

GUIDE TO

# YOUTH DELEGATES

to the  
United Nations





# YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Prepared for Member States of the United Nations by the  
United Nations Programme on Youth/Division for Social Policy and Development/  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

# JITH GATES



# FORWARD

# FORWARD



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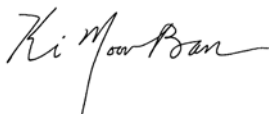
The creativity, energy and passion of young people are indispensable for tackling global challenges. Whenever I spend time with young people—my role affords me the pleasure and honour to meet frequently with youth from around the world—I am always impressed by the contributions they make to their communities, and inspired by the insight and devotion they bring to the issues on the United Nations agenda. The Member States of the Organization have also acknowledged the importance of youth in meeting the trials of our day, including through the decision of the General Assembly to proclaim the International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding, starting on 12 August 2010.

An important mechanism for the participation of young people in the work in the United Nations is the Youth Delegates Programme. By including young people in national delegations to United Nations meetings, Governments help them gain a better understanding of the intricacies of negotiations, the challenges of achieving consensus and the patience required to win diplomatic progress. These skills help young people no matter what course they choose in life. Moreover, the time spent representing the youth of their countries in the international arena can also inspire and encourage young people to participate more deeply at home, in the political life of their own societies, thereby counteracting the immense social costs of excluding young people.

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I attach great importance to the Youth Delegates Programme. It creates civic role models for young people around the world and brings new perspectives to discussions in the General Assembly. However, some regions continue to be underrepresented among the youth delegates; I encourage Member States to do more to bring young people aboard and achieve a more equitable geographical balance.

Half of the population of the world is under 25. We need to harness the spirit of youth around the world to address the tough challenges we face. This Guide is meant to inspire more Member States to support youth participation at inter-governmental meetings and to allow the voices of young people from all over the world to be not only heard, but acted upon.



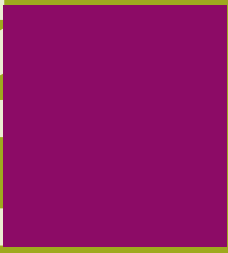
BAN Ki-moon

*Secretary-General of the United Nations*



PREFACE

PREFACE





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Young people between the ages of 15 and 24 represent approximately 18 per cent of today's global population, signifying the largest youth cohort in history. They are increasingly mobilizing and impacting social policy dialogue within their communities as well as at the global level. In response, the international community has recognized their contributions and potential for greater participation by encouraging the inclusion of youth delegates in United Nations meetings and conferences.

The purpose of the following Guide is to provide Member States with information on national youth delegates to the United Nations and practical guidance on developing youth delegate programmes. The Guide presents the many avenues through which young people may take part in the work of their national delegations, including by highlighting how some Member States have enabled youth to participate in the intergovernmental processes at the United Nations.

The Guide has been prepared by the United Nations Programme on Youth of the Division for Social Policy and Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Programme is the focal point within the United Nations system in the area of youth development and matters related to young people, particularly in relation to the priority areas identified in the World Programme of Action for Youth.

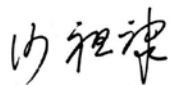


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Specifically, the Programme aims to:

- Enhance awareness of the global situation of youth and to increase recognition of their rights and aspirations;
- Promote national youth policies, programmes and coordinating mechanisms as integral parts of social and economic development, in cooperation with both governmental and non-governmental organizations;
- Strengthen the participation of youth in decision-making processes at all levels in order to increase their contribution to national development and international cooperation;
- Facilitate the coordination of the UN system's youth-related activities by leading the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development.

Through the information and country-specific examples provided in this Guide, it is the hope that Governments and young people alike will be encouraged to strengthen opportunities for youth to participate more fully in national and international development policy dialogue.



Sha Zukang

*Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs*

# CONTENTS

## CONTENTS



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■ BACKGROUND	1
■ WHY YOUTH DELEGATES?	5
■ THE ROLE OF A YOUTH DELEGATE	7
■ YOUTH DELEGATES AT THE UNITED NATIONS	9
■ The General Assembly	9
■ The Commission for Social Development (CSocD)	10
■ The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)	11
■ THE SELECTION PROCESS	13
■ BEFORE THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETINGS	17
■ Preparations	17
■ Visa process	18
■ WHEN RETURNING HOME	21
■ COUNTRY PROFILES	23
■ Australia	24
■ Germany	27
■ Netherlands	31
■ Norway	34
■ Romania	36
■ Sweden	38
■ Switzerland	41
■ Thailand	44
■ FURTHER INFORMATION	47

**BACKGROUND**  
**BACKGROUND**



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Member States of the United Nations have long recognized that the imagination, energy and ideals of young people are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. In 1995, on the tenth anniversary of the first International Youth Year, the United Nations formally strengthened its commitment to young people by adopting a unified approach called the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY). The WPAY initially identified 10 priority areas to guide policy and action in the area of youth development. Recognizing the major changes that were occurring in national and international development at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the General Assembly added five additional priority areas in 2007, namely globalization, information and communication technology, HIV/AIDS, armed conflict and intergenerational issues. The five additional areas were elaborated in a supplement to the WPAY, which was adopted at the sixty-second session of the General Assembly in 2007 (see box on p. 2).



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## THE WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR YOUTH (WPAY)

The World Programme of Action for Youth was adopted by the General Assembly in 1995 and expanded upon in 2007.

