

Youth Participation in the Alpine Convention

Mission Statement

We are young people committed to the future of the Alps, recognizing that young people are especially affected by the changes accelerated through climate change and biodiversity loss. We bring this lived experience into the Alpine Convention process through participation, dialogue, and action to work towards a sustainable, resilient, and biodiverse Alpine region for present and future generations.

Self-Understanding

The YAC (Youth in Alpine Convention) - Project Group strives to democratically represent the interests of Youth in the Alpine Convention, e.g. within its working groups. They represent these interests through active dialogue with Alpine Convention delegates and decisionmakers and are available to them to consult on Youth matters. We are committed to a long-term, sustainable, and social just transformation of the Alpine region that reflects the needs of young people.

Role

We make a substantive contribution as young representatives in Alpine Convention working groups. We want to raise awareness for the Alpine Convention amongst young people. In addition, we want to engage especially the local Youth in projects, discussions and decision making regarding current and future life in the Alps. We connect with the YPAC and support them in reaching their goals and implementing their resolutions. We will engage with and leverage existing structures of Youth organizations in the Alpine regions.

Impact

The youth project group is successful if the Alpine Convention embarks on a permanent and inclusive Youth engagement mechanism, through which young people are represented and their voices made visible.

Specifically:

- (1) We advocate for setting up Youth projects based on proposals of the project group.
- (2) We seek increased visibility of Youth participation and its output (e.g. statements, reports, policy papers).
- (3) We aim for the Alpine Convention processes to be much more influenced by Youth voices than today.
- (4) We work towards regularly being featured in the events of the Alpine Convention at the request of the Youth Project Group.

- (5) We call for further outreach by the Alpine Convention to young people regarding its work and projects.
- (6) We ask to measure the amount and quality of youth engagement in the Alpine Convention.

Thematic focus

The YAC - project group will contribute to the main topic of socio-ecological transformation in the Alpine region. In this context, the focus is on young people's interest in biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, with particular attention to social justice, quality of life, and responsible behavior. Special attention is given to ensuring that living in or visiting Alpine regions is not determined by socio-economic background but remains accessible to everyone. In addition, we consider it important to enhance the quality of life of young people in Alpine regions, especially in rural areas, to combat depopulation and support local cultural heritage and community life. We advocate for environmental education as well as responsible use and treatment of natural resources.

We will work toward democratic youth participation and empowerment as we believe it to be a cross-cutting matter and a basic condition to a socio-ecological transformation.

This statement was developed by 18 young people from Austria, Germany, Italy, and Slovenia during a two-day international workshop. The group worked together to formulate a shared vision for the future of the Alpine region. The project group aims to include young people from all Alpine countries, creating a broad and representative network that reflects the diversity of the Alpine region and its youth.

Pullach/Munich, 27th September 2026