



# Youth Manifesto



Commit to a Europe  
that delivers for and  
prioritises its young  
generation!

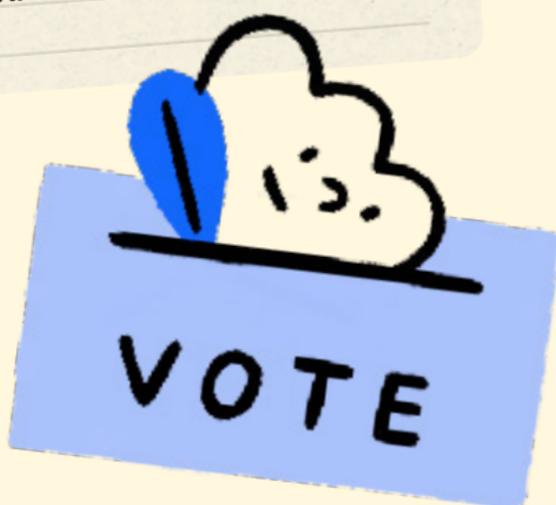


In May 2024, young people from across Europe will exercise their important democratic right and vote to elect members of the European Parliament. Young people care, act, and speak up! We are the future of our societies and we should be at the heart of all EU decision making.

**We will therefore support politicians who represent and choose to prioritise the interests of young people.** Decision makers who offer concrete and credible solutions to our issues across all policy fields. Leaders who inspire us, who defend our rights, and who not only give us hope for a better future but also take actions to make it a reality.

**What priority issues should the next European Parliament focus on?**

We would like to invite you as champions of youth to **join the next generation of the European Youth Forum's 'Youth Interest Group'** that we will be setting up for the next European Parliament Mandate.



**Democracy:** Safeguard and strengthen young people's democratic participation in society to ensure that their voices are always heard and always acted upon.

1. Use the momentum of the 2024 elections to call for legislation to ensure **voting rights as of 16 years old** for all elections in Europe, starting with European elections.
2. Develop a mandatory **EU 'Youth Test'** so that all EU legislation and policy is subject to a youth focused impact assessment, consultation with youth, youth organisations and experts focused on youth, and the development of mitigation measures in case a negative impact is identified.
3. Hold the European Commission and Council to account for fast and effective measures and a clearly defined procedure to stop infringements on **rule of law, fundamental rights and values and civic space** by governments of EU member states.
4. Implement Lisbon Treaty article 11.2 on **civil dialogue** between institutions, civil society and representative associations via developing and implementing an EU Civil Society Strategy, having focal points for civil dialogue in the Secretariat of every Parliament committee, including annual dialogues with youth representative organisations in every Parliamentary Committee.

5. Ensure sufficient and sustainable **funding for youth organisations** at all levels - from local to regional, national and European levels within the Erasmus+ programme and beyond. Youth organisations require funding to operate on a daily basis, such as to rent offices and buy equipment or organise trainings and implement projects. The EU and governments at all levels should ensure the accessibility of such funds, and ensure that they are tailored not only to public policy objectives but also to the structure, needs and independence of youth organisations.
6. Support the implementation of **citizenship education and education about the EU** throughout the EU. This should be combined with enhancing young people's participation, including through the improvement and greening of the EU programmes that help young people become active citizens through **formal and non-formal education and informal learning**, and the facilitation of **education and mobility opportunities abroad**. These participatory opportunities should all adhere to the principles set out in the Policy Document on Quality Youth Participation.
7. Support the EU level **recognition and validation of competencies gained through non-formal education and informal learning**.
8. Support the EU's flagship '**EU Youth Dialogue**' programme, including through engaging with the process and taking into account the outcomes of the cycles in the work of all Parliamentary Committees.

**Youth Rights:** Eliminate practices that discriminate against young people through mainstreaming a youth rights based approach to policy making at all levels.