It provides a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of youth in relation to the following 15 priority concerns:

- Education
- Employment
- Hunger and poverty
- Health
- Environment
- Substance abuse
- Juvenile justice
- Leisure-time activities
- Girls and young women
- Youth participation in society and in decision-making
- Globalization
- Information and communication technology (ICT)
- HIV/AIDS
- Armed conflict
- Intergenerational issues

For each priority area, the WPAY outlines the challenges young people face and presents proposals for action to improve the lives of young people. The WPAY also outlines the means of implementation of the Programme of Action. The 15 priority areas are clearly interrelated and cut across areas in which agencies of the United Nations system specialize and provide technical advisory and other services to Governments.

The Programme of Action is available at [www.un.org/youth](http://www.un.org/youth)



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The World Programme of Action focuses on increasing the quality and quantity of opportunities available to young people for full, effective and constructive participation in society. In particular, it invites Governments to strengthen the involvement of young people in international forums by considering the inclusion of youth representatives in their national delegations to the General Assembly (General Assembly resolution 50/81, paragraph 107).

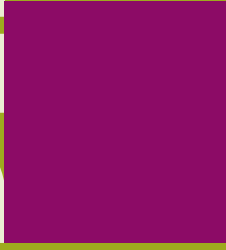
This invitation has been renewed several times in subsequent resolutions (52/83, 54/120, 56/117, 58/133, 59/148, 60/2, 62/126). In its recent resolution pertaining to youth policies and programmes (General Assembly resolution 64/130), adopted in 2009, the General Assembly:

*Urges* Member States to consider including youth representatives in their delegations at all relevant discussions in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions and relevant United Nations conferences, as appropriate, bearing in mind the principles of gender balance and non-discrimination, and emphasizes that such youth representatives should be selected through a transparent process that ensures that they have a suitable mandate to represent young people in their countries; [paragraph 17]

*Recognizes* the need for a greater geographical balance of youth representation, and encourages Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to contribute to the United Nations Youth Fund in order to facilitate the participation of youth representatives from developing countries; [paragraph 18]

**YOUTH DELEGATES**

**WHY YOUTH  
DELEGATES?**



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The underlying principle of youth participation in the work of the United Nations is that it leads to better policy and programmatic responses to the problems facing young people today. The United Nations recognizes that young people around the world are both a major human resource for development and key agents for social change, economic development and technological innovation. Where young people have participated more fully in their communities, they have been a strong positive force in the development of their societies. Youth who are involved in positive activities such as community service are less likely to pursue risky behaviour. In addition to their substantive contributions, young people also bring a unique perspective that needs to be taken into consideration.

Including young people in official delegations to inter-governmental meetings not only enriches the debate and policy dialogue, but also strengthens existing channels of communication and cooperation between Governments and young people. Listening to youth and making them full partners in the decision-making process can help Governments enact more effective and legitimate policies and programmes, especially with regard to youth issues.

Upon return to their home countries, youth delegates often promote continued progress in the development and implementation of youth policies at the national level and encourage other young people to participate more fully in the development of their communities and nations. Youth delegates also spread awareness and knowledge about the work of the United Nations to young people in their home countries, making them important actors in promoting the aims and principles of the Organization.

Several Member States regularly include youth representatives in national delegations to the United Nations, with the number gradually increasing year by year. For a list of countries that have had youth delegates in the past and for more information on their work, please visit <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/youthrep.htm>

**YOUTH DELEGATE**

**THE ROLE OF A  
YOUTH DELEGATE**



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The role of a youth delegate to United Nations intergovernmental meetings differs from country to country. It is generally determined by the authority responsible for youth development in a country, in cooperation with the ministry of foreign affairs (or its equivalent) and a country's permanent mission to the United Nations. Youth delegates typically participate in the General Assembly and/or functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council. The youth delegates provide input to their delegation on issues related to youth and participate in the delegations' general work through attending a variety of meetings and informal negotiations, as well as providing assistance in covering general debates and drafting reports. When returning home, the youth delegates often conduct tours of schools, universities, youth organizations and other civil society organizations to share their experiences with other young people.



**YOUTH DELEGATES**

**AT  
THE UNITED NATIONS**



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Youth delegates may participate in several intergovernmental meetings at the United Nations. Most official youth delegates participate in the General Assembly, but some also attend functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Each country determines the amount of time its youth delegates spend at the United Nations General Assembly. Some countries enable their youth delegates to participate throughout the full duration of the General Assembly, which is generally in session from September to mid-December. However, the main focus of a youth delegate's work is usually the processes that take place in the Third Committee, the arm of the General Assembly that deliberates on social, cultural and humanitarian issues. Youth delegates regularly deliver statements on issues of concern to young people on behalf of their Governments in the Third Committee.



Matters that pertain specifically to youth currently fall under the agenda item entitled "Social development, including

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questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, persons with disabilities and the family". Generally, this agenda item is considered in the Third Committee during the month of October. However, this is subject to change based on the annual programmes of work adopted by Member States. The agenda of the General Assembly, including that of its Third Committee, is usually available in late summer at <http://www.un.org/ga>

Very often the youth delegates liaise with youth representatives from other countries to exchange information and build upon their experiences. They may be invited to speak at various side events or panel discussions organized by their mission, the United Nations Secretariat, or non-governmental organizations. In recent years, youth delegates have also jointly organized side events on issues of global concern to youth development.

Upon the arrival of the youth delegates, it is recommended that the mission provide a short briefing to clarify their role in the delegation. The United Nations Programme on Youth also provides an orientation to the United Nations system that is open to all national youth delegates.

## THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (CSocD)

The Commission for Social Development (CSocD) is a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The body is in charge of the follow-up to and implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and meets annually in February for approximately one and a half weeks. It covers key social development themes, such as poverty, employment and social integration, and the issue of youth falls within the latter. The Commission is organized in two-year cycles, comprising a review session and a policy session. Each year the Commission reviews relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action on the situ-



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ation of social groups, including youth. A youth resolution is traditionally adopted every two years. Typically, youth delegates that have been selected for the General Assembly also participate in the Commission for Social Development, since the work of the two bodies is closely interlinked.

