

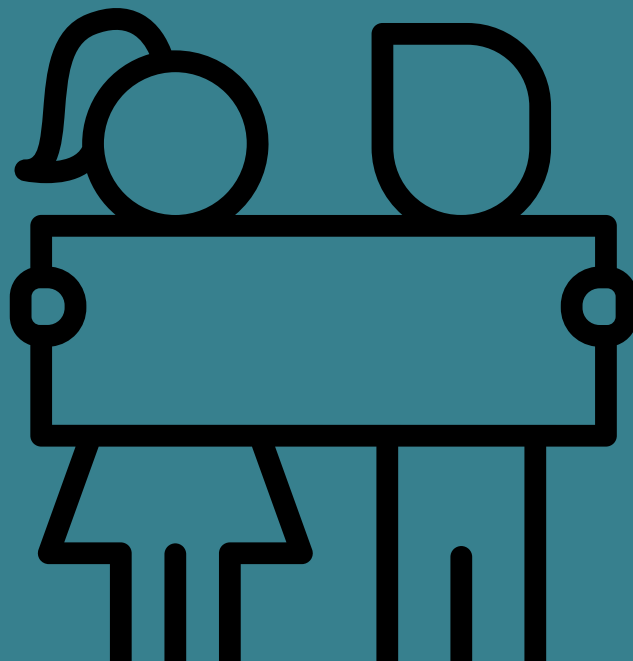


Deutscher Bundestag

Policy Recommendations

Baltic Sea Parliamentary Youth Forum

2023



Preamble

The Baltic Sea Parliamentary Youth Forum (BSPYF) 2023 took place in Berlin, Germany on 25-27 August 2023. It was organised by the German delegation to the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) and the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS). This event was held in conjunction with the 32nd BSPC Annual Conference to promote dialogue between young people of the region and policy makers.

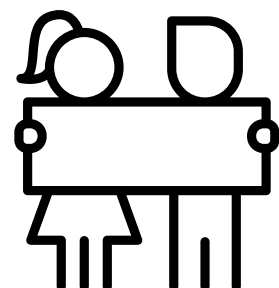
The development of the policy recommendations contained in this document, notably geared towards the BSPC, the CBSS and the EU, started during the registration process for the BSPYF 2023 when youth participants were asked to formulate their own policy recommendations on the four BSPC 2023 topics:

1. Improving Digital Resilience,
2. Increasing Youth Participation and Engaging Young People in Political Decision-Making,
3. Social Division and Polarization in the face of Right-Wing Extremism, and
4. Sustaining Faith in Democratic Institutions by Reducing Social Inequality.

The individual recommendations received were further compiled and refined in working groups during the BSPYF 2023 at the Bundestag in Berlin. The recommendations were finalised by youth participants from Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland and Sweden, guided by members of parliaments and the organisers.

Eight recommendations – two on each of the BSPC 2023 topics – were unanimously agreed on by all BSPYF 2023 participants.

The young region builders also recommended that the BSPC set up a follow-up and implementation monitoring process to track the progress of the recommendations.



Policy Recommendations

We, the participants of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Youth Forum 2023, in alignment with the topics of the 32nd Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, urge the parliamentarians of the Baltic Sea Region and other stakeholders, including the CBSS, to:

On Topic 1: Improving Digital Resilience – Conspiracy Theories and Hate Speech as a Threat to Democratic Societies

- 1.** Prohibit personal profiling based on mass collection of data, as far as these profiles allow targeted advertisement for disinformation campaigns.
- 2.** Enhance digital resilience, with the parliaments in the Baltic Sea Region striving towards manifesting their leading role in digital literacy education for all age groups focusing on 1) raising awareness on the importance of data privacy, and 2) supporting innovations to tackle disinformation.

On Topic 2: Increasing Youth Participation and Engaging Young People in Political Decision-Making

- 3.** Facilitate youth participation in political decision-making, and promote youth civic engagement through increased political literacy, notably by improving education about democracy as well as the school curriculum and educational programmes.
- 4.** Create more platforms for young people with decision-making power, and make youth councils guaranteed by law at the local and regional level, with youth councils mandated to advise local and regional governments on policies that are relevant to young people.

On Topic 3: Social Division and Polarisation in the face of Right-Wing Extremism – How Do We Stand Together and Find Common Ground?

- 5.** Develop and implement civic education programmes and civil society initiatives for both young people and adults alike to raise awareness about the dangers posed by extremism to democracy, including recruitment strategies of extremist groups.
- 6.** Encourage cross-border exchange programmes for citizens of all ages and diverse backgrounds, focused on bridging societal division and combating extremism.

On Topic 4: Sustaining Faith in Democratic Institutions by Reducing Social Inequality

- 7.** Guarantee inclusive governance by including social groups affected by structural inequality in the formation of policies and establish mechanisms for participatory budgeting for more equitable resource distribution and community empowerment.
- 8.** Encourage workers to join unions by promoting awareness and involvement by putting special emphasis on strengthening and securing the institutional framework of the workers unions.