



Dear readers,

Looking back on this year, fills us with both, great sorrow and hope. The source of the latter are the thousands of young people we worked with in 2023. Witnessing their commitment and conviction, their interest, openness and togetherness was yet again a remarkable experience.

The [Rebuild Ukraine Ambassadors](#) published their ideas for a sustainable reconstruction of Ukraine in a policy paper; the Young Islam Conference gathered young people from France, the UK and Germany and developed a [campaign](#) against polarising, racist, and Islamophobic attitudes and discourses; network members of Understanding Europe reworked and implemented [courses for school classes](#) on Europe, social and climate justice, and youth participation; the [Young Ambassadors Against Antisemitism](#) met in Berlin to discuss current Jewish and postmigrant narratives; our [travel grantees](#) travelled the continent and creatively dealt with current political and social issues; and our Young European of the Year, [Mikuláš Lakatoš](#), continued to strengthen Roma and LGBTQI+ communities in Slovakia.

But 2023 was also a year of crises, in Europe and globally. The persistence of war in Ukraine, the outbreak of war in the Middle East, or rising tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan – to name but a few – do have most severe consequences for thousands of people on the ground and cause pain, loss and despair to millions of people around the globe, not least affecting many young people in our networks and projects.

These crises do have direct implications for our peaceful coexistence in a postmigrant society. We witness an extremely worrying and outright dangerous rise in anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim racism in Germany but also in many other

European countries. Election successes of far-right parties have reinforced our concern for a pluralistic, democratic European society. A society who will commonly vote for the tenth time in June 2024 – in five member states, for the first time, 16-year-olds can cast their vote.

Democracy and human rights cannot be taken for granted. It is on all of us to advocate and fight for an open and unified society where solidarity and peaceful collaboration can thrive. We believe that political education and volunteering in the field of youth participation are essential in this regard. But they requires time, resources as well as a framework and structures that make them possible.

A big THANK YOU to all the dedicated young people, to our partners and friends who are tirelessly working to make Europe a better place. Let us continue in this spirit in 2024!



Tomáš Sacher

Executive Director of the Schwarzkopf Foundation



Check out some video highlights from our projects with young people across Europe in 2023!

Past and Future Events

- On November 21, 2023, we welcomed [Dr. Anna Lührmann](#), Minister of State for Europe and Climate, together with the Alfred Herrhausen Society at the PalaisPopulaire. The debate focused on the question whether EU-enlargement has become a geopolitical necessity due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.
- On January 11, 2024, we will be hosting an online event focusing on the ongoing war in the Middle East. [Meron Mendel](#) will provide an overview of the broader conflict but also address its implications on educational settings and civil society in Germany and Europe.
- On January 22, 2024, we are delighted to welcome [Ekin Deligöz](#), Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth. The discussion will focus on the “Kindergrundsicherung”, exploring political measures addressing child and youth poverty in Germany and Europe.

European Youth Parliament (EYP)

- Elections were held for The EYP’s [Governing Body](#), the network’s International Board, consisting of young network members. Annelou Snippe (NL) and Jarne van der Poel (NL) will be followed by Güneş Uğuz (TR), Linda Vaher (EE), and Rufat Mir Feyzullazadeh (AZ). We wish you good luck with the upcoming term!
- The [local European Youth Event \(EYE\) is coming to Berlin](#) from April 17 to 20, 2024! It will bring together 1,700 participants on site and 500 digitally who will explore and experience Europe together. Taking place in multiple locations across Berlin, the event will show the rich landscape of youth and civil society organisations in Europe, foster international connections, and discuss issues on the EU’s agenda.

- We are happy to launch [YOUTHVOTE](#), a new project engaging #YoungEurope in active citizenship and the European elections 2024 via capacity-building, tools, and opportunities for youth-driven projects and media campaigns.
 - EYP is now on [TikTok @eyp_network!](#)
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Young Islam Conference (JIK)

- At this year's roundtable with stakeholders from politics, academia, the media and civil society the focus was on the topic of anti-Muslim racism, especially against young people. The JIK-team presented its [new publication](#) on the topic, which aims to create more visibility and awareness for these young people and formulates specific recommendations for action.
 - As part of the [Narrative Change Academy](#), 12 participants and two fellows created a campaign based on the narrative change approach, which will be launched in January 2024. With our campaign, we tell stories of human connection and create curiosity and familiarity in response to fear. The second academy year will be starting in September 2024.
 - [The Media Academy](#) concluded just now with the publication of the magazine [bittersüß](#) \[bittersweet\], which brings together photos and texts created by the seven mentees of the academy. You can order the printed version [here](#).
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Understanding Europe (UE)

- The [2023 Educational Briefing](#) explores the concept of resilience as a means for young people to deal with crises such as wars or the climate crisis. It features contributions by a psychologist, educational scientists, and network members of Understanding Europe.
- The last [Transnational Training for Trainers](#) took place in Portugal, from October 20 to 22. Young trainers from the network met in Porto to learn more

about and discuss the upcoming European Elections and climate topics.

- The latest Coordinators' Meeting took place from November 30 to December 3 in Yerevan, Armenia. Gathering network members from 10 member countries, one of the highlights was the panel-discussion on the role of the youth in addressing challenges in Armenia and Europe.
- The upcoming Photovoice project will present photos and texts created by network members last August. A publication will be released at the beginning 2024 and an exhibition is planned to take place at Rotes Rathaus Berlin in February.

Education and Travels

- On October 25 and 26, [the Peer Conference 2023](#) took place online. For the third time, we invited peer multipliers and professionals from racism-critical educational work and child and youth welfare to get to know and exchange ideas on new pedagogical approaches.
- The [Empowerment-Kalender "Roots and Seeds"](#) has been published! This calendar was created as part of the second year of the Young Ambassadors Against Antisemitism (YAAA). For each month, the young authors present a focus topic such as intersectionality, Black Our-Stories Month or resilience for which they wrote texts, collected quotes, poems or useful information.
- On December 6, a [Zoom-Event with Josephine Apraku](#) addressed the importance of critical whiteness and its influence on educational material. It also explored what needs to change in general so that child and youth welfare can meet the demands of postmigrant society.

Competence Network "Living Together in the Migration Society"

- As part of the Competence Network Living Together in Migration Society, we have co-authored a [publication on changes in migration societies](#). It includes texts on intergenerational exchange, the conveyance of history and institutional changes in (civil) society.
 - The [annual conference](#) of the Competency Network has taken place on November 7 and 8. In a keynote, workshops and formats for exchanging ideas, the conference focused on current changes and developments in migration societies.
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In other news

- We have published the second episode of our [podcast “Young Europe”](#). This episode revolves around the delayed energy transition and the challenges and obstacles associated with it.
 - We have launched our [campaign on the European elections 2024](#). In two videos, we started to make young people aware of the upcoming election and their general importance while highlighting that in four member states the voting age has been lowered to 16, enabling more young people to make their voice heard.
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