The agenda of the Commission for Social Development is available at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/index.html>

## THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD)

The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) is responsible for reviewing progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration on the Environment and Development, as well as providing policy guidance to follow up on the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) at the local, national, regional and international levels. The CSD meets annually in New York during the month of May for two weeks, and is open to both governmental and non-governmental actors. Young people can participate either by being a member of their country's official delegation, or by representing an NGO through the children and youth major group. In recent years, the presence of youth on government delegations has been increasing. Participating NGOs must be in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), including those accredited on the CSD Roster. Major groups can participate in interactive dialogues, develop coordinated statements through the different caucus groups, and advocate for particular issues. The youth caucus is an international network of youth leaders from hundreds of organizations around the world that facilitates youth inputs to the CSD, through the children and youth major group, in the Commission's preparation phase and throughout the session.

The agenda of the Commission for Sustainable Development is available at [http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd\\_index.shtml](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_index.shtml)

# THE SELECTION THE SELECTION PROCESS



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The selection process for youth delegates varies from country to country. The selection process is frequently overseen by the government authority directly responsible for youth (e.g., ministry of education, department of youth and sport, ministry of cultural and social affairs, or equivalent). Since youth delegates represent the youth of their home countries, past youth delegates have stressed the importance of selecting a representative young person through a transparent process, often with the involvement of young people in the decision-making process. In many instances, the process is coordinated by the National Youth Council or similar youth structure that is able to transmit information to a diverse membership and organize a peer review process. Involvement of well-established youth structures also ensures continuity. In other instances, the relevant ministry circulates a call for applications and then shortlists candidates to be jointly reviewed and/or interviewed by representatives of both the Government and youth organizations. In several countries, previous youth delegates are included in the decision-making process, since they have first-hand experience of the skills and knowledge needed to be an effective youth delegate.

Because the youth delegates are expected to inform resolutions and other recommendations on youth policies and programmes, the most effective delegates are those who are well versed in current national youth policies, who are linked to youth organizations, structures or networks in their home country and who are knowledgeable on some of the key issues confronting their generation. Further, it is of importance that the selected youth delegates have knowledge of some basic English in order to be able to interact effectively at the intergovernmental meeting.

The inclusion of a youth delegate in a national delegation to a United Nations intergovernmental meeting involves intragovernmental cooperation and coordination. Once the delegate(s) has been selected, the name of the selected delegate(s) is then transmitted to the ministry of foreign affairs (or equivalent) and subsequently to the country's per-

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manent mission to the United Nations. It is also important to inform the United Nations Programme on Youth, at [youth@un.org](mailto:youth@un.org), so that the youth delegate can be appropriately directed to information, supported in understanding the work of the United Nations and informed of joint events with other selected youth delegates.

To ensure that the youth delegates have sufficient time to prepare, and thus make the most of their participation at the United Nations, it is recommended that selection take place well before the intergovernmental meeting is held. Ideally, the youth delegate should be selected at least six months prior to the meeting.

The logistical arrangements for youth delegates are typically handled by the foreign ministry or permanent mission, as they are experienced in bringing their nationals to functions at the United Nations. The associated costs are borne by the Government, either entirely or partially. The youth delegate may also be asked to raise funds required for his or her participation. Following the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 64/130, Governments may wish to make contributions to the United Nations Youth Fund to support the participation of youth delegates, in particular from developing countries.

For more information on how different countries select their youth delegates, please refer to the country profiles on pages 23 to 45.



**BEFORE THE**

**BEFORE  
THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
MEETINGS**



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## PREPARATIONS

Before attending intergovernmental meetings, it is helpful for youth delegates to become familiar with the work of the United Nations on youth development. It is useful to review recent youth resolutions and relevant reports of the Secretary-General. All this information is accessible via the United Nations Programme on Youth website at [www.un.org/youth](http://www.un.org/youth) or by request at [youth@un.org](mailto:youth@un.org). It is also very helpful to contact previous youth delegates, in order to learn more about their experiences.

Youth delegates often attend an in-country briefing with the ministry of youth or similar authority responsible for youth development. In some cases, youth representatives organize events, public or online discussions, consultations, school visits or other forms of outreach in order to create awareness of their role as a national youth delegate. In some countries, youth delegates' role includes travelling around their country, in order to gather information about young people's opinions and views. For more examples of activities that youth delegates around the world undertake before the intergovernmental meetings, please see the country profiles included in this guide.

Most years, a national youth council or similar organization hosts a preparatory meeting for all the national youth delegates of a specific region taking part in the General Assembly. In previous years, for example, the European Youth Forum has hosted a preparatory meeting for European youth delegates. Youth delegates from other regions around the world have participated through online discussions. The purpose of the preparatory meeting is to prepare the youth delegates for their work in the General Assembly and to meet other youth delegates. Some Governments support this work, either financially or by integrating these activities into their own programmes.

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## VISA PROCESS

The visa process differs by country. In most cases, the foreign ministry or the country's mission to the United Nations writes a support letter for the selected youth delegates that can be used for the visa application process. Sometimes the visa process takes only a week, but in most cases it takes significantly longer, adding to the importance of selecting the youth delegates well before the intergovernmental meeting takes place.







