



Intergenerational engagement for advancing young women's leadership

CSW70 Side event¹

Friday, 13 March 2025, 11:30–12:45 EST

CR-2, Conference Building, UN Headquarters, New York

Organizers: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), UN Women, International IDEA, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

Co-sponsors: European Union Delegation and Member State (TBD)

BACKGROUND

Structural, socioeconomic and cultural barriers rooted in unequal power relations and discriminatory norms hinder women's and, in particular, young women's participation in public life. As of 1 January 2026, only 28 countries are headed by a woman. In 2025, women made up 22.9% of cabinet members heading ministries, 27.1% of national legislators and 35.6% of the local legislature. According to the IPU 2025 report *Youth participation in national parliaments*,² the proportion of young women members of parliament (MPs) declined since 2023, with women aged 30 and under accounting for just 1.2% of MPs worldwide (down from 1.4%), and those aged 40 and under only 6.9% (down from 7.9%). Gender balance is stronger among younger MPs, with women making up 42.8% of MPs aged 30 and under, and 36.2% of those aged 40 and under, compared with just 27.2% across all ages and 21.1% for those over 40.

Organized in the context of the CSW70 Review theme which looks back at the 65th session of the CSW (2021) focused on the theme “Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls”, this side-event will focus on the topic of intergenerational engagement to support and increase the participation of young women in public life, leadership roles and politics. The [CSW65 Agreed Conclusions](#) recognized that “young women are particularly underrepresented in public life”, that “early exposure to women leaders as role models, as well as to legislative and policy-making spaces, motivates young women and girls, broadens networks and strengthens their opportunities to become fully engaged citizens”, and that “measures are needed to enable young women and girls to successfully grow into leadership positions in public and private spheres by ensuring their full and equal access to education,

¹ **WYDE | Women's Leadership** is part of the **Women and Youth Democratic Engagement** initiative (WYDE), funded by the European Union, that seeks to empower and strengthen the rights, and participation in public and political life of youth and women as key actors of development and change.

² Inter-Parliamentary Union, [Youth participation in national parliaments 2025](#) (2025).



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technology and skills development, leadership and mentorship programmes, increased technical and financial support, and protection from violence and discrimination”.

In direct response to these identified gaps and priorities, the European Union (EU) is funding an initiative implemented by UN Women, International IDEA, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). Launched during CSW68 in 2024, the WYDE | Women’s Leadership initiative is a collaborative global effort working to advance women’s full and effective political participation, representation and decision-making at all levels, especially in those most often left furthest behind. Over three years, WYDE | Women’s Leadership is leveraging collective action, partnerships, coordination, knowledge and resources at the global level to advance women’s and young women’s political participation and decision-making through social norms change, networking and global advocacy. One of its key strategies is the rolling out of intergenerational dialogues and exchanges for building critical skills and facilitating networking of young women in politics and decision-making. These dialogues also strengthen intergenerational solidarity between women’s rights organizations and women in politics, encouraging an intersectional perspective to their respective work.

The side event will present an opportunity to hear first-hand about the successes and challenges of intergenerational engagement and to learn from the WYDE programme.

OBJECTIVES

The in-person side event will bring WYDE Women’s Leadership partners as well as representatives from the EU together with members of parliament, local governments, women’s movements, civil society organizations, experts and women leaders, including from youth groups, with the objectives to:

- Highlight the impacts and needs to bring more young women into politics
- Learn from the successful experiences and best practices of intergenerational exchanges, alliances and mentoring
- Present the iKNOW Politics Young Women’s Empowerment portal, a tool that promotes young women’s access to leadership and representation

WHERE AND WHEN

Date and time: Friday, 13 March 2026, 11:30–12:45 EST

Venue: CR-2, Conference Building, UN Headquarters, New York

Registration: (for passholders) through [this link](#).

Interpretation will be provided in English, French, Spanish and Arabic.



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AGENDA AND SPEAKERS

Time	Session and speakers
11:30–11:40	Welcome (10 min) Moderator (TBD) Opening remarks (3 min each): - Ms. Julia Koch–de Biolley, Head of Task Force for Equality, European External Action Service - UN Women representative - Member State (co-sponsor) speaker (TBC)
11:40–11:45	Voices across generations for young women’s leadership – video (4 min)
11:45–12:35	Panel discussion: Intergenerational collaboration to advance young women’s leadership (40 min) This panel will examine how intergenerational collaboration can advance young women’s political leadership and will highlight effective practices from across public and political life. It will also address key obstacles to women’s participation, with a focus on gender-based violence, including technology-facilitated violence against women and girls, and discuss strategies to overcome these barriers. Moderated discussion (30 mn) with 5 speakers: - A young locally elected woman (under 35) - A young member of parliament (under 40) - A youth activist - A seasoned political leader - A WYDE grantee/Action Coalition 6 Questions & answers session (10 min)
12:35–12:40	Presentation of iKNOW Politics Young Women’s Empowerment Portal (5 min)
12:40–12:45	Closing (2 min)



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