



World Forum for Democracy



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World Forum for Democracy Youth Delegation

30 October – 5 November 2026

European Youth Centre
Strasbourg

Call for participants
Deadline: 14 August 2026, 14:00 Strasbourg time



World Forum for Democracy 2026

The [World Forum for Democracy](#) is a unique platform for political decision-makers and activists to debate solutions to key challenges for democracies worldwide. By identifying and analysing experimental initiatives and practices, the Forum highlights and encourages democracy innovations at the grassroots and their transfer on a systemic level 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 edition of the World Forum for Democracy will take place in Strasbourg on 2-3 November 2026, under the title “Rupture or Renewal? Democratic Security for Our Future” in the framework of the [New Democratic Pact for Europe](#). The New Democratic Pact for Europe, firmly focused on the future, is the Council of Europe’s response to these new challenges. Supported by the Council of Europe’s member states since 2025, the Pact provides a framework for reflecting on the future of European democracies and how to prepare for it. Over two years, the Council of Europe has conducted a broad consultation with its member states, regions, territories, civil society, and universities to better prepare for the future of democracy in Europe.

The World Forum for Democracy 2026 will mark the culmination of the Pact’s consultation phase, placing emphasis on “democratic foresight”, that is, the ability of our democracies to anticipate the future in order to strengthen democratic security in Europe. In this spirit, the World Forum for Democracy 2026 will bring together political leaders, representatives of civil society and academia, youth voices, the general public, and experts from all backgrounds. Over two days, participants will take stock of European democracies, project themselves into possible futures based on forward-looking scenarios, and commit to implementing concrete actions at all levels of governance. Discussions will draw on work carried out by specialists in policy planning and strategic analysis, exploring not only future threats but also the choices still available to democracies to strengthen themselves. The discussions will address both immediate threats and long-term resilience: how can democracies withstand upheaval while renewing themselves?

Why a New Democratic Pact for Europe?

Democratic backsliding, disinformation, impunity, and authoritarianism are undermining democracy in Europe. People are increasingly afraid and frustrated. It comes at a time when democratic security – the resilience of our democratic institutions, freedoms, and values – is our first line of defence against the threats we face. A collective response is needed. There is no quick fix and no single solution. With the New Democratic Pact, the Council of Europe unites with its partners to boost solutions that work and create new responses. To identify them, consultations are needed. The Pact will serve as a collective and inclusive process – not to reinvent democracy, but to reinforce its foundations, amplify its benefits, and innovate its form to make it tangible for everyone, especially younger generations. The directions set during the consultation phase running through 2026 will shape the work that follows.

The Youth Delegation

The participation of a youth “delegation” in the World Forum for Democracy is rooted in the history of youth participation and of the inclusion of a youth perspective in the work of the organisation and of the Forum itself. Youth participation in the World Forum for Democracy is widely recognised as essential. The ideas shared and generated during the Forum represent

a valuable contribution, with young people making their voices heard, sharing perspectives, proposing solutions, and enriching breakout sessions.

To support this, the Youth Department has, for several years, organised the composition and preparation of the youth delegation. The participants of the youth delegation will gather at the European Youth centre in Strasbourg two days before the start of the Forum to learn about the Council of Europe and its work, including with youth, to get to know each other, to develop their ideas, work together and prepare for the Forum. During this time, participants will be well informed about the setting of the Forum, about the programme and their role in various sessions. The online preparations in September-October 2026 will focus on getting to know each other and key aspects of Council of Europe work on democracy and youth engagement. It is expected that participants would need to dedicate 1-2 hours/week for this work.

The youth delegation will also connect the World Forum for Democracy with the various contributions made by the sector to the New Democratic Pact for Europe, with the most recent one being the [Manifesto for a European Democracy in 2049](#) that resulted from the youth event of the New Democratic Pact for Europe, [Youth Innovating Democracy](#) (Strasbourg, 24-26 June 2026). The Manifesto highlights the need to build a long-term vision for democracy, insists that democracy must be continuously renewed and must exist beyond institutions – “in schools, workplaces, youth centres, public spaces and also online”. Among its proposals are calls for greater youth participation at local and regional levels, improved accountability mechanisms, compulsory education on democratic citizenship and human rights, and innovative digital tools for civic engagement. The Manifesto also stresses the importance of diversity, equality and intergenerational dialogue. “For us democracy is a culture to live and a path to build”. Young people demand concrete action from the Council of Europe, governments, as well as local and regional authorities, pointing out that their ideas “cannot remain an aspiration.”

The delegation will also bring in the results of the 10th Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth, held in Malta in 8-9 October 2025, which recognised the important role of youth participation. The national delegations included in their composition representatives of youth civil society, in their vast majority national youth councils or similar platforms, where national youth councils do not exist. The Council of Europe [Reference Framework on a Youth Perspective sets an innovative](#) and high standard for the integration of young people’s views in decision-making in all policy areas, not only in the youth sector. This offers the possibility of a strengthened role for national youth councils to play an important role in organising youth participation and consultation in member States across policy areas beyond the youth sector. In 2026, the Committee of Ministers joined the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in responding to the needs and aspirations of young people through the adoption of the Recommendation [CM/Rec \(2026\)3 on the European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life](#), an innovative standard that completes a multilevel framework of governance.