**WHEN RETURNING**

**WHEN RETURNING**

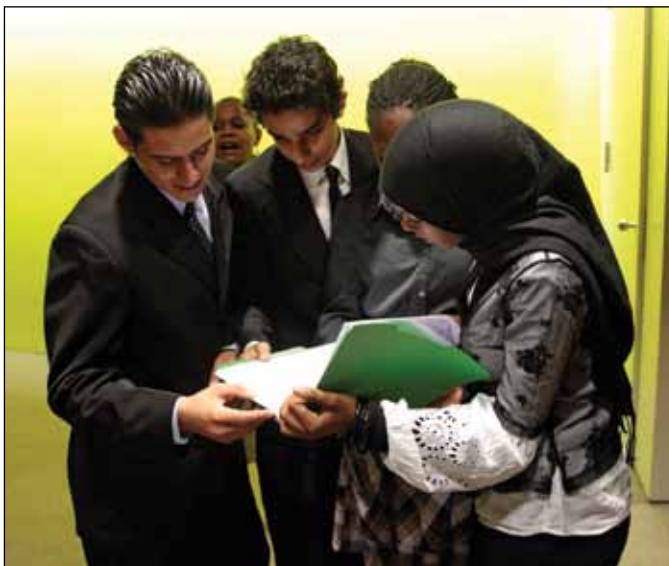
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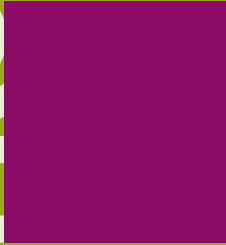
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Upon return from United Nations intergovernmental meeting, most youth delegates prepare a report to submit to the various ministries within the Government and/or make presentations to relevant departments. In some cases, they undertake outreach activities similar to those they undertook prior to their time in New York, in order to share their experience with other young people through youth organizations, schools, radio programmes and other media.

Some youth delegates continue to interact with their Governments to participate in implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth or to support related government programmes and projects. It is also very useful for the returning delegates to be involved in the preparation and briefing of the incoming youth delegates.



# COUNTRY PROFILES



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Countries that send youth delegates to intergovernmental meetings at the United Nations have varied arrangements when it comes to their national youth delegate programmes. In this section several national programmes are presented in detail, in order to provide a better understanding of how a youth delegate programme might be set up. The programmes presented here have been operational for at least three consecutive years, and are proven to have effective selection processes that could serve as examples for emerging youth delegate programmes. Each country seeking to establish a youth delegate programme will, however, need to tailor the programme to local specificities.



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## AUSTRALIA

**Existing since:**

1999

**Sending youth delegates to:**

The United Nations General Assembly

**Call for application:**

Late October

**Number of youth delegates:**

1

**Length of term:**

1 year, beginning end of March

**Visa process:**

G2 visa, received with a support letter from the Australian Mission to the United Nations

**Criteria for applying:**

- Between 16 and 24 years old
- Passion for youth empowerment and participation
- Strong knowledge of the United Nations and of international affairs
- Awareness of the Australian youth sector
- Past background in media, advocacy and consultation
- Able to devote the whole year to a domestic tour and participation in the United Nations General Assembly

**SELECTION PROCESS:** The selection process is organized by the United Nations Youth Association of Australia (UNYA) and follows a four-step process. The process begins with an expression of interest. UNYA advertises the position and consistently receives around 200 applications per year that respond to short-answer questions relating to youth advocacy and international relations. During the second step, shortlisted applicants are asked to think creatively and to strategically write an essay on what they can bring to the position of youth delegate. Thirdly, successful applicants from the second round are invited to an interview where they are asked questions on their experience with media, advocacy, consultation and youth work. Interviews are recorded in each Australian state and territory and are then screened by the UNYA National Executive. From the recorded interviews, UNYA shortlists five candidates to be viewed by the Australian Government's Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade

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(DFAT). The final step consists of DFAT's selection and endorsement of the successful youth delegate. UNYA supports the youth delegates with their domestic consultations and advocacy, while DFAT is responsible for supporting the representative's work at the General Assembly.

**BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The youth delegate has a high-profile role in the Australian youth community and undertakes a five-month consultation tour of all Australian states and territories. The objective of this tour is to capture the local and global concerns of young Australians.

During the tour, the youth delegate performs a wide range of educational activities, including educating young people on domestic and international political processes. This includes raising awareness among young people on how they can convey their views to the Australian Government and on how they can support the goals of the United Nations. The youth delegate also equips young people with tools and information on how they can get involved in local and global campaigns.

A vital part of the youth delegate's work is engaging voiceless young people in the community, including young people who are marginalized and come from disadvantaged backgrounds. In this work, the youth delegate seeks to improve the self-esteem of young people by delivering motivational speeches and participating in workshops on youth participation.

Throughout the domestic tour, the youth delegate forms strong relationships with members of the national Government, in particular the Ministry for Youth, state governments and other political actors. Through these relationships, the youth delegate has a good platform through which to advocate the concerns of the diverse youth s/he has engaged. Ultimately, the consultations and advocacy work help develop the youth delegate's official statement to the Third Committee of the General Assembly.

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**AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The Australian youth delegate works within the Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations from mid-September to early December. The main responsibility of the youth delegate is to convey the voices of Australian children and young people in General Assembly forums and events. This includes delivering a statement to the Third Committee of the General Assembly based on the findings of the national tour. The youth delegate also helps to negotiate resolutions in the Third Committee on behalf of the Australian Mission, has the opportunity to organize side events for delegations and contributes to raising the profile of youth participation within UN organs and agencies.

**WHEN RETURNING HOME:** Follow-up on the work within Australia and to the General Assembly is one of the most critical parts of the youth delegate's role. The youth delegate's follow-up work includes a "Reporting Back Tour" in order to undertake a substantial evaluation process and support to government and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of youth resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. The youth delegate delivers educational workshops and inspirational talks to diverse youth audiences to inform young people, especially those visited throughout the national tour, on how they were represented at the General Assembly.

