring that everyone can play their part in the democratic process and by prioritising the participation of young people in decision-making processes.

Young people's involvement remains essential to building a democratic present and future. Democracy is, above all, lived out and experienced at a local level, where young people can learn to contribute to and take part in decisions that affect the day-to-day life of the community, whilst being able to see the impact of their own decisions.

In 2024, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities launched a review of the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life, immediately involving the Joint Council on Youth as the main partner in the process, in order to better reflect and address the challenges faced by young people, as well as to incorporate new practices for youth participation, monitoring methods and support for implementation.

The revised text was adopted on 29 October 2025 by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities at its 49th plenary session and on 12 March 2026 by the Committee of Ministers, in the form of Recommendation CM/Rec (2026)3 on the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life.