

The Annual Young European Councils

The annual Young European Councils (YEC) are international conferences focused on uniting young leaders from each European Union Member State who are determined to make their voices heard. The aim of the YEC is to provide actionable and innovative input to European policy making and, for this reason, the conference results are discussed with senior policy makers from several sectors. The Young European Council goes beyond simulation games. The YEC 2015 won the 2016 European Charlemagne Youth Prize for the third best youth project in the European Union. The YEC 2016 was hosted under the high patronage of both the European Parliament and the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The Young European Council 2017

“We are not tomorrow’s leaders; we are the young leaders of today.”

The YEC 2017 will take place in Brussels, Belgium from October 16 to October 19. The conference is expecting over 90 participants and will feature three Councils:

- Council on labour market affairs, including the labour market for young people;
- Council on home affairs, including migration;
- Council on digital and communication affairs, including combatting disinformation.

The programme spans one week and includes three elements.

1. Negotiations: The main focus of the conference is to work with other delegates to achieve a Final Communiqué with innovative yet actionable policy recommendations for European policy making.
2. Meetings: Delegates meet with senior stakeholders, e.g. framed by YEL’s Eat & Meet programme.
3. Knowledge and Skills: The YEC yields critical skills to succeed in today’s labour markets and society.

Select Previous Guest Speakers

- Ms. Georgieva – VP European Commission
- Ms. Schumacher – Director UN Women
- Mr. Markkula – President CoR
- Ms. Hedegaard – European Commission
- HE Ambassador Frøysnes – Head of Office CoE
- HE Ambassador Thompson – Deputy Director IOM



From left to right: Mr. Geran Kaai, the Head of Security and Justice Department of the Permanent Representation of the Netherlands to the EU; Mr. Massimiliano Paolucci, Head of Brussels office of the World Bank Group; Ms. Renate Nikolay, the Head of Cabinet for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality; Mr. Tillmann Heidel, President of Young European Leadership; Chair of YEC16 Heads of State and Government Council; Mr. Markku Markkula, President of the Committee of Regions; Chairs of YEC 2016 External Affairs, Gender Equality and Home Affairs Councils with all delegates at the Opening Ceremony of YEC 2016.

Young European Leadership

Young European Leadership (YEL) is an international non-profit and non-partisan organisation dedicated to empowering young leaders and future decision makers from Europe and beyond. One of the responsibilities of YEL is to recruit and train the official delegations of the EU to the annual Y20 Summits, the official young counterpart to the G20 Summits.

YEL conceptualised and organises the annual YECs. The conference is realised after over 11 months of voluntary work. The participants are recruited in a competitive application process across the European Union, focusing on innovation, leadership skills and general background.

Additional Resources

For more information about YEL and the YEC, please visit younglead.eu/yec. For more information about YEL’s Eat & Meet programme, please visit younglead.eu/eam.