**FUNDING:** The Australian Government organizes and pays for the youth delegate's accommodation during the General Assembly. All other costs, including the national tour and flight tickets, are funded by the youth delegate through his/her own fund-raising.

**CONTACT:** To learn more about the selection process and the Australian youth delegate programme, please contact the UNYA National Vice-President for Youth Representation at [vp youthrep@unya.org.au](mailto:vp youthrep@unya.org.au) or visit [www.youthrep.org.au](http://www.youthrep.org.au)



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## GERMANY

**Existing since:**

2005

**Sending youth delegates to:**

The United Nations General Assembly, the Commission for Social Development and the Commission on Sustainable Development

**Call for application:**

Early November

**Number of youth delegates:**

4 (two youth delegates to the General Assembly who typically also participate in the Commission for Social Development (CSocD) and two delegates to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD))

**Length of term:**

1 year for the General Assembly.

Youth delegates are selected in late January/early February

For the CSD, one youth delegate with a 2-year mandate is selected each year in August/September, so that the German delegation always includes one experienced and one new youth delegate

**Criteria for applying:**

- Between 18 and 25 years old
- Fluency in English
- Experience with youth work is desirable
- Must be able to devote a considerable amount of time to youth delegate work

**SELECTION PROCESS:** The selection process is organized by the German National Youth Council (DNK – Deutsches Nationalkomitee für internationale Jugendarbeit) together with the German United Nations Association (DGVN – Deutsche Gesellschaft für die Vereinten Nationen). In response to a call for applications, interested candidates submit a motivation letter and CV. Shortlisted candidates have two weeks to submit an essay on questions regarding youth topics discussed at the United Nations. The questions are typically taken from the toolkit for the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY). Around 12 candidates are then selected for a telephone interview containing general questions in both German and English about the candidate, the candidate's motivation and his/her knowledge about the United Nations and the WPAY. Six candidates are selected

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for a two-day final selection process that takes place in Berlin. The finals include interviews and role playing. The two youth delegates are then selected together with the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

**BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The youth delegates travel around the country to visit local youth initiatives, youth organizations, schools, universities, political parties, NGOs, Model United Nations Conferences, expert conferences, educational centres for disadvantaged youth, and other events where young people are present. The main aim of this tour is to have a comprehensive consultation process, which enables young people in Germany to voice their views and demands, as well as share information about their lives. Furthermore, the youth delegates inform youth in Germany about the work of the United Nations. During the tour, the youth delegates attend workshops, deliver speeches and take part in panel discussions. They also meet with the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Federal Foreign Office to learn more about the work of these institutions and to establish contacts with their staff.

Contact with previous youth delegates is essential, and several days are spent with them in order to transfer knowledge. Furthermore, the youth delegates prepare by undertaking a great deal of background research. This includes reading resolutions, reports of the Secretary-General and national position papers of youth organizations, and collecting the inputs from the national tour. The youth delegates also attend a preparatory meeting for youth delegates organized by the European Youth Forum, and take part in online discussions with other youth delegates. During the last three years it has been common that the youth delegates take a six-month break from their studies/jobs in order to make the outcome of the programme as successful as possible.

**AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The German youth delegates are advisers to their national delegation. In their personal

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## GERMAN YOUTH DELEGATES TO THE CSD

The CSD youth delegate programme is run by the German Federal Youth Council (DBJR), with strong support from the Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. After a call for applications that takes place in late summer, interested candidates submit their motivation letter and CV to the DBJR. Shortlisted candidates are invited for a personal interview and, based on those interviews, the youth delegates are selected. The CSD youth delegates usually do not conduct a nationwide tour before the CSD, but are instead responsible for keeping in contact with all youth organizations around Germany to include their inputs in formulating a joint German youth position for the discussions at the CSD.

While at the CSD, the German youth delegates are part of the official delegation as well as members of the children and youth major group.

When returning home, the youth delegates undertake a national tour during the summer together with the youth delegates to the General Assembly to discuss the topics at the CSD with youth around the country.

The youth delegates normally attend CSD for two weeks and are funded by the Ministry for the Environment. In recent years, the German Government has also funded the participation of two African youth delegates at the CSD.

capacity, they deliver a speech to the Third Committee of the General Assembly on behalf of German youth, and attend informal consultations on resolutions concerning youth. Furthermore, they arrange side events at the German Mission and take part in various meetings. The youth delegates usually attend the General Assembly for three weeks. The youth

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delegates to the General Assembly typically also participate in the Commission for Social Development (CSocD), which takes place in the beginning of February.

**WHEN RETURNING HOME:** When returning home, the youth delegates report back to the national Parliament about the outcome of the General Assembly and what actions should be taken in the national context with regard to youth policies. The youth delegates also report back to the National Youth Council and its member organizations as well as to the German United Nations Association. Finally, they also go through an extensive knowledge transfer process with the youth delegates of the subsequent year.

**FUNDING:** The trip and accommodation for the final stage of the selection process is covered by the German National Committee for International Youth Work (DNK) and the German United Nations Association (DGVN). During the national tour, the inviting organizations cover the travel expenses and accommodation if necessary. Apart from that, the German youth delegates raise funds for special activities and events. Participation in the preparatory meeting of youth delegates organized by the European Youth Forum is covered by the National Youth Council and the European Youth Forum. The trip and accommodation for the youth delegates during the General Assembly is covered by the DNK and the DGVN.

