

21ST UNIVERSITY ON YOUTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Annual theme:

“Building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions”

within the three-year cycle under the umbrella theme

“SDG 16: peace, justice and strong institutions”



12-17 September 2022

Mollina, Spain

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



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Every year, the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe promotes a week-long residential international youth event called “Summer Universities”. The “Summer Universities” are flexible and dynamic space to empower young people, build synergies among policy makers, nurture civic engagement, and promote respect for Human Rights, in Europe and beyond.

In each “University” a number of youth-led and youth-oriented organisations have the possibility to run their own activities (trainings, seminars, board meetings...) while taking part in plenary sessions and other happenings that encourage dialogue and cooperation between all the stakeholders of the event.

The University on Youth and Development is the oldest summer programme of the North-South Centre. Since the year 2000 it brings together hundreds of young people, youth workers, decision makers, experts from the field and institutional representatives, providing them all with a space to meet, debate, build their capacities and cooperate on youth policy issues.

➤ [more information and explanatory videos about the Summer Universities are available at this webpage.](#)

For the period 2018-2020* the North-South Centre and its partners agreed on a three-year cycle under the umbrella theme of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16: “Peace, justice and strong institutions”. The umbrella is broken down every year into specific annual themes.

The theme of the 21st edition of the UYD is “Building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions”. In light of Throughout the event, confidence-building initiatives between youth organisations and policy makers will be organised in order to better understand each other’s role and to explore their complementarity for building more fair and peaceful societies.

**Due to the pause imposed by the COVID 19 pandemic in the year 2020 and 2021, the cycle will be concluded in 2022.*

2018-2022 UMBRELLA THEME: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 16: “ PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS”

Peace, justice and effective and inclusive institutions are on the top of the global youth agenda and they are largely recognised as core elements for sustainable development. However, progress in these areas remains uneven across and within regions.

A fundamental shift in the way those global challenges are faced needs to be grounded in a new rights-based approach. [The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) represents the major contribution for such a shift, being a transformative agenda and a universal call for action to ensure democracy, security, and prosperity. The Agenda 2030 acknowledges the centrality of youth: over a third of the 169 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets highlight the role of young people and the importance of their empowerment and participation.

Albeit the official recognition of their role and of their main concerns and challenges remain open when it comes to the effective space young people and youth organisations actually have with regards to the implementation, the monitoring and the review of the global goals.

Within this context, the SDG 16 is particularly relevant: accountable and transparent institutions, fair and accessible juridical systems, and a society free from violence and discrimination are among the main elements that could guarantee a greater contribution from youth in translating policies into action towards the achievement of the UN SDGs.

The strategic importance of the UN SDG 16 also comes from the fact that it is closely related to two other UN SDGs particularly relevant for young people: SDG 4 on quality education and SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth. On the one hand, education develops critical thinking, helps to reduce inequalities, to enhance gender equality, and fosters tolerance between people thus contributing to more peaceful societies. On the other hand, youth unemployment can lead to marginalisation and peace disruption if it is left unaddressed. Therefore, productive employment and “decent work” for the young generations are key elements to achieving fair globalisation and poverty reduction.

To that end, it is important that governments, parliaments, local and regional authorities work together with youth organisations and with other sectors of civil society, ensuring more efficient mechanisms of youth participation and more inclusive decision-making processes, following a bottom-up approach. Those demands are in line with the [Council of Europe Recommendation on youth work](#), the renewed [EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027](#) and the [UN Resolution on “Youth, Peace and Security”](#).

Considering this rationale, peace, justice and strong institutions represent the core elements of the Network for the years 2018-2020, in line with the [priorities of the North-South Centre](#) and of the [youth sector of the Council of Europe](#).

ANNUAL THEME 2022: BUILDING EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE, AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS.

