UNECE Youth Dialogue: Shaping the future of the region
Tuesday, 20 December 2022, 10:00-16:00 (CET), online

Outline

Young people across the Pan-European region are driving change for a sustainable future. Far from being mere beneficiaries of the 2030 Agenda, young people have been active architects in its development and continue to be engaged in the frameworks, processes and organizations that support its implementation, follow-up and review, such as the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, through the Major Group on Children and Youth, or the ECOSOC Youth Forum and its regional Fora.

As UNECE marks its 75th anniversary, it aims to strengthen its partnership with young people who often stand at the forefront of many social movements, demanding a greater say in governance and policy development, in climate action and in social inclusion. Youth engagement is a process that empowers and enables youth to understand, realise and claim their rights. Participation is a fundamental human right. Young agents for change deserve a voice in the multilateral discussions that will impact their future and the future of our planet.

Objective

As part of the UN Youth Strategy,¹ launched by the Secretary-General in 2018, UNECE seeks to enhance its engagement with young people to better address their needs and to co-create innovative solutions to regional challenges.

The UNECE Youth Dialogue will be a platform for young people to bring their views, ideas, solutions and innovations to policy discussions on issues that matter to them and their future. Taking on board new solutions and ideas by participants will foster UNECE’s potential to be innovative, creative and fit for the future. Engaging with youth will ensure that UNECE’s work stay informed, relevant, appropriate and responsive both to the needs of young people and to transforming societies.

¹ https://www.unyouth2030.com/about
Specifically, the UNECE Youth Dialogue will focus on the longer-term vision for the future of the UNECE region\(^2\) - helping scan the horizon for new trends which will shape the economy, society and environment.

Key messages from the Youth Dialogue will be made available to the 70\(^{th}\) Session of the Commission, (Geneva, 18-19 April 2023), and to the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (29-30 March 2023).

**Thematic focus**

The meeting will focus on a selection of key issues related to UNECE’s work and which are of relevance for young people. Representatives of UNECE’s senior management and thematic experts from the UNECE Secretariat and other UN and regional entities will be present at the youth dialogue to engage in a dialogue with young people. Informed by the UNECE’s areas of mandates and through clear, accessible, diversity-sensitive, user-friendly and age-appropriate materials, the topics are expected to include: the future of environment; the future of mobility (including road safety); the future of cities; the future of trade; the future of energy and the future of data, among others.

**Audience**

UNECE member States will nominate youth representatives; **nominations should be communicated to monika.sbeghen@un.org by 30 November 2022**. The full name, youth organization (if applicable), age, and e-mail (for correspondence purpose) of the nominated youth representative should be provided. For member States that have a UN Youth Delegate Programme,\(^3\) we would encourage the nomination of the UN Youth Delegate(s) for the Dialogue. Further representatives from youth-led organizations will be invited to participate in and contribute to the meeting.

Young people, aged between 18 and 24, will be the key experts for the youth dialogue. The meeting will also be open to participants beyond this age group, if they wish to engage.

**Focus, format and language**

The meeting will be held as a one-day, virtual meeting. The meeting intends to be highly engaging with interactive elements and facilitated exchanges in break-out groups. The language of the meeting will be English.

\(^2\) Information on UNECE’s geographic scope: https://unece.org/geographical-scope

\(^3\) More information available here: https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/what-we-do/youth-delegate-programme.html