**CONTACT:** To learn more about the selection process and the German youth delegate programme, please visit [www.jugenddelegierte.de](http://www.jugenddelegierte.de)

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## NETHERLANDS

**Existing since:**  
1970

**Sending youth delegates to:**  
The United Nations General Assembly, the Commission for Social Development (CSocD), the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Youth Forum

**Call for application:**  
Beginning of August

**Number of youth delegates:**  
5 (two for the General Assembly and the Commission for Social Development (CSocD), two for the Com-

mission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and one for UNESCO)

**Length of term:**  
2 years for the General Assembly, CSocD and CSD and 1 year for UNESCO. Youth delegates are selected in October. During the first year, the youth delegates take on an active role by attending intergovernmental meetings and working on national projects. During the second year, the youth delegates act as mentors and support the next youth delegate

**Criteria for applying:**  
Between 18 and 25 years old

**Visa process:**  
G2 visa

**SELECTION PROCESS:** The selection process is organized by the Dutch National Youth Council (DNYC). In response to a call for applications, interested candidates submit their CV and answer a few questions in an online questionnaire on what they would do if they were selected as a youth delegate. In September, the DNYC selects 16 young people who qualify for the next round. The second round consists of a debate, where groups of four people debate against each other on two different topics. The six best debaters are chosen by a jury including a previous youth delegate and representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the United Nations Association of the Netherlands. In the third round, the six selected young people compete against each other in a week-long election process. Everyone in the Netherlands can vote either through the Internet, by ballot

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paper or by sending text messages. The three candidates that receive the most votes are selected for the finals. The final takes place on 24 October, United Nations Day. The three finalists hold debates and try to gather as many votes as possible. Through the DNYC, the finalists get a small amount of money to use for their campaigns, which include leaflets, articles in newspapers and posters. People can vote either by being present at the final or by sending text messages. The person with the most votes is the winner and becomes the next youth delegate.

**BEFORE THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING:** The youth delegate travels around the country to meet young people, attend conferences organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, participate in debates and give speeches at various conferences. The youth delegate also receives support from the senior youth delegate, reads background documents and participates in preparatory online consultations with other youth delegates. S/he also attends a preparatory meeting organized by the European Youth Forum.

**AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The youth delegate is an official member of the national delegation and delivers a statement to the Third Committee of the General Assembly. The youth delegate also participates in informal consultations on resolutions concerning youth, and organizes side events together with other youth delegates. The Dutch youth delegate is normally at the General Assembly for three weeks.

**WHEN RETURNING HOME:** The youth delegate reports back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Dutch National Youth Council. The youth delegate also participates in various lectures, debates and workshops and gives speeches in order to inform as many youth as possible about his/her experience at the intergovernmental meeting.

**FUNDING:** The Dutch National Youth Council covers travel expenses within the Netherlands. The European Youth

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Forum pays costs related to the preparatory meeting. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs covers expenses related to the intergovernmental meeting, including accommodation, flight and food.

### **NETHERLANDS YOUTH DELEGATES TO UNESCO AND THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The youth delegates participating in the UNESCO Youth Forum undergo a selection process similar to that for those attending the General Assembly. After a call for applications, interested candidates have to submit a personal letter and CV. Shortlisted candidates are then selected for an interview with the DNYC. After that, the member organizations of the DNYC vote for the candidate they want to see as the next youth delegate. The candidate who receives the most votes from the member organizations becomes the next youth delegate to UNESCO. The youth delegates attending the CSD are also chosen through a few rounds of interviews conducted by the DNYC. The final takes place at a sustainable development event, where those attending vote for the candidate they would like to see as a youth delegate.

**CONTACT:** To learn more about the selection process and the Dutch youth delegate programme, please visit the Dutch Youth Council at [www.njr.nl/](http://www.njr.nl/)

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## NORWAY

**Existing since:**

1971

**Sending youth delegates to:**

The United Nations General Assembly

**Call for application:**

Beginning of February

**Number of youth delegates:**

2

**Length of term:**

1 year. Youth delegates are selected at the beginning of March

**Criteria for applying:**

- Nominated by a youth organization
- Experience working with youth organizations
- Age 26 or below

**SELECTION PROCESS:** The selection process is organized by the Norwegian Children and Youth Council (LNU). In response to a call for applications, youth organizations around Norway can nominate candidates. One candidate is selected from one of the political parties' youth organizations through a rotating system, and one youth delegate is selected from one of the other youth organizations. The nominated candidates have to send their CV and a motivation letter stating what the candidate would do as a youth delegate if selected, together with the nomination letter from their organization to the LNU. Successful candidates are then invited for an interview conducted by a staff member and a board member of the LNU. On the basis of these interviews, two candidates are suggested to the board of the LNU, which makes the final decision.

**BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The youth delegates participate in the United Nations working group of the Norwegian Children and Youth Council, and take part in the Council's board meetings in order to learn more about the work. The youth delegates also meet with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, previous youth delegates and various politi-



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cians. They also participate in the preparatory meeting organized by the European Youth Forum.

**AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The youth delegates are official members of their national delegations. They deliver a statement to the Third Committee in the General Assembly and speak on behalf of Norway in the informal consultations on youth resolutions. The youth delegates are at the General Assembly for two weeks.

**WHEN RETURNING HOME:** The youth delegates write a report to the Norwegian Children and Youth Council. They also share their experiences with youth organizations around Norway.

**FUNDING:** Most of the costs for the youth delegate are covered by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. About 10 per cent of the total cost is covered by the LNU.

