

**ROUND**  
**TABLE**

# **Youth Policies: A Parliamentary Dimension**

## ROUND TABLE

# Youth Policies: A Parliamentary Dimension

## Abstract

- ▶ The world and countries have seen deliberate policies towards younger generations since the 1950s.
- ▶ Young people are increasingly influencing government and decision-making within states, international organizations, and integration blocs. They are a real driving political force bringing new trends and technologies to our life.
- ▶ Youth policies have found their ways into constitutions and national legislations of virtually all countries.
- ▶ A task of streamlining national youth legislation lies ahead of many countries. Of special importance are solving problems of strategic planning in the area, ensuring inter-agency coordination while working with young people, and developing youth infrastructure and systems of training qualified personnel.
- ▶ In some countries, increased attempts by external forces to influence young people are an impediment to effective state youth policies. In this regard, national youth measures should be viewed as an essential prerequisite for national security and social stability.
- ▶ Noticing numerous emerging trends, youth can adopt a creative approach to them, thus offering sophisticated answers to modern challenges. Unlocking youth potential represents a key strategic task for any country.
- ▶ Balanced youth policies lay the basis for effective government.
- ▶ Legislatures seek to engage younger generations in policy formulation and implementation and various inter-parliamentary activities.
- ▶ The round table aims to summarize best practices of carrying out national youth policies, including legislative ones, mechanisms of the interaction between parliaments and youth, the development of youth parliamentarism, ways of engaging young people in interparliamentary diplomacy and new approaches to using youth creativity in the interests of national and world development.

## Youth and youth policies

### Young People as a Social Group

The term 'youth' is used to refer to the most dynamic age group. The UN, for statistical consistency across regions, defines<sup>1</sup> the group, as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States. Not only do age limits vary across the world, but also they lead to different approaches to youth matters.

Young people constitute a progressive part of society. They tend to be receptive to development, experience, changes and new conditions or ideas.

The social group is less conservative and more sensitive to national development problems, which makes it a breeding ground for social protest movements.

The youth of today are not merely passive observers but actively engage in policy-making. Youth policies can only be effective when shared by the bulk of young people, with governmental programs and events being provided in their legitimate interests. These measures allow for successful socialization and self-fulfillment.

### Youth Legislation

In one way or another, youth issues are embodied in national legislations of most world countries. For instance, they are entrenched in constitutions of such countries as Spain, Italy, China, Cuba, Kuwait, Portugal, Romania, Thailand, Turkey, Germany, the Philippines, Switzerland, Hungary, Slovakia, Yemen, etc. As for Bulgaria, Brazil, Israel, India, Costa Rica, Latvia, Lithuania, New Zealand, Germany, Finland, France, Sweden, Estonia, South Africa, South Korea, Japan and other nations, they have relevant legislation addressing youth matters. As regards Russia, Norway, Poland, Argentina and others, they have adopted relevant sector-specific laws and bylaws.

As different countries demonstrate, both governmental bodies, including local self-government organizations, and civil society structures engage in pursuing youth policies.

When it comes to national conceptions of youth legislation, two approaches are traditionally distinguished.

The former rests upon the state's leading role in determining priority areas and conducting youth policy, which is characterized by a well-developed and elabo-

<sup>1</sup> In Russia, 'youth' means "every person between the ages of 14 and 30 years" (in some cases – 35 years). The World Health Organization (WHO) defines adolescents as individuals in the 10-19-year age group and 'youth' as the 15-24-year age group. These two groups are combined in the group 'young people', covering the age range 10-24 year.

rated regulation system and close interaction with NGOs. This is illustrated, for instance, by Germany and France.

The latter is based on the balance between the state and civil society structures while carrying out youth policies. Under such circumstances, governmental agencies tend to formulate overall goals and key objectives of youth policies, which determines the leading role of local governments and social organizations. This is exemplified by the United States and Great Britain.

