



Concept Note

“Youth and Citizenship in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean”

The concept of youth has been transformed historically and in general has been related to age ranges of human groups that more or less are between 15 and 29 years, but their characteristics and their role in society differ according to social contexts, cultural and economic aspects of their communities, countries and regions of origin; In other words, being young is not the same in rural areas of Bolivia as in centre of Madrid. Participation has also been an evolving concept and beyond the classical understanding that should be given in an organised manner about rights and duties citizens in their relationship with the State, now comes in innovative, autonomous, self-convened or organised around civil society initiatives in different fields of private life or common worries. In short, the participation of young people today is diverse in its form and content and aims both to change their individual and collective living conditions.

One sixth of the world's population is young (in 2015: 1.2 billion) and the importance of youth participation for the future development is widely acknowledged. However, demographic change differs between regions and societies. Despite the fact that many European societies are confronted with the problems of an aging society, in Latin America and the Caribbean the inclusion of children and adolescents remains a central challenge. Across these contexts young people navigate the difficult way from adolescence to adulthood, from school to decent work and towards citizenship.

In many contexts youth protests stand at the forefront of public youth perceptions. The current “Fridays for Future” movement stands in line with the youth protests 2011/2012 in the Arab world, in Southern Europe, Chile and Mexico, the student movements of 1968, but also with the today youth protests in Central America for environmental topics and also for human rights and democracy. However, adult society rather perceives youth protests as a threat to stability than a sign of political commitment. Experience in many contexts, shows that the social and political treatment of youth demands and suggestions is crucial for whether young people make a constructive contribution.

At the international level, declarations such as the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on “Youth, Peace, and Security” (2015) or the current World Youth Report (2018) acknowledge the important role of youth. In UNSCR 2250 young people are not seen primarily as a problem, but as agents of change. Instead of stirring up political panic against young people, the resolution calls for the participation of young people at all levels of decision-making in (but also beyond) contexts of violent conflicts. These changes are a long term endeavour and only possible, if and where politics, business and society consider young people as partners, whose inclusion in the future is crucial.

At the regional level there are specific spaces for youth participation. In November 2018, the European Commission approved a new strategy for young people "Involve, connect and train young people" for 2019-2027. EU youth cooperation shall make the most of youth policy's potential. It fosters youth participation in democratic life; it also supports social and civic engagement and aims to ensure that all young people have the necessary resources to take part in society. Since 2005, the 'Forum of the Young Americas' serves as the official platform for the participation of young people in the processes of the Summits of the Americas (last Lima 2018).

In bi-regional experiences, in 2015, the first EU-LAC Youth Days were held, dedicating the debate to more and better jobs for youth; the second EU-LAC Youth Days in 2018 focused on the management of youth volunteering in both regions. In both exercises the European Youth Forum participated, made up of national youth organisations from all European countries, as well as Latin American and



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Caribbean Youth Forums. Representatives of those networks will be invited to the Seminar.

To discuss the related topics the EU-LAC Foundation and the GIGA-ILAS organise the International Seminar "Youth and citizenship in the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean" on September 24 & 25. The two-day seminar aims at a broad debate about the challenges, opportunities and deficits for the active participation of young people in different political and social spaces. Academics and experts, as well as representatives of public institutions and youth organizations in the EU, Latin America and the Caribbean will attend it. Special attention will be given to ensuring that both experts and representatives have a geographical, age and gender balance.



Preliminary programme

Day 1: September 24th

By invitation Institutional Greetings

10.00-10.30 Corinna Nienstedt – Director-General International Affairs, Europe, Protocol, Senate Chancellery of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg
Paola Amadei – Executive Director EU-LAC Foundation
Sabine Kurtenbach – Director GIGA-ILAS (ai)
Gustavo Espinoza – Representative of Bolivia- Pro Tempore Presidency CELAC

10.30-12.15 Inaugural Panel: Youth and citizen participation in the EU and LAC

Otto Argueta – Alianza para la Paz (Colombia)
Juan Carlos Vargas – President of the Youth Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy (Chile)
Benjamin Gunther – Board Member- European Youth Forum (Germany)
Shaquille Knowles – Chairman of the Caribbean Regional Youth Council (Bahamas)
Moderator: Sabine Kurtenbach – GIGA

12.15-12.30 Closing Remarks

12.30-14.00 Light Lunch at the Senate

14.00-14.30 Walking to the GIGA

Registration required

14.30-16.15 Panel 1: Youth in the XXI Century (Who they are?)

- Bewilderment when looking at the youth of today: Young people and generations, singularities and transformations – Roger Soler-i-Martí, University Pompeu Fabra (Spain)
- How are the youth of today and tomorrow in LAC? – Daniela Trucco, Representative CEPAL (Chile)
- Empowering Youth for Participation – Noura Berrouba, International Board of the European Youth Parliament (Sweden)

Moderator: Saskia Ruth-Lovell (GIGA)

16.15-16.30 Coffee Break

16.30-18.30 Playing Democracy – Facilitator Saskia Ruth-Lovell (GIGA)

19:15 Dinner with panellists

Day 2: September 25th

09.00-10.30

Panel 2: Youth participation in politics:

- Two experiences from LAC-practitioners: Román Castellanos, Universidad de San Carlos (Guatemala) and Rafael Castro, GIGA (Colombia)
- Experience from an EU practitioner: Wanja Kaufmann, Green Party (Sweden)

Moderator: Claudia Pineda – EULAC Foundation

10.30-10.45

Coffee Break

10.45-13.00

Panel 3: Youth and social responsibility

- CiudadexJóvenes, transformation from the territories – Mar Botero Serna, TECHO-LAC (Chile)
- Social commitment against gender violence – Silvia Juárez, Organization of Salvadoran Women for Peace (El Salvador)
- Volunteering – what's the gain? – María Encarnación Cubo – Government of Aragón (Spain)
- Youth participation in public policies: volunteering in Paraguay – Eunice Rivas, AROVIA (Paraguay)

Moderator: Claudia Pineda – EU-LAC Foundation

13.00-14.00

Lunch

14.00-16.00

Panel 4: Youth and the challenges of the future

- Environment – Danaé Espinoza, Latin American and Caribbean Youth Climate Movement (Mexico)
- Peace – Sabine Kurtenbach, GIGA-ILAS (Germany)
- Politics – Ashley Pitschmann, Youth Policy (Germany)

Moderator: Paola Amadei – EU-LAC Foundation

16.00-16.30

Closing Session

Paola Amadei – Executive Director EU-LAC Foundation

Sabine Kurtenbach – Director (ai) GIGA-ILAS



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