

Press Release, 26 February 2026

Young European Security Conference 2026 brings 200 young people from 49 countries to Berlin starting today

From 26 to 27 February 2026, around 200 young people aged 16 to 21 from 49 countries are gathering in Berlin for the second Young European Security Conference. The conference is hosted by the Schwarzkopf-Stiftung Junges Europa and the Hertie-Stiftung with the aim of strengthening security policy education, European networking, and the active participation of young people.

Under the title “Youth Perspectives on Shifting Powers – Rethinking Security in a Multipolar World,” participants will engage with key questions of European and international security policy. Topics include the future of the European security architecture, trade policy, technological developments, environmental and climate security, and the protection of critical infrastructure.

The programme features panel discussions, interactive debate formats, and in-depth working sessions. Guided by experts from academia, politics, and civil society, as well as young trainers, participants are introduced to key issues, engage in constructive debates, and formulate substantive policy impulses. During the ceremonial closing discussion at the Rotes Rathaus, they will present their results and discuss them with high-level guests.

Dr Seyran Bostanci, Managing Director of the Schwarzkopf-Stiftung, emphasises: “*Young people do not want to be mere spectators of global developments – they want to help shape them. With this conference, we are creating a space in which their perspectives on security policy are heard, taken seriously, and brought into the broader discourse.*”

“*In a time of profound geopolitical change, security policy education is more important than ever. It is our aim to empower young people to understand complex interconnections, reflect critically, and take responsibility for Europe’s future,*” explains **Dr Jan-Jonathan Bock**, Deputy Head of the ‘Strengthening Democracy’ programme at the Hertie-Stiftung.

More information about the conference can be found [here](#).

Press contact

Friedrich Landenberger | Head of Communication and Events

Schwarzkopf-Stiftung Junges Europa
Sophienstraße 28/29, 10178 Berlin
E-Mail: presse@schwarzkopf-stiftung.de
Tel.: +4930726219537

Programme on 26 February 2026

- 10:00 Opening session with keynote by Prof. Dr Julian Wucherpfennig (Hertie School) and discussion with Yara Itani (Bundeskanzler-Helmut-Schmidt-Stiftung) and Hannah Koch (German UN Youth Delegate)
- 11:30 Introductory workshops in the working groups
- 14:00 Workshop Session I in the working groups
- 16:00 Expert talks with guests including representatives from the Federal Ministry of Defence (BMVg), the Federal Foreign Office, the British Foreign Policy Group
- 17:45 Reflection workshop in the working groups

Programme on 27 February 2026

- 09:15 Morning kick-off in the working groups
- 10:00 Workshop Session II in the working groups
- 11:45 Bar Camp / World Café, organised by the Conference Youth Board
- 14:15 Workshop summaries and preparation of the final presentation
- 18:30 Closing discussion with Julia Hammelehle (Munich Security Conference), Thomas Wiegold (journalist), and Dr Hanna Notte (James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies)

About the Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe

The non-partisan *Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe* was founded in 1971 by Pauline Schwarzkopf. 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 citizenship.

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.