In May 2020 the UN Development Programme warned that the levels of deprivation in the conditions of health, education, and living standards in some parts of the world are equivalent to those last seen in the late-1980s¹. The COVID-19 pandemic turned out to be a magnifying glass for inequalities worldwide. The growing socio-economic inequalities not only remain at the root of today's global threats, but they will continue to harm social cohesion and worsen the lack of trust in democracies and institutions.

The need for collective responses to address global challenges (climate change, extreme poverty, sustainable development, migration...) collides with the state of crisis of many institutions and multilateral entities.

Restoring trust in institutions would require balancing the space given to groups having major influence in the global economy with the space demanded by fragile and marginalised communities.

A potential action in this sense could be the **transition to more inclusive, dynamic, and connected-to-the-ground institutional mechanisms, where organised youth civil society plays a key role**. Civil Society Actors (CSAs), including Youth Civil Society Actors (YCSAs) are key stakeholders to connect “duty bearers” and “rights holders” and to render authorities accountable, guaranteeing good governance.

However, the youth sector also faces problems. Insufficient technical, financial, and organisational capacities limit the possibilities young people possess to participate in policy processes and to carry out long-term strategies. Moreover, besides being very fragmented, the sector is affected by issues connected to accountability gaps, high staff turnover, and disconnection between youth representatives and young people of the communities they represent. All those aspects might instil doubts in institutions at the moment in which they intend to engage more with youth organisations.

Moreover, there exists a widespread issue of disenchantment and disengagement. A recent EU survey showed that despite the majority of respondents believing it is important to help people in developing countries to level up inequalities, just over half of them agree that individuals can play a role in tackling poverty². Looking at the Southern Mediterranean region, despite some positive developments³, civic engagement levels among youth in this region are the lowest in the world, with only nine per cent of youth in region volunteering with a civic organisation⁴. And for those who are engaged, there are persistent challenges, such as the capacity to express their voice autonomously given that most youth CSAs depend solely on the State's funding through which local governments infiltrate and influence the sector's agenda⁵.

¹ COVID-19 and Human Development: Assessing the Crisis, Envisioning the Recovery. Accessed online [here](#) on 17 March 2021.

² Special Eurobarometer 476 on EU citizens and development cooperation. September 2018. Accessible [here](#)

³ Such as the Morocco Integrated National Youth Strategy 2015-2030; Tunisia's National Youth Council since 2016; Lebanon's National Youth Development since 2012; Egypt's National Youth Strategy for Egypt, 2021-2026; and Jordan's National Youth Strategy for Jordan renewed since 2005.

⁴ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Division of Data, Research and Policy (April 2019). MENA Generation 2030: Investing in children and youth today to secure a prosperous region tomorrow. Consulted on 4 March 2022. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/mena/reports/mena-generation-2030>.

⁵ Abdeslam Badre. Youth Civil Society Actors in Euro-Med Space for dialogues within and across the Mediterranean Institutions. September 2021. Accessible here: https://meddialogue.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/MAJALAT-Research_Youth_EN-1.pdf

The limitations to civil engagement, the deterioration of socio-economic situation, the lack of institutional accountability and persistent structural violence and disenfranchisement in the society are increasing the disillusionment towards institutions. Those trends worsened as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic as there were situations where the crisis was used as a pretext to curtail civil liberties, including freedom of expression and association.

According to the [2021 Global Risks Report](#), “youth disillusionment” will become a critical threat to the world in the short term. Since 2019 the world has observed an intensification of youth protests that represent increased sentiment of betrayal by the generation in power over insufficient action on social and climate justice, political change, and corruption. Failing to address the fears and concerns of young people could intensify inter-generational tensions, widen societal fragmentation, and further challenge national institutions.

In light of this scenario, it is fundamental to foster confidence-building initiatives between youth organisations and policy makers in order to better understand each other’s role and to explore their complementarity: as young people need strong institutions ensuring the protection of their rights, institutions need a strong civil society to feed and sustain their work for building more fair and peaceful societies.