9. The EU should fully recognise, respect, protect and mainstream **youth rights** across existing and future EU legal frameworks. The EU should support the adoption of a legally binding **International Convention on the Rights of Young People** with an accompanying monitoring mechanism that would universally recognise young people's rights around the world.
10. Promote intergenerational solidarity by **tackling age-based discrimination**, ensuring the Council moves to unblock the EU Horizontal Non-Discrimination Directive and pushing for EU level age-disaggregated data.
11. Uphold the enjoyment of **equal rights for all genders**, including access to services and sexual and reproductive health and rights, including education, contraception, and abortion.
12. Ensure **quality standards for internships and jobs for young people** including on remuneration - by banning unpaid internships via a legal instrument, putting an end to youth minimum wages and other discriminatory labour law provisions specific to young people.
13. Ensure **access for young people to social protection** equal to other age groups.

**Sustainability:** Build a sustainable world for young and future generations by legislating to ensure that the climate crisis is acted upon at scale now and placing sustainability and wellbeing of people and planet at the heart of policy making.

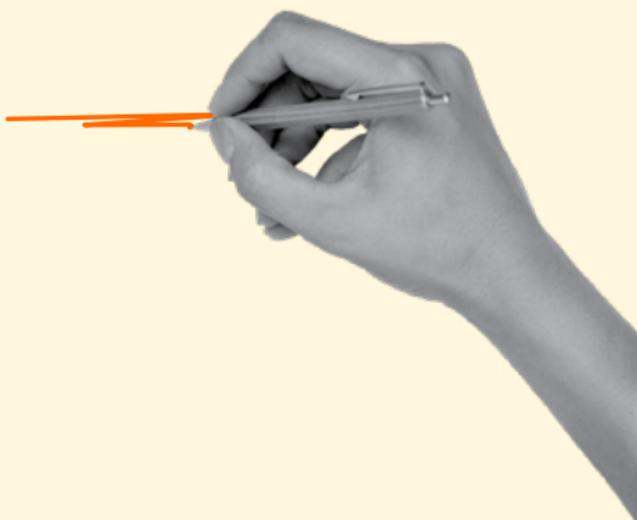
14. Increase ambition to tackle the climate crisis through a 65% **emissions** reduction target by 2030 in a revised EU climate law, and by accelerating just and sustainable transition to a 100% renewable energy supply.
15. Ensure that the European Commission puts forward a dedicated regulation to tackle **EU resource overconsumption** by introducing science-based binding material footprint reduction targets.
16. Adopt policies that decrease our structural dependence on economic growth and adopt **alternative measures of progress** based on sustainable development and the real wellbeing of people and the planet.
17. Ensure that **fiscal rules** are more flexible and democratically accountable to ensure sufficient space for social and environmental investment and spending.

**Digitalisation:** Legislate to make the digital sphere a less intrusive environment for young people, so that young people are empowered to choose what they see online.

18. The EU should legislate against deceptive design practices used by technology companies, so that privacy settings and opt-outs are presented in a clear and transparent way, and introduce **stronger data protection** rules for online platforms, to ensure the highest level of data privacy settings. The EU should deploy awareness-raising campaigns on **cybersecurity and media literacy** should also support young people to better understand how to protect themselves and their data in the online world.

19. The EU should prohibit targeted advertising based on pervasive tracking, personal profiling and inferred data. **Contextual advertising**, which relies on data provided by people voluntarily and specifically for that purpose, should be preferred.

20. Every EU policy promoting digital solutions must factor in the **carbon footprint of digitalisation**, inter alia by mandating durable design of hardware and guaranteeing repairability.



The European Youth Forum is the largest platform of youth organisations in Europe, bringing together tens of millions of young people from all over the continent. We represent over **100 diverse youth organisations** and platforms, and we are led by young people, who are **democratically elected** for the roles of President and the Board.

We bring the voices of young Europeans to international fora, and facilitate their participation in policy making. We help young people claim their rights, and we promote the exchange of ideas and experiences.

We believe that **every young person should have a say about matters that concern them**, and we make this a reality.

[youthforum.org](https://youthforum.org)