**CONTACT:** To learn more about the selection process and the Norwegian youth delegate programme, please visit the Norwegian Children and Youth Council at [www.lnu.no](http://www.lnu.no)

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## ROMANIA

**Existing since:**

2006

**Sending youth delegates to:**

The United Nations General Assembly and the Commission for Social Development (CSocD)

**Call for application:**

End of July, beginning of August

**Number of youth delegates:**

2 (gender-balanced, the youth delegates selected for the General Assembly also participate in the CSocD)

**Length of term:**

1 year. Youth delegates are selected at the end of August

**Criteria for applying:**

- Romanian citizenship
- Between 18 and 25 years old
- Have spent at least one year out of the last three years in Romania
- Able to spend the year of the mandate in Romania

**Visa process:**

G2 visa, supported by the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**SELECTION PROCESS:** The selection process is organized by the Romanian National Youth Council in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In response to a call for applications, interested candidates submit their CV, a motivation letter, a letter of recommendation and a 1,500-word-long essay on a preset topic regarding youth. Successful candidates are then selected for a semi-final, where an interview is conducted via Skype on such topics as youth policies and youth programmes at the national, European and international levels, as well as questions regarding the candidate's academic and professional background.

The final rounds, for which six candidates are selected, comprise a public debate with negotiations on youth priority areas as defined in the World Programme of Action for Youth, and a question-and-answer session. The jury consists of representatives from the Romanian National Youth Council, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the United Nations Information Centre and various youth NGOs.

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**BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The youth delegates take part in various briefing sessions held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the United Nations Information Centre. The youth delegates also attend a one-day briefing on youth policies and programmes organized by the Romanian Youth Council. Furthermore, the youth delegates conduct background research on issues related to youth, and have online discussions and consultations with young people around Romania. They also participate in online discussions with other youth delegates prior to the General Assembly and the Commission for Social Development.

**AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The youth delegates are official members of their national delegation and take part as advisers. The youth delegates deliver a statement to the Third Committee and participate in informal negotiations on resolutions concerning youth. They also organize a side event at the Romanian Mission, and write briefing reports on youth-related topics. The youth delegates attend both the General Assembly and the Commission for Social Development for two weeks.

**WHEN RETURNING HOME:** Upon their return, the youth delegates report back to the National Youth Council and meet with various stakeholders and NGOs that work on youth policies. The youth delegates also travel around the country for an information campaign visiting universities and high schools, informing young people about their experiences as youth delegates and the work of the United Nations. They also brief the incoming youth delegates.

**FUNDING:** The Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs covers the accommodation during intergovernmental meetings, while the Ministry of Youth and Sports covers the flight tickets. Other costs related to the role of the Romanian youth delegates are covered by the youth delegates themselves. The youth delegates are advised and supported by the National Youth Council to undertake fund-raising.

**CONTACT:** To learn more about the selection process and the Romanian youth delegate programme, please visit [www.unyouthdelegate.ro](http://www.unyouthdelegate.ro)

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## SWEDEN

**Existing since:**

1999

**Sending youth delegates to:**

The United Nations General Assembly (GA) and the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)

**Call for application:**

Beginning of November

**Number of youth delegates:**

2 (one for the General Assembly and one for the Commission on Sustainable Development)

**Length of term:**

1 year. Youth delegates are selected in February

**Criteria for applying:**

- Nominated by a member organization of the Swedish National Youth Council
- Between 18 and 25 years old
- Fluent in English
- Insight into and understanding of youth perspectives
- Strong active background in youth organizations
- Experience with and knowledge about the Swedish National Youth Council (LSU)
- Willing to be a resource person for the member organizations of the LSU

**SELECTION PROCESS:** The selection process is organized by the National Council of Swedish Youth Organizations (LSU). The selection process is the same for both the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development. In response to a call for applications made through the LSU's electronic newsletter, interested member organizations of the LSU nominate one person to represent their organization. The nomination includes submitting a letter of motivation, a CV and an official nomination letter from the member organization. The candidates who qualify for the next round are called to a telephone interview with members from the LSU board. Successful candidates are then selected for a face-to-face interview. The final candidates are selected by the board of the LSU.

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**BEFORE THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING:** The youth delegates meet with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the LSU and former youth delegates to gather inputs about the work of the United Nations. They undertake research of old resolutions and other relevant background information. The youth delegates also write articles, take part in various conferences and participate in preparatory meetings traditionally organized by the European Youth Forum. The youth delegates also participate in online discussions with the other youth delegates prior to the intergovernmental meeting.

**AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The youth delegate's role is to be a resource for the Swedish Mission on youth perspectives, and s/he is asked to deliver a statement to the General Assembly's Third Committee. S/he also takes part in informal consultations on youth resolutions and follows other discussions on topics covered during the General Assembly. The youth delegate is at the General Assembly for two weeks.

**AT THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** The youth delegate is part of the official delegation but also represents youth as part of the children and youth major group (Children and Youth Caucus). The youth delegate attends delegation meetings (and the European coordination meetings), follows consultations and assists in the work of the Permanent Mission of Sweden. The work (for the Children and Youth Caucus) is more dependent on the priorities of the caucus and can include speechwriting, organizing side events and writing articles.

**WHEN RETURNING HOME:** When returning home, the youth delegates follow up with a report to the LSU to brief it

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on the experiences gained at the intergovernmental meeting. The youth delegates travel around to visit schools and member organizations of the LSU to share experiences and the outcomes of youth resolutions at the United Nations.

**FUNDING:** The Swedish Government and the National Youth Council of Swedish Youth Organizations cover expenses related to the preparatory meeting organized by the European Youth Forum. The Swedish Government also covers expenses related to the intergovernmental meeting, including the cost of travel, food and accommodation.

