



## What is the YEP programme?

The Young Elected Politicians Programme (YEPs) is a network of politicians who are no older than 40 and hold a mandate at regional or local level in the EU.

The purpose of the network is to:

- exchange best practice among local and regional politicians
- network with fellow young elected politicians from the EU in person and on [YEPcommunity.eu](https://yepcommunity.eu)
- understand and seize opportunities offered by the European Union for local and regional areas
- speak for EU regions and municipalities in the European legislative process
- gain visibility in European circles.

## YEP programme 2022

The call for application to join the YEP Programm in 2022 is now open. Candidates can apply by filling [in this form until the 8<sup>th</sup> April](#).

The activities of the YEP Programme 2022 will start in May. As 2022 is the European Year of Youth, many activities will include a youth dimension and the members of the YEP Programme will receive more visibility in actions related to this topic.

To become part of this network, politicians must:

- apply for the [annual call of the YEP Programme](#) that is published each year;
- hold a democratic mandate as an elected politician at regional or local level in a Member State of the European Union;
- be no older than 40 (born after 1 January 1982);
- not be a CoR member or alternate;
- have a good level of English (since, for organisational purposes, events will be held in English only).

## What's next

- March 2022: Summit of cities and regions

YEPs are invited to participate in the European Summit of cities and regions taking place on 3 and March 2022 in Marseille. [More information on the Summit are available here](#).

- Kick-off of the YEP Programme 2022
- Dedicated info session on the European Green Deal
- Dedicated info session on "Bringing Europe closer to its people"
- Dedicated info session on cohesion policy
- Monthly networking sessions

# CoR members and YEPs

One of the aim of the YEP programme is to put in contact CoR members and YEPs. This happens through different channels:

- members participating as speakers to YEP sessions;
- meeting with CoR rapporteurs. For example, YEPs had the opportunity to meet with Vincent Chauvet Kate Feeney, Donatella Porzi and Kata Tüttö to contribute in the consultations carried over for the preparation of their opinions;
- political groups and national delegations can invite YEPs to their meetings;
- YEPs invited as speakers and participants to CoR plenary sessions and meetings of CoR commissions;
- Communication actions.

## Brief history

The YEP Programme started in 2019 in the Summit of Regions and Cities in Bucharest. Since then, young elected politicians from across the EU have been invited to different events (see list further down).

In 2020, the European Committee of the Regions developed an online platform dedicated to Young Elected Politicians (YEPs) who have been taking part in the YEP Programme to ensure a continuity of the networking opportunities for YEPs between events.

The platform was delivered on 9 May 2020. It offers YEPs:

- A closed online space for discussion and exchange of ideas
- An opportunity for YEPs to keep in touch with and meet other YEPs
- A trusted source of EU information, access to community managers for questions and information
- A calendar of activities for YEPs
- A monthly newsletter with an interview to discover fellow YEPs and CoR members and their work

In 2020, the programme was also further structured with the launch of a yearly call for applications for 150 new YEPs to integrate the YEP network. The YEP programme 2021 started in May, with 163 new YEPs.

So far, 534 YEPs took part in the YEP Programme. Of which over 300 joined YEPCommunity.eu.

## 2021 events

- [YEP Forum: young local leaders write their recommendations for the future of Europe](#)

On 17 and 18 November 2021, the participants of the Young Elected Politicians (YEPs) Programme gathered in a two day forum to draft recommendations on key priorities for the European Committee of the Regions (CoR). The recommendations were presented to the CoR political assembly at the CoR December Plenary Session (1 and 2 December 2021) in view of the CoR contribution to the Conference on the Future of Europe and of the debate on the 2022 European Year of Youth.

- [Young leaders for the future of Europe](#)

Two YEPs and two MEPs engaged in a dynamic discussion to reflect on the difficulties, improvements and possible measures that are linked to the most important issues of our European society: Mr Alin Mituta (RO/Renew E.), Member of the European Parliament; Ms Lena Düpont (DE, EPP), Member of the European Parliament; Ms Céline Geissmann (FR/PES), Deputy Mayor of Strasbourg and participant of the 2021 YEPs Programme; and Ms Susanna Croci (IT/ECR), City councillor of the Municipality of Venegono Superiore (province of Varese) and participant of the 2021 YEPs Programme.

- [Cohesion as a value – Benefits and costs for young people to transitioning to a post Covid-19 world](#)

In the margins of the external Bureau of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) in Slovenia, the Young Elected Politicians (YEPs) Programme organised an event on Cohesion Policy with the participants of the 2021

YEPs Programme and the YEPs Alumni. As one of the main topics of the 2021 YEPs Programme, YEPs engaged in a debate with the President of the CoR, CoR Members, Slovenian politicians, representatives of the European Commission and Eurofund on the importance of "cohesion as a value" for Europe, especially for the recovery phase from the pandemic crisis. A special focus was dedicated to young people, their needs, expectations and the externalities of the post COVID-economy for the young generation. Social rights in the digital economy was an additional topic for discussion. It will help boosting the recovery while ensuring that no one is left behind.

