

Recommendation 2302 (2026)¹

Strengthening democracies with young people: from participation to shared responsibility

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly refers to its [Resolution 2639 \(2026\)](#) “Strengthening democracies with young people: from participation to shared responsibility”, which reaffirms that the renewal and resilience of democracy depend on the full and effective participation of young people in all spheres of public life.
2. The Assembly commends the achievements of the Council of Europe's youth sector, notably its co-management model, which remains unique in international governance, and recognises the pivotal contribution of the European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest and the European Youth Foundation.
3. The Assembly welcomes the Final Declaration adopted at the 10th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth and the Resolution on the Council of Europe Reference Framework on a Youth Perspective, adopted on the same occasion, and invites the Committee of Ministers to ensure its effective implementation across all sectors and monitoring bodies of the Organisation.
4. The Assembly invites the Committee of Ministers to:
 - 4.1. reaffirm youth participation as a cross-cutting priority of the Council of Europe, ensuring systematic inclusion of the youth perspective in all intergovernmental, monitoring and co-operation activities;
 - 4.2. strengthen the co-management system by enhancing synergies among the Joint Council on Youth, the Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, including through regular exchanges and joint initiatives;
 - 4.3. provide predictable, multi-annual funding for the Council of Europe's Youth for Democracy programme, the European Youth Foundation and the European Youth Centres to secure long-term planning, accessibility and inclusiveness;
 - 4.4. continue its support for the Quality Label for Youth Centres on the basis of the Marienthal Statement adopted during the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers;
 - 4.5. support the integration of Council of Europe standards on youth participation into national legislation and practice through technical assistance, peer learning and training of civil servants;
 - 4.6. enhance partnerships with other international and regional organisations, including the European Union, the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), to promote a coherent international agenda for the rights of young people and democratic engagement;
 - 4.7. encourage the collection of comparative data and research on youth participation, disillusionment and trust in democracy, to support evidence-based policy making;

1. *Assembly debate* on 28 January 2026 (5th sitting) (see [Doc. 16308](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, rapporteur: Ms Sona Ghazaryan; and [Doc. 16332](#), opinion of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, rapporteur: Ms Elisabetta Gardini). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 28 January 2026 (5th sitting).



4.8. make every effort in its work to reach out to young people living in European societies who may not have access to the usual institutional channels for participation;

4.9. promote the establishment of a third venue of the European Youth Centre in the Black Sea region, within available resources, as a concrete expression of solidarity and outreach to young people in the wider region.

5. The Assembly supports the launch of a pan-European campaign on lowering the voting age to 16 to provide expertise, training and advocacy materials to member States willing to explore or implement this reform, in line with best practices identified within the Council of Europe.

6. By reinforcing the institutional capacity of the Council of Europe and its commitment to youth participation, the Committee of Ministers can ensure that young people are meaningfully involved in shaping the future agenda of the Organisation and its reforms as active builders of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.