**CONTACT:** To learn more about the selection process and the Swedish youth delegate programme, please visit the National Council of Swedish Youth Organizations (LSU) at [www.lsu.se](http://www.lsu.se)

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## SWITZERLAND

**Existing since:**

2003

**Sending youth delegates to:**

The United Nations General Assembly, the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Alliance of Civilizations Forum, the UNFCCC Conference of Parties, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Youth Forum and the Human Rights Council in Geneva

**Call for application:**

November/December

**Number of youth delegates:**

3. Each year the Swiss National Youth Council together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs decides which three conferences to send youth delegates to

**Length of term:**

2 years. During the first year the youth delegate takes on an active

role by attending intergovernmental meetings and working on national projects, including awareness-raising activities to inform Swiss youth about the UN. During the second year the youth delegate acts as a mentor and support for the next youth delegate

**Criteria for applying:**

- Availability for 2 years
- Knowledge of at least two national languages (French, German, Italian or Rhaeto-Romanic), one active, one passive, as well as English
- Background in working with youth organizations or youth projects as a volunteer
- Declared interest and knowledge of international affairs and the United Nations
- Between 18 and 25 years old
- Commitment to work approximately 6 hours per week for the project

**Visa process:**

A2 visa

**SELECTION PROCESS:** The selection process is organized by the Swiss National Youth Council (SNYC). In response to a call for applications, interested candidates submit a motivation letter and a CV to the SNYC. A certain number of candidates are then invited to an interview with representatives from the Foreign Ministry and the SNYC and former youth del-

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legates. The interview contains questions in German, French and English about personal motivation, experience in volunteer work, the work of the United Nations and youth issues. After the interview, three youth delegates are selected, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the SNYC, decides which intergovernmental meeting the youth delegates will be attending. Normally, each youth delegate can attend one meeting. The selection committee tries to select a gender- and language-balanced team. The youth delegates then receive several briefings from the SNYC, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant institutions in order to prepare them for their role as youth delegates and to inform them about youth issues and the work of the different departments in the area of youth.

**BEFORE THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING:** The youth delegates travel around the country to visit secondary schools, NGOs and youth organizations to organize workshops, meetings and conferences. Each year the three youth delegates select a common theme in regard to youth issues, and work together to plan the national activities. The youth delegates also prepare their position, together with the SNYC, prepare a statement to the General Assembly (when possible), familiarize themselves with earlier resolutions on youth, participate in online dialogues and take part in preparatory meetings with the Swiss delegation. The SNYC supports the youth delegates throughout the year. The youth delegates meet every two months with the SNYC to inform it about their ongoing work. The youth delegate attending the General Assembly takes part in a preparatory meeting that is traditionally organized by the European Youth Forum.

**AT THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING:** The youth delegate is an official member of the national delegation and works on youth-related issues. S/he participates in informal consultations on youth resolutions, attends other discussions, and can usually deliver a statement to the Third Committee of the General Assembly. During the General Assem-



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bly, the youth delegate also organizes a side event and a working breakfast at the Swiss Mission.

**WHEN RETURNING HOME:** When returning home, the role of the youth delegates is to share the experiences from the intergovernmental meeting through workshops and forums with various NGOs, schools and youth organizations as well as to follow up and report on the discussions at the intergovernmental meeting. The youth delegates also have the responsibility to support, select and act as a mentor for the next youth delegates during the following year.

**FUNDING:** The Swiss Foreign Ministry covers some expenses related to the activities in Switzerland, as well as the cost of travel and accommodation for the intergovernmental meeting. The Swiss National Youth Council covers the costs for national projects. The SNYC receives its funds from different foundations.

The youth delegates have to cover a part of their subsistence expenses, as well as telephone use while out on the road or at the intergovernmental meeting.

**CONTACT:** To learn more about the selection process and the Swiss youth delegate programme please visit the Swiss National Youth Council at [www.youthrep.ch](http://www.youthrep.ch)

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## THAILAND

**Existing since:**

2007

**Sending youth delegates to:**

The United Nations General Assembly

**Call for application:**

January

**Number of youth delegates:**

2 (gender-balanced)

**Length of term:**

2 weeks during the General Assembly

**Criteria for applying:**

- No older than 24 years
- Experience working on youth issues
- Some English required

**Visa process:**

G2 visa

**SELECTION PROCESS:** The selection process is organized by the Bureau of International Cooperation, which is part of the Ministry of Education. The process begins with a call for applications. Interested candidates have to submit a short essay on human rights and children's rights, a letter of motivation, CV, grade transcript and, if they are students, proof of enrolment. Those who qualify for the next round are selected for a group discussion, during which the selected candidates have to debate an unknown subject related to general human rights issues in front of a jury including representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Bureau of International Cooperation and one NGO. The most successful candidates are then selected for an interview with questions concerning the United Nations in general in both English and Thai.

**BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The youth delegates meet with the Bureau of International Cooperation and take part in the delegation's preparatory activities before attending the General Assembly. The youth delegates also prepare the statement to be delivered at the Third Com-

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mittee of the General Assembly and read background material related to youth, such as reports, national policies and earlier resolutions.

**AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** The youth delegates deliver a speech to the Third Committee, take part in informal negotiations, attend meetings, take notes and organize side events.

**WHEN RETURNING HOME:** When returning home, the role of the youth delegates is to share the experiences from the General Assembly with other youth and to write a report about their experiences.

**FUNDING:** The Thai Government finances the trip, accommodation and subsistence expenses during the intergovernmental meeting.

INFORMATION

FURTHER  
INFORMATION



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**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE  
INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF YOUTH, VISIT:**

[social.un.org/youthyear](https://social.un.org/youthyear)  
[facebook.com/UNyouthyear](https://facebook.com/UNyouthyear)  
[twitter.com/UNyouthyear](https://twitter.com/UNyouthyear)

**Or contact:**

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