



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

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Forum of Young Parliamentarians

Youth-related activities in 2024

Report on activities carried out since March 2024 and upcoming activities

The IPU works for the empowerment of 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, which led to the creation of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians. The Forum held its first meeting in 2014.

This year marks the Forum's 10th anniversary. Over the past decade, the Forum and its Board have advanced youth participation by: monitoring the age demographics of parliaments, as reflected in the IPU's Parline database and its reports on *Youth participation in national parliaments*; organizing the Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians each year; empowering young MPs via training courses and empowerment series briefings; providing support to parliaments at the national level; and facilitating the engagement of young MPs in the larger global youth agenda.

Despite 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 aged 30 and under and less than half of those MPs are young women.

To address the gap in youth representation, the IPU launched the [I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!](#) campaign, comprising six pledges identified by young MPs: promoting youth quotas, aligning the age of eligibility with the voting age, supporting youth channels in parliament, empowering young parliamentarians, mentoring young aspirants and advocating for youth participation. As of 25 September 2024, close to 1700 changemakers have already joined the campaign, including 759 MPs and 64 Speakers of Parliament.

Since March 2024, the IPU has organized the following activities to enhance youth participation in parliament and in the IPU:

- Meetings of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians and its Board at the 148th Assembly in Geneva (March 2024).
- In the framework of the IPU's Empowerment Series, two briefings for young MPs: on the role of young MPs in contributing to conflict prevention and peacebuilding (5 June 2024) and on young women's political participation, to mark International Youth Day (13 August 2024).
- National-level activities to promote youth participation and empower young parliamentarians: with the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) of Myanmar on 8 May 2024, the National Assembly of Zambia on 3-4 August 2024, and the Transitional Legislative Assembly of Burkina Faso on 27-29 August 2024.
- The Tenth IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians on *Avoiding lost generations: Preserving education and employment in all circumstances* in Yerevan, Armenia (12-14 September 2024).
- Continued promotion of the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign.
- Contribution of young MPs to international deliberations.

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

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1. OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES SINCE MARCH 2024

Meetings of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians and its Board at the 148th Assembly

The Forum of Young Parliamentarians was held on 24 March 2024. It brought together 70 young MPs from 60 countries, 41% of whom were women. The newly appointed United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs also took part in the meeting.

The Forum members took stock of youth participation in their parliaments and shared experiences and good practices, including the establishment of a new youth caucus in Thailand, the adoption of a youth quota in Ecuador, and efforts to lower the age of eligibility to run for office in Mexico, Nigeria, Paraguay and Türkiye. Issues of concern were also shared over rising violence against young MPs, including assassination and death threats by drug cartels and criminal groups, sexism and gender-based violence against young women, and online violence and harassment on social media.

In line with the theme of the General Debate of the Assembly, the Forum discussed parliamentary diplomacy for peace from a youth perspective, noting that young MPs are keen to be part of solutions. They underlined that there can be no lasting peace without youth participation and leadership in peace efforts.

During the Assembly, the Forum of Young Parliamentarians also held a Youth Leaders' Meetup, bringing together young MPs and youth representatives. Aligned with the Forum's objective to strengthen ties with youth organizations, the meeting facilitated the exchange of ideas and collaboration to advance youth empowerment initiatives globally.

Out of the total number of 703 MPs who took part in the 148th IPU Assembly, 194 were young MPs, amounting to 27.6%. This surpassed the Forum's target of at least 25% of parliamentary delegates being young MPs, and was viewed by the Board of the Forum as providing further impetus to the proposed amendment to the IPU Statutes to lower the age limit to be considered a young MP to under 40.

***I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign**

As of 25 September 2024, close to 1700 changemakers have signed up to the *I Say Yes!* campaign, including 759 MPs and 64 Speakers of Parliament, as well as several Heads of State, and heads of United Nations agencies and other international organizations.

The IPU continued to support parliaments in implementing campaign pledges, especially in three national-level training courses and activities in Burkina Faso and Zambia, and for young MPs from Myanmar with the Committee Representing the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH). Further details are below.

