



Declaration on the 20th University on Youth & Development

COUNCIL OF MEMBERS // EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY
AMIENS, FRANCE
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Introduction

The University on Youth and Development (UYD) is an international and multilateral youth event that for 20 years has been facilitated and coordinated by the [North-South Centre of the Council of Europe](#) (also known as European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity of the Council of Europe) in partnership with the [European Youth Forum](#) (YFJ), the Spanish Institute for Youth (INJUVE) and other international youth organisations and youth-serving institutions. In the UYD youth-led and youth-oriented organisations have the possibility to run their own activities (seminars, trainings, focus groups, annual meetings etc.) within a multilateral cooperation context, which encourages networking, peer-to-peer education, design of common actions and sharing of knowledge and opportunities, offering a space to explore and put into practice the concept of global education and global citizenship, to advocate for youth participation and empower young people towards their rights and duties. **Thus, the UYD is a space that tackles the issue of shrinking civic space by providing an environment for civil society organisations to exchange best practices and to foster cooperation amongst each other.**

The UYD is promoted by the Network on Youth and Global Citizenship, which gathers youth-led organisations, youth platforms, governmental and intergovernmental institutions from Europe, the Southern Mediterranean and beyond. The Network aims at encouraging the definition of a common agenda and the implementation of common actions to foster democratic participation and global citizenship among young people; and envisages contributing to uphold principles, values and standards of the Council of Europe and of the [United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

As a hub that offers an opportunity for youth organisations to network and learn from each other, the UYD serves also as the perfect chance for young people to raise their voice together and advocate towards the Council of Europe in matters related to global citizenship education.

Every partner, every participant and the Council of Europe as a whole greatly benefit from the UYD and the Network of Universities in general, and it is our belief that the realisations of the present proposals will serve to fulfil the core purposes of the Council of Europe and its three pillars of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law.

AEGEE, IUSY, OBESSU and YEU, who were all present at the latest edition of the UYD from 15th to 22nd September 2019 in Mollina, Spain, agreed to highlight the following topics as elements of essential need for youth and civil society organisations to achieve the young people's fullest potential as truly equal and

global citizens, and call upon the Council of Europe to act on them. These proposals are marked by **a particularly meaningful moment of humankind's history, in which all stakeholders need to take immediate action so as to fight the global climate crisis.**

1. Non-Formal Education (NFE) / Role in Education

Non-Formal & Informal Education play an essential role in the development of young people. Nonetheless, they do not enjoy the same institutional recognition as Formal Education.

We therefore call upon the Council of Europe to:

- Implement the Recognition of Non-Formal Education and informal education as a means to passing on the values of human rights and communal responsibility.
- Implement the Recognition of Youth Organisations as soft skills providers via Non-Formal Education, fostering the development of a democratic and tolerant society. Youth organisations provide the necessary education for young people to emancipate themselves and live up to their fullest potential.

2. Funding / Shrinking Space for Youth Organisations

The increasing trend of shrinking spaces for civil society and public engagement especially affects the democratic expression of young people.

We demand to:

- Increase funding for youth organisations coming from disadvantaged backgrounds to attend events from the Network of Universities.
- Provide spaces for dialogue for youth oriented civil society organisations and political youth organisations. - Accept the power of the collaboration of different actors and work with civil society and uphold democratic processes.

3. Youth / Social Justice

Without social justice, political and civic freedoms are empty and incomplete. Youth is the main resource to promote social justice on a global level

Thus, we should speak with our strong voice and strive for a:

- Replication of the good measures of systems like the co-management of the Advisory Council on youth to the Council of Europe or the EU Youth Dialogue as means of meaningful youth participation in political dialogue.
- Change of our economic system that ensures everyone is treated with human dignity and secure measures for their life and the future.

4. Climate Crisis

The most recent developments among young people all over the world have increased the visibility of the continuing climate crisis which demands immediate action.

We therefore call on the Council of Europe to:

- Declare the state of climate emergency in the Council of Europe, and call upon its Member States to take the necessary means of action to substantially reduce the consequences of climate change.
- Encourage the Member States of the Council of Europe to make use of the tools provided by the Council of Europe and the United Nations so as to further execute the realisation of the Agenda 2030. - Call for a change in the system in order to prevent an anticipated climate disaster mainly due to its failure to respond effectively to climate change.