

Recommendation 2316 (2026)¹

Europe, the fastest-warming continent: accelerating climate action with young people

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly refers to its [Resolution 2679 \(2026\)](#) “Europe, the fastest-warming continent: accelerating climate action with young people”. It notes that the habitability of the planet is the primary condition for the values of freedom and dignity enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights (ETS No. 5) and the European Social Charter (revised) (ETS No. 163) and that the decisions taken today will determine this habitability throughout the lives of present and future generations.
2. The Assembly welcomes Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)6 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on young people and climate action, the first international instrument specifically dedicated to this issue. The recommendation establishes an essential framework for protecting young people’s rights, supporting their action and ensuring their effective participation in climate decisions. It is now time to accelerate and make visible its implementation across all member States.
3. The Assembly stresses that every delay in climate action shifts an increasing share of the risks, harm and effort required onto today’s young people and future generations. In this regard, the judgment in *Verein KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz and Others v. Switzerland* is particularly significant: the European Court of Human Rights recognised the need for a fair distribution of the burden between generations and for immediate action to avoid placing a disproportionate burden on future generations. The judgment makes clear that compliance with the obligations arising from the European Convention on Human Rights cannot be reduced to setting climate targets. It requires an effective framework, a pathway with interim targets and verifiable deadlines, the quantification of national emissions limits through a carbon budget or an equivalent method, and concrete measures to ensure that emissions are actually reduced.
4. The Assembly also welcomes the adoption of the Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment (2025-2030) and its Action Plan, which follow up on the commitments made by Heads of State and Government in the Reykjavík Declaration and help implement the Reykjavík process on environment and human rights. It considers that their implementation provides an opportunity to embed the youth perspective and intergenerational equity permanently in the Organisation’s work.
5. The Assembly therefore recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - 5.1. organise, before the five-yearly review scheduled for 2029, a mid-term review of the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec (2024)6, based on common indicators, information provided by States and independent contributions from national youth councils, youth organisations and young environmental defenders, and publish the results and any best practices identified;
 - 5.2. supplement the Action Plan related to the Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment (2025–2030) with an initiative on futures literacy and intergenerational justice, drawing on the methods developed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the work

1. *Assembly debate* on 1 October 2026 (34th sitting) (see [Doc. 16493](#), report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Ms Aurora Florida). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 1 October 2026 (34th sitting).

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of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on intergenerational governance and the United Nations Declaration on Future Generations, and adapting them to the Council of Europe's needs;

5.3. make the supervision of the execution of the judgment *Verein KlimaSeniorinnen Schweiz and Others v. Switzerland* an opportunity to ensure exemplary execution in full compliance with the positive obligations identified by the European Court of Human Rights, based on the adoption of an ambitious carbon budget accompanied by binding intermediate targets, as well as on a mechanism endowed with sufficient resources and genuine supervisory powers; such execution should be guided by the protection of the rights of young people and by the need to avoid placing a disproportionate burden on future generations;

5.4. without further delay, begin drafting of a legally binding instrument recognising, at Council of Europe level, the autonomous right to a healthy environment, guaranteeing substantive and procedural rights, giving due consideration to present and future generations and providing for an independent monitoring mechanism to which civil society and young people can contribute;

5.5. strengthen the ambition, transparency and exemplary nature of the Council of Europe's internal approach to reducing its carbon footprint, by publishing annually its carbon footprint, the progress made in relation to its trajectory and the implementation of its action plan, by explaining any deviations and adopting the necessary corrective measures, and involve the Advisory Council on Youth in this monitoring.

6. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers recognise that armed conflicts and environmental destruction can significantly increase climate vulnerability and have long-term consequences for young people and future generations, and ensure that climate resilience, environmental restoration and reconstruction policies take into account their rights, needs and interests.