To ignite this virtuous circle, the following questions - linked to specific [SDG16 targets](#) - need to be addressed:

- What contribution can young people give to develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions (target 16.6)?
- What mechanisms can be enhanced to ensure responsive and inclusive decision-making (target 16.7)?
- Could the youth sector play a role in the fight against corruption and bribery (target 16.5)?
- How can the interregional youth cooperation contribute to broadening and strengthening those institutions ensuring global governance (target 16.8)?
- What synergies can be developed between youth organisations and national institutions to prevent violence and enforce non-discriminatory policies (16A&B)?

For the achievement of the SDG16, the answering to those questions is a fundamental exercise that should jointly engage young people, youth workers, institutional representatives, and policy makers.

21st UNIVERSITY ON YOUTH AND DEVELOPMENT (UYD)

The UYD 2022 is organised in the framework of “iLEGEND II: Intercultural Learning Exchange through Global Education, Networking and Dialogue”, a project co-funded by the Council of Europe and the European Union for the promotion of Global Development Education. Hence, the educational model implemented to run the event follows the North-South Centre’s [Global Education Guidelines](#).

In this context, **the UYD is designed as a space to experience intercultural dialogue while debating in a dynamic and participatory environment the most pressing issues related to the Sustainable Development Goals young people face.**

The 2022 edition counts with nine partners organisation representing youth constituencies at different level: from UN agencies to high school students’ networks. The partners organisations were selected among the 52 applicants who responded to the call for partners launched in April 2022.

The schedule of the UYD week enables organisations to run their own activities while ensuring enough time for everyone to get together around the “Joint Programme”. The “Joint Programme” consists of a series of plenary sessions where everyone gets together to explore the annual theme, to share good practices, to interact with experts and decision makers and to plan joint advocacy actions on youth policies.

The organisations selected to run their activity within the 21st UYD become co-promoters of the event and collaborate to the design and implementation of the programme, contributing to the success of the event and for the growth of the youth sector at interregional level.

235

youth representatives
young leaders
youth workers

AFRICA (14%)
EUROPE (72%)
MIDDLE EAST (11%)
OTHER REGIONS (5%)



10 PARTNER ACTIVITIES

Global Education

Social inclusion

Human Rights

Pluralistic democracy

Access to rights

Youth work and policy

Forum of the EuroMed young Researchers "Bridging the gap in Euro-Mediterranean relations: Youth as drivers of cohesion"

Workshop "Mobilising young voters: why & how?"

Training "Peace Communicators - Layers of Peace"

Training "Global Education and Advocacy" + Global education Network 2022 Closing Meeting

Summer School "Nothing about us without us"

Training "Young Migrants Can Achieve Change"

Focus group "Media and information literacy in digital spaces: Young people championing their vested interest online"

Training "Youth Civic and Political Participation"

Training "Inclusive campaigning for all different abilities"

Training "Visuals for Human Rights"