Under the title “Think globally, act locally!”, the Youth Day of the World Forum for Democracy will take place on 4 November 2026 after the event, bringing together the youth delegation together with a francophone delegation of young representatives from Strasbourg’s surroundings, the Grand Est region of France and beyond. The event aims to support cooperation between young people involved with topics of democracy and youth participation at global level and introduce participants to the standards for youth participation put forward by the European Charter on the participation of young people in local and regional life, as a basis for thinking globally on how to support local action for the revitalisation of democracy. The Youth Day is supported by the [City of Strasbourg](#), the [Region Grand Est](#), the [European Community of Alsace](#) and the [French Government](#).

The Youth Department brings together a youth delegation of about 50 young people from all over the world to take part in the World Forum for Democracy, to contribute youth perspectives in the consultations for the New Democratic Pact for Europe. To secure that the participation of the young people in the World Forum for Democracy is respecting the highest standards of preparation and support necessary, the Youth Department is organising a training session for the youth delegation on 31 October and 1 November 2026 in the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg, followed by attendance of the World Forum for Democracy (2-3 November 2026) in which the young delegates will take different roles. On 4 November 2026, the youth delegation will take part in the World Forum for Democracy Youth Day dedicated to local youth participation together with other 50 young people selected by the partners of the Council of Europe.

Timeline of engagement of the youth delegation

Online preparations	Arrival Strasbourg	Pre-event training	World Forum for Democracy	Youth Day	Departure Strasbourg
September – October	30 October	31 October – 1 November	2-3 November	4 November	5 November

Profile of participants

The youth delegation will bring together up to 50 participants who reflect the diversity of young people around the world and offer a wide range of perspectives on democracy, including those already engaged in finding solutions and developing ideas to revive democratic systems where they are at risk.

Candidates should fulfil the following profile:

- Be aged 18-30 years old;
- Be able to work autonomously in English;
- Be Available to take part in the entire activity, including online preparations (September-October 2026), the training of the youth delegation (31 October-1 November), the World Forum for Democracy (2-3 November) and the Youth Day (4 November 2026);
- Represent a youth organisation and/or youth movement active at local, regional, national or international level on topics of democracy, youth participation, innovative democratic practices;
- Be in a position to follow-up the results of the World Forum for Democracy within their organisations and communities;
- Previous involvement with the Council of Europe youth sector in the field of democratic participation will be considered an asset, particularly in activities of the Youth Department or partners, including grantees of the European Youth Foundation, that have contributed to the New Democratic Pact for Europe.

Application and selection

All candidates must duly complete the online application form. The deadline for submitting the applications is **Friday, 14 August 2026 14 :00 Strasbourg time** at [THIS LINK](#).

In addition to the application form, participants are required to record a video with themselves and share the link to the video in the application form:

- Introducing themselves

- Answering to the question: what is the ONE key issue that the New Democratic Pact for Europe should address?
- Maximum duration of the video: 1 minute.
- Participants have to store the video online and share the link to the accessible video in the application form. We recommend using a secure cloud storage service and sharing a view-only link. If you prefer to use online video sharing platforms (e.g., YouTube), please ensure that your video is uploaded as unlisted rather than public. The video will be used exclusively for the purpose of assessing applications and will neither be kept nor shared beyond the selection process.
The Council of Europe Youth Department is not in a position to offer storage space for the videos.

The Council of Europe will select up to 50 participants based on the profile outlined above, ensuring a balance between genders, geographical regions, levels of experiences, cultural backgrounds and organisations. A waiting list will be established. Participants will be informed mid-September about the results of selection.

The Council of Europe welcomes applications from all candidates who fulfil the specific profile of the activities, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, colour, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

Financial and practical conditions of participation

Travel expenses

Travel expenses and visa fees for the World Forum for Democracy in Strasbourg will be reimbursed according to the rules of the Council of Europe (Full participation in the 5 days programme is a requirement for reimbursement).

Participants are expected to arrive at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg on Friday, 30 October 2026 and depart on Thursday, 5 November 2026.

Board and lodging

Board and lodging for the activity will be provided and paid for by the Council of Europe at the European Youth Centre Strasbourg. Participants will be accommodated in twin rooms. The European Youth Centres are accessible to people with disabilities and can take measures to accommodate for any access needs of participants in this respect. Please provide the necessary information in your application form.

Working languages

English will be the main working language of the activity. Participants are required to be able to express themselves autonomously in English.

The Youth Day on 4 November 2026 will be held with simultaneous interpretation in English and French.

Further information

For any questions, please contact us at youthdemocracy@coe.int.