



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

147th IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS Luanda (Angola), 23–27 October 2023

Forum of Young Parliamentarians

Youth-related activities in 2023

Report on activities carried out since March 2023 and upcoming activities

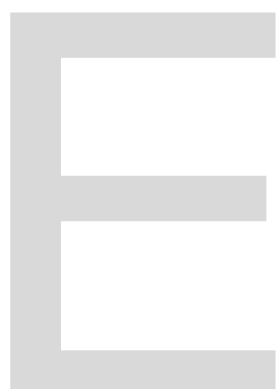
For over a decade, the IPU has been empowering young parliamentarians to strengthen and rejuvenate democracies and make them more representative of all generations. In 2010, IPU Member Parliaments adopted a landmark [resolution](#) to promote youth participation in the democratic process. Despite this clear political commitment and tentative progress, the level of youth representation in parliament, as measured regularly by the IPU, remains low. Half the world's population is under 30, while only 2.8% of MPs globally are under 30 and less than half of them are young women.

To address the gap in youth representation, the IPU launched the [I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!](#) campaign with six pledges identified by young parliamentarians as the most impactful ways to generate transformative change: promoting youth quotas; aligning the age of eligibility with that of voting; supporting youth channels in parliament; empowering young parliamentarians; mentoring young aspirants and advocating for youth participation. As of 15 September 2023, a total of 1,460 changemakers have already signed up, including 668 MPs, 60 Speakers of Parliament, and Heads of State, United Nations agencies and other international organizations.

Since March 2023, the IPU has organized the following youth-related activities to enhance youth participation in parliament and in the IPU:

- Meetings of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians and its Board were held at the 146th Assembly in Manama (March 2023); additionally, online meetings of the Board were held in April and June 2023.
- Promotion of the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign continued, including through an online *Shout Out to Changemakers* event (24 May 2023).
- Two briefings as part of the IPU's Empowerment Series for young parliamentarians were held on *Youth in climate negotiations* (31 May 2023) and on *Human rights of youth* (11 August 2023), which coincided with International Youth Day.
- The Ninth IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians took place in Hanoi (Viet Nam) on *The role of youth in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs through digital transformation and innovation* (15–17 September 2023).
- Outreach to youth organizations took place, including through visits of the President of the IPU Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians to the Americas and Asia (July, August and September 2023).
- Contributions by young MPs to international deliberations.
- Launch of the 2023 IPU *Youth participation in national parliaments* report.

More information on these activities is provided below, along with a list of future activities.



1. OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES SINCE MARCH 2023

Meetings of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians and its Board at the 146th Assembly

The Forum of Young Parliamentarians was held on 12 March 2023. It brought together 60 young MPs from 58 countries. About 37% of them were young women.

The Forum members took stock of youth participation in their countries and shared experiences and good practices, such as: the creation of new youth caucuses, increased activity by political parties to empower young MPs and more. In bringing a youth perspective to the theme of the General Debate, *Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolerance*, the Forum members discussed the leadership role that young MPs must play in decision-making and peace negotiations.

As the Board mandate concluded, the Forum approved the nominations of new Board members who would serve for the next two years. The new Board then elected Mr. Dan Carden from the United Kingdom as President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians.

Out of the 683 total number of MPs who took part in the 146th IPU Assembly, 150 were young MPs, amounting to 22% of delegates. Although this was short of the Forum's target of at least 25% of parliamentary delegates being young MPs, the target had been reached at over half of the IPU Assemblies since 2021. To aim higher in promoting greater participation of younger MPs at Assemblies, the Board had a discussion on the topic and shared proposals on amending the IPU Statutes and Rules of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians. Board members agreed to recommend lowering the age limit to be considered a young MP.

Online meeting of the Board

Informal meetings of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians were held online on 12 April and 20 June. Discussions focused on enhancing youth engagement in climate negotiations. A set of actions was agreed upon, including to enhance youth engagement and perspectives in COP28.

I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament! campaign

As of 15 September, there are a total of 1,460 changemakers who have pledged to support youth participation in parliament, among them 60 Speakers of Parliament, 668 MPs and 15 high-level representatives, such as Heads of State, Vice-Presidents of countries, and the United Nations Envoy on Youth. During the 146th IPU Assembly, promotional activities took place, including a dedicated campaign booth and proactive promotion of the campaign to delegates.

To celebrate the second anniversary of the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign and share experiences, in May 2023, the IPU organized an online *Shout Out to Changemakers* event. The meeting brought together MPs, youth leaders, civil society and individual advocates. Sixty-nine participants from 27 countries took part, of whom 38.6% were women. In addition to MPs, the meeting included the participation of high-level key partners, including Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth at the time; Ms. Corinne Momal-Vanian, Executive Director, Kofi Annan Foundation; Ms. Helga Fogstad, Executive Director, Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH); and Mr. Samson Itodo, Executive Director, YIAGA Africa.