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 2024, the IPU has hosted two online briefings: on the role of young MPs in contributing to conflict prevention and peacebuilding (5 June 2024) and on young women's political participation, to mark International Youth Day (13 August 2024). The two events brought together a total of 120 participants (parliamentarians and parliamentary staff) from 37 countries. Among the participants, 64 were young parliamentarians, 53% of whom were young women.

During the briefing on the role of young MPs in contributing to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, participants explored the opportunities and challenges that young MPs experience in conflict prevention and peacebuilding and discussed practical action they can take, including in policymaking, parliamentary diplomacy, mediation and dialogue efforts. It was emphasized that youth political participation is instrumental in building sustainable peace. Young MPs can reinforce linkages between youth and national parliaments; and act as mediators and promote dialogue and reconciliation in divided societies.

The briefing on young women's political participation took place on the occasion of International Youth Day. During the briefing, participants took stock of the implementation of the Call to Action on young women's political participation and leadership, and discussed how young MPs can advocate and promote young women's political participation. Panellists and participants agreed on the urgency of action and insisted on the creation of an enabling environment for young women's participation and the elimination of sexism, gender-based harassment and violence in politics.

National level activities

In line with the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign, the IPU continued to provide support to parliaments at the national level.

In May 2024, a workshop took place to support the creation of a Network of Young Parliamentarians for the CRPH of Myanmar, including the participation of the President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians. In August 2024, a two-day training workshop on leadership, mentorship and communication was delivered for young MPs of the National Assembly of Zambia and the Zambia Youth Parliamentary Caucus in Lusaka. Support was also provided for the launch of the Caucus's Strategic Plan. A workshop for MPs of the Transitional Legislative Assembly of Burkina Faso was held on the "Adoption of the Recommendations of the IPU Regional Conference on the Role of Parliaments in Conflict Prevention and Management in West Africa". The workshop included components on youth political participation and UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security. One of the outcomes of the workshop was growing momentum for the establishment of a national youth caucus.

In addition to ongoing support in these countries, discussions are also ongoing to support young MPs in other parliaments, including Benin, Kenya, Liberia, South Sudan, Thailand and other transitional parliaments in the Sahel.

Tenth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians

The Tenth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians was held from 12 to 14 September 2024 in Yerevan, Armenia. It brought together about 144 young MPs from some 52 countries. Approximately 40% of the young MPs were women. The young MPs were joined by representatives from international and regional organizations, youth groups and academia, and several inspirational leaders.

Addressing the theme *Avoiding lost generations: Preserving education and employment in all circumstances*, the young parliamentarians affirmed their commitment to preserving education and employment opportunities in all circumstances, including in times of crisis. They adopted an action-oriented [outcome document](#) which includes commitments to free and accessible education for all, greater investment in digital infrastructure and adaptation of curricula to meet the demands of future economies, and employment initiatives that empower young people through job programmes, micro-credit schemes and entrepreneurship support. They also highlighted the necessity of inclusive labour policies, especially for refugees, and stressed the importance of affordable housing to foster long-term economic stability. With a focus on leaving no one behind, the parliamentarians committed to ensuring that education and employment services reach marginalized groups and those in vulnerable situations, delivering a more equitable future for all.

The Conference also included new innovations, such as a working group session, and an "Unconference" session in which young MPs were invited to propose and vote on thematic topics for discussion.

Strengthening links with youth organizations; young MPs contributing to international deliberations

In line with the Forum's objectives to strengthen links between parliaments and young people and contribute to international deliberations, members of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians played active roles in the following events:

- the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum (16–18 April 2024);
- the UN Summit of the Future, as well as the associated "Action Days" (September 2024).

2. UPCOMING YOUTH-RELATED ACTIVITIES IN 2024 AND 2025

- Support activities to help parliaments promote and implement the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign will continue, including to help launch the campaign in national parliaments and provide technical support for the implementation of pledges.
- Continued online and offline training for young MPs, such as IPU modules on leadership, mentorship and communication for young parliamentarians.
- Continued online briefings as part of the Empowerment Series.
- Preparation for the next edition of the IPU's report on *Youth participation in national parliaments*.

Partnerships

The IPU youth programme maintains partnerships with the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the World Health Organization (WHO), 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.