

16 November 2022

Call for applications for young people to take part in the 2023 edition of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities' "Rejuvenating politics" initiative

(44th and 45th sessions and project preparation)

As part of its "Rejuvenating politics" initiative the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe invites young people to:

- come to Strasbourg (France) to take an active part, as a youth delegate, in its 44th (21-23 March 2023) and 45th (24-26 October 2023) Congress sessions.
- develop their own grass-roots project back home (under the Congress' aegis)

APPLICANTS The deadline for submitting completed applications to the Congress of the Council of Europe is 6 January 2023, at the latest <i>Scroll down for online application form</i>	CONTACT Dolores Ríos Turón Head of the Table Office Congress of Local and Regional Authorities E-mail: congress.youth@coe.int
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What is the Congress?

The Congress is a pan-European political assembly, its members hold elective office (they may be regional or municipal councillors, mayors or presidents of regional authorities) and represent over 130,000 authorities in 46 European States. Its role is to promote local and regional democracy, improve local and regional governance and strengthen authorities' self-government. It meets in session twice a year.

Like other political assemblies, such as national parliaments or local/regional councils, the sessions are formal gatherings where the Congress members examine reports, hold thematic debates and adopt recommendations.

To learn more about the Congress, please [consult the website](#).

The Congress and youth participation

Since October 2014, the Congress has invited young professionals from different backgrounds – youth activists, youth workers, students to take part in its sessions, to have their say in the debates and to exchange with Congress members on the issues on the agenda.

Since 2016, as an integral part of their participation, youth delegates have been required to develop their own projects at local and regional level in between the sessions.

To learn more about youth delegates in the Congress please [consult the website](#).

Participating in the Congress' work for one year

Being a youth delegate for a year is a unique opportunity to gain international experience, become a part of a diverse group of young activists, network and make an impact by stimulating the debates from a youth perspective thereby highlighting and strengthening the Congress' commitment to youth empowerment.

1. Participating as a youth delegate in the sessions (in-person or remote)

The youth delegates sit in the hemicycle alongside the Congress members for both sessions (or online in the case of remote sessions).

A one-day preparatory session will be held prior to each session. This day is not intended as a training day, its purpose is to familiarise youth delegates with the Congress and its proceedings; delegates should already have the necessary public speaking skills, be able to prepare short speeches and be capable of analysing policy documents.

Youth delegates must commit to taking part in the whole of the two sessions in 2023:

- **From Sunday 19 March (18.00) until the debriefing session on Thursday 23 March (17.00)**
- **From Sunday 22 October (18.00) until the debriefing session on Thursday 26 October (17.00).**

A welcome evening will be organised prior to each session on 19 March and 22 October.

2. Developing and implementing projects between the sessions

Between March and October, youth delegates will remain involved in the work of the Congress. They will be required to develop a local or regional project which may be related to the Congress' priorities or to the session themes for 2023. For this, they will have the support of the trainers in the form of mentoring sessions to develop and assess their ideas.

While the Congress will not provide funding for project development, it will provide youth delegates with an introduction letter to act as a visiting card in their dealings with local or regional authorities and may provide information material.

There may also be possibilities for some of the youth delegates to participate in other events organised by the Congress outside Strasbourg such as its committee meetings, seminars or conferences.

Aims and objectives

By inviting a number of young people to take an active part in its sessions the Congress aims to give young people an opportunity to express their opinions about all the issues being discussed directly to the local and regional elected representatives.

The specific objectives are to:

- involve young people directly in all aspects of the Congress' work;
- make young people aware of the Congress' work and the tools it has developed to support youth participation;
- discuss with young people how local and regional youth participation can be boosted;
- bring the youth perspective to all thematic debates within the Congress;
- motivate the youth delegates to multiply the information and experience acquired during the sessions on their return home in particular through the development and implementation of their own projects at local and regional levels;
- share information about existing models of youth-led structures and motivate young people to spread the word about the Congress' work;
- promote co-operation between members of the Congress and youth delegates;
- show national delegations the importance of officially including more young people as members.

Programme

The entire youth delegate programme is compulsory, youth delegates who do not take part in one or more of these aspects will be replaced by their national substitute delegate.

Compulsory activities include:

- participation in online preparation with the trainers prior to each session;
- full attendance during both sessions (which includes the preparation day on the eve of each session and the evaluation meeting on the last afternoon of each session);
- participation in several meetings via videoconference (April - September) with trainers to prepare the youth project;
- implementation of the project between April and mid-September 2023.

Profile of participants

All youth delegates should:

- be open, committed and motivated to develop and strengthen dialogue between young people and elected representatives at local/regional level;
- be between 18 and 30 years old;
- live in and hold the passport of one of the 46 Council of Europe member States;
- be active in youth work at local and regional levels;
- be available to engage **in the whole** of the activity including the preparation of grass-roots projects;
- have an interest in actively participating in policy making at local and/or regional levels but not be an elected representative;
- be able to multiply the information obtained during the session on their return home;
- have good writing and public speaking skills;
- be committed to working in an intercultural team;
- not have participated in the initiative previously;
- speak English fluently;¹

Application procedure and selection of participants

Those wishing to apply to take part in the 44th and 45th Congress sessions must do so by means of the [online application](#) form below. **Participation in only one session is not possible.**

Applicants must also submit a short video via online link of no more than 30 seconds, to support their application. The link to the video (title should contain only the applicant's name and country) should be sent together with the application. **Please note that candidates should not present themselves on the video but answer the question that has been put. This is an integral part of the application.**

The deadline for submitting completed applications is 23:59 CET on **6 January 2023**.

The youth delegates will be selected by a selection panel which includes the Congress' Spokesperson on Youth, the youth trainers and two members of the Council of Europe's Advisory Council on Youth. The panel will ensure that the selected applicants represent a balanced group with regard to gender, cultural background and experience.

Applicants will be informed of the results of the selection procedure by **10 February 2023**.

Travel, subsistence and accommodation

The youth delegates' travel and subsistence expenses will be covered by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities according to the Council of Europe's rules.

Accommodation will be provided and paid for by the organisers, in single-occupancy or shared rooms according to availability and prevailing sanitary measures. The organisers cannot cover the cost of accommodation elsewhere.

[Click here to fill out the application form](#)

¹ During the non-formal sessions organised alongside the official debates and committee meetings, the working language will be English.