### Russian Federation

In the Russian Federation, youth policy is enshrined in the Federal Constitutional Law on the Government of the Russian Federation, federal laws on State Support for Youth and Children's Public Associations and on General Principles for the Organization of Legislative (Representative) and Executive Bodies of State Power in the Subjects of the Russian Federation, some other federal laws and by-laws, and international agreements ratified by the country.

In 2014, the government adopted the Principles (Foundations or Fundamentals) of State Youth Policy of the Russian Federation until 2025. As the document states, "national youth policies seek to improve legal, socio-economic and organizational conditions for the successful self-realization of youth, which is aimed at unlocking their potential for the further development of the Russian Federation, as well as facilitating the successful integration of youth into society and enhancing their role in the country's life".

### Institutional Framework of Youth Policies

National youth policy implementation represents a multilevel process involving joint efforts of federal, regional and municipal bodies on the one hand and civil society structures on the other. In Russia, youth matters fall within the joint jurisdiction of the Russian Federation and its subjects or entities.

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation and the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs (Rosmolodezh) are tasked with coordinating efforts to implement state youth policy at the federal level.

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation is responsible for shaping and carrying out state youth policy and regulating the field from the legal perspective. Rosmolodezh is in charge of providing public services and state property management in the state youth policy, implementation, in cooperation with civil society organizations and movements representing the interests of young people, measures to ensure healthy lives of young people, moral and patriotic education of youth and the realization of their professional capabilities.

Other federal ministries and agencies are also involved in implementing youth policies. They ensure the implementation of Russia's relevant laws on youth, develop regulatory legal acts and targeted programs within their competence, and submit them to the President of the Russian Federation and to the Government of the Russian Federation in due course.

### Russian Regional Legislation

78 out of 85 subjects or entities of the Russian Federation have adopted regional youth legislation so far.

Table 1

Regional Youth Legislation

Federal District/Region	Number of Russian subjects with regional youth legislation (in brackets, the total number of subjects in each district/region)	%
Central	17 (18)	94
Northwest	9 (11)	82
Far East	8 (9)	89
Siberia	12 (12)	100
Ural	6 (6)	100
Volga	13 (14)	93
South	6 (8)	75
North Caucasus	7 (7)	100

The list includes:

- four laws on Youth (the Chechen Republic, Sverdlovsk Oblast, Chelyabinsk Oblast, and Moscow);
- four laws on Youth and Youth Policies (Khabarovsk Krai, Arkhangelsk Oblast, Kemerovo Oblast, and Samara Oblast);
- two laws on Youth and National Youth Policy (the Tatarstan Republic and Kaluga Oblast)
- one law on Youth Support (Belgorod Oblast);
- one law on State Support for Youth (the Adygea Republic);
- nineteen laws on Youth Policy (the Bashkortostan Republic, the Dagestan Republic, the Kabardino-Balkar Republic, the Karachay-Cherkess Republic, the Komi Republic, the North Ossetia-Alania Republic, Primorsky Krai, Stavropol Krai, Vladimir Oblast, Kostroma Oblast, Lipetsk Oblast, Nizhny Novgorod Oblast, Novosibirsk Oblast, Saratov Oblast, Tambov Oblast, Tyumen Oblast, Yaroslavl Oblast, the Jewish Autonomous Oblast, and Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug);
- thirty-six laws on National Youth Policy (the Altai Republic, the Buryatia Republic, the Ingushetia Republic, the Karelia Republic, the Mari El Republic, the Mordovia Republic, The Sakha Republic (Yakutia), the Tuva Republic, the Udmurt Republic, the Chuvash Republic (Chuvashia), Zabaykalsky Krai, Kamchatka Krai, Krasnodar Krai, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Amur Oblast, Volgograd Oblast, Vologda Oblast, Ivanovo Oblast, Irkutsk Oblast, Kaliningrad Oblast, Kirov Oblast, Kurgan Oblast, Kursk Oblast, Leningrad Oblast, Magadan Oblast, Moscow Oblast, Omsk Oblast, Orenburg Oblast, Oryol Oblast, Pskov Oblast, Rostov Oblast, Sakhalin Oblast, Tver Oblast, Tomsk Oblast, and Nenets Autonomous Okrug);
- one law on State Regional Youth Policy (Altai Krai);
- two laws on Main Directions of National Youth Policy (the Kalmykia Republic and Bryansk Oblast);