European Institute of the Mediterranean

European Youth Card Association

International Falcon Movement - Socialist Educational International

North-South Centre of the CoE

Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions

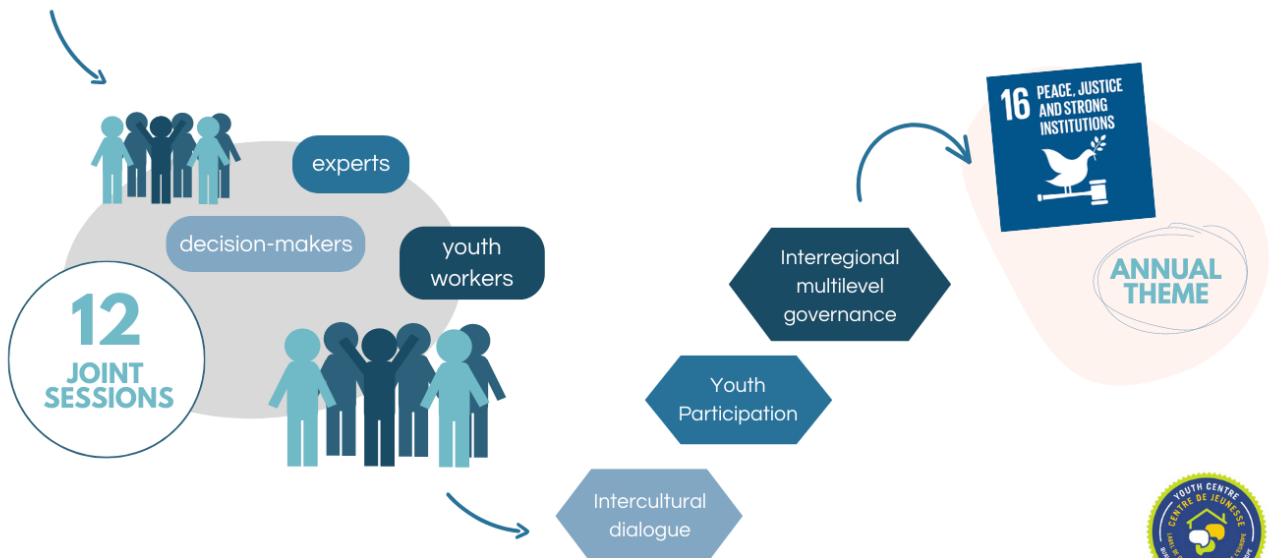
SIRIUS Policy Network on Migrant Education

UNESCO HQ

UNDP Regional Hub for the Arab States

Young European Federalists

Youth Peace Ambassadors Network



 **CENTRO EURO-LATINOAMERICANO DE JUVENTUD (CEULAJ)**
MOLLINA 70 km Malaga airport



21st UNIVERSITY ON YOUTH AND DEVELOPMENT (UYD) – SCHEDULE OF THE WEEK

Sunday 11 Sept.	Day Time	Day 1 Mon. 12 Sept.	Day 2 Tues. 13 Sept.	Day 3 Wed. 14 Sept.	Day 4 Thur. 15 Sept.	Day 5 Fri. 16 Sept.	Day 6 Sat. 17 Sept.	Sunday 18 Sept.
Coordination meetings	09.30	Opening Session I	Partner activities	Joint session	Partner activities	Partner activities	Partner activities	Departure participants <i>(all day)</i>
	11.00	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	
	11.30	Opening Session II	Partner activities	Joint session	Partner activities	Partner activities	Partner activities	Evaluation meetings
Lunch	13.00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Arrivals Participants <i>(all day)</i>	15.00	Partner activities	Partner activities	Partner activities	Free afternoon	Partner activities	Partner activities	Evaluation meetings
	16.30	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break		Coffee break	Coffee break	Departure of the Partners' teams
	17.00	Partner activities	Partner activities	Partner activities		Workshop sharing	Final Plenary	
	19.00	Free time	Free time	Free time		Networking dinner buffet	Free time	
Dinner	20.00	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	
Welcome evening	21.30	Evening activity 1	Evening activity 2	Intercultural musical evening	Free evening	Free evening	Glocal farewell fest	

Partners activities	Activities organised independently by organisations who applied through a call for activities. Each activity takes place in an independent room, with their own trainers, participants, and resource persons, following their own programme and counting on their own financial and human resources.
Joint programme	Plenary moments gatherings all the people involved in the event (organisers, trainers, participants, volunteers). It consists of series of initiatives of different nature: from informal and playful evening activities to more formal debates to explore the annual theme with representatives from governments and experts from the field. The Joint Programme also includes musical sessions and moments of interaction with the local community. The Joint Programme is coordinated by the North-South Centre and implemented by an experienced group of youth workers through collaborative and creative non-formal education methods.



For more information:

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North-South Centre of the Council of Europe
www.nscentre.org

Consult the [webpage](#) of the Summer Universities

Check UYD previous editions' [photos](#) and [videos](#)

