

Press release, 24.02.2025

Young Security Conference of Europe: new initiative for security policy education takes place in Berlin for the first time

The Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe and the non-profit Hertie Foundation are launching a new project on security policy education. From February 27 to 28, 2025, around 200 young people from all over Europe will come together for the first Young European Security Conference, taking place at Urania Berlin. In addition to geographical focal points, topics such as technology, the environment, transatlantic relations, disinformation, democracy and resilience will be discussed. Guests include experts from academia, politics and civil society as well as trainers from the Schwarzkopf Foundation's youth networks and students from the Hertie School. The project will run until 2027 and will also include various educational activities between the three conferences.

At a time when international conflicts and security policy issues become increasingly relevant, the project offers young participants an opportunity to engage with various aspects of security policy. Between panel discussions and interactive debate formats, the participants are divided into working groups and develop proposals and demands on their topics. The highlight of the conference is a festive closing discussion in Berlin's Red City Hall, where young participants present the results of their working groups and discuss them with high-ranking guests.

Tomáš Sacher, Managing Director of the Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe, is convinced: *“The perspectives of young people on security policy are often not taken seriously enough. However, skills development and active participation in this area are crucial for strengthening democracy and cohesion in Germany, Europe and beyond.”*

Annette Schavan, Chairwoman of the Board of the Hertie Foundation, emphasises: *“With this international conference, we want to qualify young people for a better understanding of the security policy situation in Europe and at the same time encourage them to actively participate in the discourse and to act as experts and multipliers in their environment.”*

The Schwarzkopf Foundation's youth networks – the *European Youth Parliament* and *Understanding Europe* – will continue to address security policy issues in Europe-wide events and the development of educational materials. These aim for creating broad, accessible and sustainable educational opportunities on security throughout Europe.

On-site interviews, photo and video recordings are possible. We are also pleased to arrange interviews in advance of the event. Please request accreditation by sending an email stating your surname, first name and medium by 26.02.2025 to presse@schwarzkopf-stiftung.de.

A project of the Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe and the Hertie Foundation

About the Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe

The non-partisan Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe was founded in 1971 by Pauline Schwarzkopf in Hamburg. The vision of the Schwarzkopf Foundation is a Europe of openness, solidarity and democracy shaped by young people. Through events, workshops, educational programmes and youth-led networks such as the European Youth Parliament (EYP), the Young Islam Conference and Understanding Europe, as well as through awards and fellowships, it offers young Europeans opportunities for encounters and exchange, personal development and active democratic citizenship. More information on: www.schwarzkopf-stiftung.de/en

About the Hertie Foundation

The work of the Hertie Foundation focuses on two key issues: brain research and strengthening democracy. The foundation's programmes and initiatives provide best-practice examples and inspiration within these areas. In order to act freely and put our founder's intentions into practice using contemporary methods, the Hertie Foundation generally runs its own projects, but it also provides funding support. The focus is always on people and on making tangible improvements to their living conditions. The non-profit Hertie Foundation was established in 1974 by the heirs of the department store owner Georg Karg and is today one of the largest ideologically independent and entrepreneurially unaffiliated foundations in Germany. The name "Hertie" goes back to Hermann Tietz, co-founder of the department store group of the same name at the end of the 19th century. More information on: www.ghst.de

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