- five laws on the Implementation of National Youth Policy (the Khakassia Republic, Penza Oblast, Saint Petersburg, Sevastopol, and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug Yugra);
- one law on State Activities in Youth Policies (Ulyanovsk Oblast);
- two laws on the Regulation of Individual Relations in National Youth Policies (Ryazan Oblast and Tula Oblast).

### **Commonwealth of Independent States**

Most CIS member-states, with the exception of Russia and Armenia, have so far endorsed framework laws on public youth policies.

The list includes Kazakhstan's State Youth Policy, Turkmenistan's State Youth Policy, Uzbekistan's State Youth Policy, Azerbaijan's Law on Youth Policy, Kyrgyzstan's Law on Youth Policy, Belarus' Law on Youth, Moldova's National Youth Law, Tajikistan's Youth and Youth Policy, and Ukraine's Law On Fostering Youth Socialization and Development. Public relations which arise out of developing and introducing national youth policies fall under the scope of these laws.

The CIS works to harmonize national youth legislations. In 2012, the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly adopted the Model Law on National Youth Policy.

### **Germany**

According to the Youth Development Index (YDI)<sup>2</sup>, Germany is ranked the highest for youth development. Youth policy is incorporated into the Basic Law of Germany, with the word 'youth' being cited many times.

Child and youth policy is not only a matter for the federal government but also for the Länder. The key document addressing the needs and/or rights of young people and youth issues is the Social Code, Book VIII - Child and Youth Services, which is also called the Child and Youth Services Act [Kinder- und Jugendhilfegesetz (KJHG)]. In addition, laws dealing with the specific problems of children and young people include Protection of Young Persons Act, Protection of Young Persons at Work Act, the Act on Dissemination of Printed Publications and Media Content etc.

### **Switzerland**

Youth issues are anchored in the Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation. They are cited many times, particularly in Article 11, Article 41 (twice), Article 67 (twice), Article 68, and Article 123.

Specifically, Article 11 on the Protection of Children and Young People stipulates that "Children and young people have the right to special protection of their personal integrity and also to encouragement of their development. They exercise their rights themselves to the extent that their intellectual capacities allow".

According to Article 41, "The Confederation and the Cantons shall undertake to ensure that, in addition to personal responsibility and private initiatives, [...] children and young people are encouraged to develop into independent and socially responsible people, and are supported in their social, cultural, and political integration".

As Article 67 on the Educational Needs of Adults and Young People argues, "The Confederation and the Cantons shall, when fulfilling their tasks, take into account children's and young people's special needs for development and protection. The Confederation may complement cantonal measures and support both extra-curricular activities for children and young people and the training of adults".

### **Portugal**

Youth issues and policies are enshrined in Portugal's Constitution, namely Article 70 stating that:

1. "In order to ensure the effective enjoyment of their economic, social and cultural rights, young people shall receive special protection, particularly: a. In education, vocational training and culture; b. In access to their first job, at work and in relation to social security; c. In access to housing; d. In physical education and sport; e. In the use of their free time.

2. The priority objectives of the youth policy shall be the development of young people's personality, the creation of the conditions needed for their effective integration into the active life, a love of free creativity and a sense of community service.

3. Acting in cooperation with families, schools, businesses, residents' organizations, cultural associations and foundations and cultural and recreational groups, the state shall foster and support youth organizations in the pursuit of the said objectives, as well as international youth exchanges".