During the event, several key takeaways emerged. An inclusive approach was identified as key to the successful implementation of campaign pledges. The participants stressed the importance of working across party lines, mobilizing support in the media and collaborating with various stakeholders. The significance of platforms for sharing best practices within the inter-parliamentary community was highlighted. The participants also identified new areas important to enhancing youth participation that require increased attention, including: intersectionality, financial barriers and the roles of political parties in fostering meaningful change.

Parliaments also reported new developments in the implementation of the campaign pledges. For example, in **Greece** there is a new proposal to lower the age of eligibility to run for office (Pledge 2); in **Guyana** the Speaker of Parliament initiated new youth debating competitions to feed into the work of the country's youth parliament (Pledge 5); in **Kazakhstan**, the Speaker created a young experts club to feed youth views into parliamentary processes (Pledge 3); and in **South Africa**, there plans are underway to create a new caucus of young parliamentarians in line with the campaign.

Empowerment Series for young parliamentarians

The IPU continued a series of capacity-building activities as part of its Empowerment Series for young MPs.

Since March 2023, the IPU hosted the sixth and seventh briefings for young MPs. They brought together a total of 78 participants (parliamentarians and parliamentary staff) from 34 countries. Among the participants were 41 young women (52%). A briefing on *Youth in climate negotiations* was organized on 31 May 2023, and another one, on *Human rights of youth* was held on 11 August 2023 on the occasion of International Youth Day and in conjunction with the Human Rights 75 Initiative leading up to the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 2023. The briefings provided a platform for the exchange of experiences and good practices in supporting youth engagement in climate negotiations and advancing youth political rights, as well as identifying legislative and policy-related solutions.

Ninth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians

The Ninth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians was held from 15 to 17 September 2023 in Hanoi, Viet Nam. It brought together about 300 young MPs from some 65 countries. Approximately 44% of the young MPs were women. The young MPs were joined by representatives from international and regional organizations, youth groups, start-ups, academia, and inspirational leaders. The Conference marked the eighth anniversary of the Hanoi Declaration on the SDGs, adopted by the IPU in 2015.

Addressing the theme *The role of youth in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs through digital transformation and innovation*, the young parliamentarians affirmed their commitment to further accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through digital transformation and innovation. They adopted an action-oriented [Conference statement](#) which includes a proposal to close digital gaps so that technologies can be more accessible to and safer for all, calls for a boost of innovation and start-up ecosystems, and for a responsible and inclusive approach to new technologies able to mitigate risks and promote cultural diversity and dialogue.

Enhancing links with youth organizations and contribution by young MPs to international deliberations

In line with the Forum's objectives to enhance links between parliaments and young people and to contribute to international deliberations, various activities took place:

- A delegation from the Forum of Young Parliamentarians took part in the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum and its side events in New York City (25-27 April 2023). This entailed engagements with civil society and youth leaders, such as the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth. The young parliamentarians also had leadership roles contributing to the Forum's discussions as well as in parallel events.
- The President of the Board carried out a series of missions to promote youth participation and engage with youth organizations. These took place in the United States (July 2023), Chile and Peru (August 2023), and Thailand and Singapore (September 2023), and included meetings with parliamentarians and representatives of youth organizations.
- Members of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians took part in the Global Parliamentary Forum (GPF) organized together with the World Bank Group (WBG) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in April 2023. This also included contributions to the WBG's Young MP initiative.

- Members of the Board of the Forum participated in online sessions of the Civic Engagement Accountability Hubs, organized by the Kofi Annan Foundation (September, October 2023). These meetings connected the young parliamentarians with youth leaders from around the world.

2023 IPU report *Youth participation in national parliaments*

The 2023 IPU report *Youth participation in national parliaments*, launched at the 147th IPU Assembly, provides updated data and information on levels of youth participation in national parliaments, including: ages of MPs, disaggregated data based on sex, information on youth quotas, committees, and caucuses of young MPs, and more. Some key highlights:

- Only 2.8% of world MPs are 30 years of age and under, and only 18.8% are 40 and under.
- 39% of parliaments have no MPs 30 years of age and under.
- Women remain disproportionately underrepresented compared to men across all age categories.
- 70% of chambers of parliament impose a “waiting time” between voting age and age of eligibility for office.

Informed by interviews with young MPs, the report also provides key takeaways on the implementation of the six *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign pledges.

2. UPCOMING YOUTH-RELATED ACTIVITIES IN 2023 AND 2024

- Support activities to help parliaments promote and implement the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign will continue, including to help launches of the campaign in national parliaments and technical support in implementing pledges.
- Continued trainings (online and offline) for young MPs, such as on IPU's modules on leadership, mentorship and communication for young parliamentarians.
- Production of new communication and promotional materials for the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign.
- Continued online briefings as part of the Empowerment Series.
- Contribution of young MPs in international deliberations, including the parliamentary meeting at the COP28.
- Tenth IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in 2024.

Partnerships

Partnerships exist and are maintained with the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Generation Equality Forum (GEF), the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), the World Bank Group, the Kofi Annan Foundation (KAF), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), Plan International, various international, regional and national youth organizations, academics, and many others.