- [YEPs meet the High-Level Group on European Democracy](#)

The High-Level Group on European Democracy (HLG) is an independent advisory body, set up to develop innovative ideas on improving European democracy and the impact and influence of local and regional authorities within the context of the CoR's participation in the Conference on the Future of Europe.

This event has contributed to the reflections on European Democracy in the context of the Conference. It enabled an exchange among the members of the HLG on European Democracy and the participants of the YEP Programme. The focus was on democracy and the future of Europe from the particular perspective of the younger generations of local and regional politicians.

- [Young Local Leaders for a climate neutral Europe: implementing the renovation wave](#)

Representatives of the European Committee of the Regions, the Covenant of Mayors Initiative, the European Investment Bank, the European Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) and the European City Facility Initiative will debated and provided the participants of the Young Elected Politicians Programme with the key information, tools and financial support opportunities for local and regional authorities to reduce energy consumption and greenhouses emissions.

- [Future of Europe-What the next generation expects](#)

More than 100 people including Young Elected Politicians (YEPs), CoR members, young politicians from Azores and Madeira, students and civil society representatives participated in an online event on the Future of Europe and the Conference on the Future of Europe. This event marked the political opening of the Young Elected Politicians (YEPs) Programme 2021.

- [For more women in politics - International Women's Day 2021](#)

Members of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), Members of the European Parliament and participants in the CoR Young Elected Politicians Programme (YEPs) have gathered on International Women's Day 2021 to highlight the urgent need to address the democratic deficit constituted by the under-representation of women in this particular field.

## Communication actions

Online communication related to the YEP programme uses the hashtag #YoungLocalLeaders.

### Social media

- For more women in politics: A series of quotes in a carousel [on Instagram](#).
- "YEP, this is my city!" Started in April 2021, and features one YEP per month. As an example, YEP Alessandra Medici: [on Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

### Videos

- For more women in politics: Video [featuring CoR Member Daniela Ballico and YEP Emma Murphy](#) and Video [featuring CoR Member Jelena Drenjanin and YEP Sandra Doevedands](#)
- [Instagram stories with 6 YEPs](#)

6 YEPS from across Europe speak about the YEP Programme.

- [Covid19 – Young Local Leaders United](#)

All local and regional leaders are working together with EU and national authorities to fight the [#CoronaVirus](#) and help all the citizens of the EU. Discover their message in the videos.

## Podcasts

- **Episode 9:** [Local leaders for the future of Europe #2021](#)

The 9th episode focuses on the democracy crisis and what can be done about it at the local level. Two young elected politicians – Gregor Unfried, a city councillor in St. Pölten, Austria, and Alba Gordó Vilaseca, a city councillor in Sant Cugat del Vallès, Spain – told us about what they do in their constituencies to strengthen democracy, how they include citizens in decision making, about the importance of leading by example, and more.

- **Episode 8:** [Local Leaders for cohesion #2021](#)

In this 8th episode, we talked with young elected politicians Mateusz Cebula, city councillor in Dębica, Poland, and Sandra Schneeloch, city councillor in Cologne, Germany. They shared with us their tips on accessing the EU funding, examples of successful projects, as well as their vision for the future. Even though they come from two very different cities, they are equally committed to keep working to strengthen cohesion in their communities.

- **Episode 7:** [Local leaders for climate neutral cities](#)

Young elected politicians Emilia Wasielewska, city councillor in Konin, Poland, and Manolis Mavrommatis deputy mayor in the municipality of Dorida, Greece, show how their generation strive to deliver the European Green Deal locally by leading youth groups that are committed to make their own territories greener, cleaner and more welcoming. They discuss how their cities are tackling climate change at the local level.

- **Episode 6:** [Local leaders for gender #2021](#)

In this edition of the podcast, Inês Xavier from Portugal, Lauda Guidicelli from France and Elisenda Alamany from Spain share their personal experience, talk about barriers that block women from deciding to seek political decision-making positions or that blocks them when they are in, and how to overcome them.

- **Episode 5:** [Local leaders for the European green deal](#)

The Local Leaders for Europe podcast is a series of interviews conducted at the European Committee of the Regions (CoR), the EU's assembly of regional and local authorities. In this edition of the podcast, two Young Elected Politicians, Astrid Aller from Denmark and Monika Andrasek from Hungary, share their views on how to engage citizens in the fight for climate neutrality.

- **Episode 4:** [Local leaders for cohesion](#)

In this edition of the podcast, two Young Elected Politicians, Francesca Pizziolo from Italy and Anna-Kristiina Mikkonen from Finland, explain how cohesion policies and funds are used in their cities and regions.

- **Episode 3:** [Local leaders for the future of Europe](#)

In this edition of the podcast, two Young Elected Politicians, Elena Alvarez Brasero from Spain and Sophia Kircher from Austria, are sharing their views on what the future of Europe should look like.

- **Episode 2 :** [Local leaders for Gender](#)

For the second episode, Local leaders for gender, young elected politicians have been invited to share their opinion on gender equality and the difficulties for women in politics. Tune in to hear what they have to say!

- **Episode 1 :** [Local leaders for Climate](#)

For the first episode, Local Leaders for Climate, young elected politicians have been invited to discuss with CoR Members and draft recommendations on climate action in the framework of the Green Deal resolution and COP25. Listen to what they came up with!