### **USA**

Current US youth policies imply government support only for the most vulnerable and troubled young people, with expenditure and categories of assistance being tightly managed. This is a fundamental difference from the West European model highlighting the state's responsibility for integrating youth into society.

The United States lacks a single coordinating body that oversees youth policy. The federal government, which is not tasked with framing youth policies *per se*, monitors youth program implementation only in the most general way.

However, US authorities are gradually recognizing the necessity to elaborate more coordinated approaches to youth support and development.

Special "umbrella" structures, which are in charge of health and social protection of younger generations, are created at a regional and local level, with community service programs being implemented.

The Scout movement has gone mainstream. National youth organizations operate within major religious institutions such as Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry.

<sup>2</sup> The YDI is an annual index of 18 indicators that collectively measure progress on youth development in 183 countries. It considers five themes, or domains, measuring levels of Education, Health and Well-being, Employment and Opportunity, Political Participation and Civic Participation among young people.

### Canada

The Youth Employment Strategy (YES), Canada's overarching initiative involving eleven federal departments and agencies and scores of public, private, and non-governmental bodies intending to provide youth employment and adaptation, is a crucial component of the country's youth policies.

Career Focus and Skills Link, two program streams offered by Service Canada, are two of the most illustrative. While the former provides "funding for employers and organizations to design and deliver a range of activities that enable youth to make more informed career decisions, develop their skills and benefit from work experiences", the latter provides "funding for employers and organizations to help youth facing barriers to employment develop the broad range of skills and knowledge need to participate in the current and future labor market".

### South Africa

South Africa's National Youth Policy is aimed at consolidating youth initiatives. The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and the South African Youth Council (SAYC) advocate for implementing youth policies.

As a governmental organization, the NYDA is responsible for all programs working to integrate young people into the economy and society in general and for promoting a uniform approach by all organs of state, private sector and NGOs to youth development. The SAYC, a voluntary civil society body, is meant to mobilize youth organizations to ensure their participation in the broader societal affairs of the country.

## Youth Policies in International and Supranational Bodies

### United Nations

In 1965, the UN adopted the Declaration on the Promotion Among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding Between Peoples, the first international document on public youth policies.

In addition, the international body endorsed:

- the 1965 UN Resolution on Further Planning and Suitable Follow-up in the Field of Youth;
- Economic and Social Council Resolution 1983/17 (1982) on Youth Participation in Social and Economic Development and Their Exercise of the Rights to Life, Employment and Education; and
- the 1985 Guidelines for Further Planning and Suitable Follow-up in the Field of Youth.

The 2010-2011 UN International Year of Youth (IYY) saw the UN's New York headquarters and its offices around the world hold events demonstrating the younger generation's contribution to the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY). The IYY culminated in the New York high-level meeting of the General Assembly on Youth of July 25-16, 2011.

At present, youth policies are a regular item on the UN's agenda. Specifically, they fall within the scope of

UNESCO, ECOSOC, the UN-HABITAT Youth Fund, and the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD). The New York-based ECOSOC Youth Forum, which is annually organized in January-February, constitutes a key platform for the youth's message.

In 2017, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres appointed Jayathma Wickramanayake of Sri Lanka as his next Envoy on Youth to succeed Ahmad Alhendawi of Jordan. The Envoy is mandated with the task of seeking youth engagement in the organization's priority areas such as sustainable development, human rights, peace and security, and humanitarian activities.



*Youth policy is within the purview of the United Nations*

The 1st Global Forum on Youth Policies held in Baku in 2014 was convened by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Office of the United Nations Secretary General's Envoy on Youth (OSGEY). It brought together about 700 participants from over 150 states.

It aimed at highlighting youth issues around the globe, analysing and evaluating national youth policies in different states, and defining how to take them forward.



*The 1st Global Forum on Youth Policies provided a platform for a fruitful discussion of key issues related to improving and developing public policies for young people in modern states*

Youth ministers from over 70 UN member states came together in Moscow for a regular international meeting held ahead of the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students in 2017. The participants shared the best practices of implementing national youth policies and discussed possible cooperation in dealing with youth-related matters. They also worked out some joint mechanisms and patterns to address global modern challenges and foster friendly inter-state relations.



*Youth ministers from all over the world gathered in Moscow on the eve of the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students*

### **European Union**

The European youth policy is considered most effective and elaborate.

The European conception includes both age and a set of individual characteristics and traits in its definition of the notion "youth". A range of articles in the Maastricht Treaty and the Lisbon Treaty prioritize the engagement of young people in European integration processes. They set the stage for the *Youth for Europe* project aimed at securing the openness of the dialogue between state officials and young citizens of the EU.

The Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life (2003) identifies 14 main sectoral policies which should have the youth dimension at the regional (municipal) level:

- A policy for sport, leisure and associative life
- A policy to promote youth employment and combat unemployment
- Urban environment and habitat, housing policy, and transport
- An education and training policy promoting youth participation
- A policy for mobility and exchanges
- A health policy
- A gender equality policy
- A specific policy for rural regions
- A policy on access to culture
- A policy for sustainable development and for the environment
- A policy to combat violence and crime

- An anti-discrimination policy
- A policy on sexuality
- A policy of access to rights and law

### **Council of Europe**

The Youth Department is responsible for implementing youth programmes of the Council of Europe. The non-profit European Youth Forum, a recognized partner for the Council of Europe, is assigned the task to assist it in resolving European youth problems.

Until 2012, the Council of Europe regularly convened European Conferences of Ministers responsible for youth focused on promoting democratic culture worldwide, with the last held in 2012 in St. Petersburg.

### **Commonwealth of Independent States**

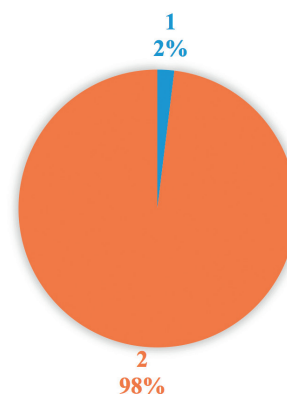
Founded in 2005, the CIS Council for Youth Affairs still operates within the confederation's structures and brings together representatives from youth agencies and national councils (unions) of youth organizations from the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, and the Republic of Tajikistan.

## **Youth and parliaments: youth parliamentarism in the interests of inter-parliamentary diplomacy**

legislative (representative) as well as executive state bodies are tasked with shaping as well as successfully introducing national youth policies. The cooperation between parliaments and youth and youth organizations is an inalienable part of such policies.

For years, interaction mechanisms between parliaments and young people and the role of youth in inter-parliamentary diplomacy have been subject to much debate.

**YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER 30 MAKE UP LESS THAN 2 PER CENT OF THE WORLD'S MPS**



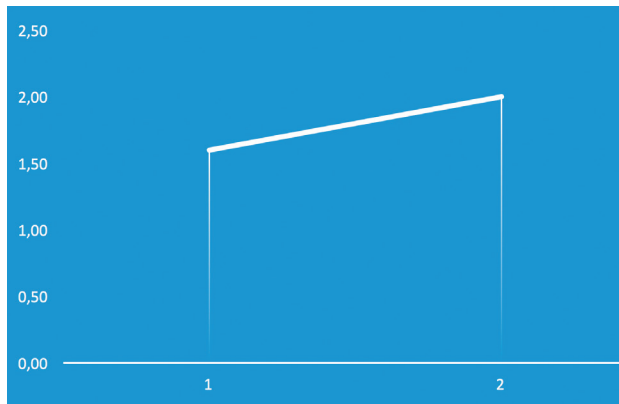
*Participation of young people under 30 in national parliaments. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). 2016. URL: <https://www.ipu.org/our-work/youth/data-youth-participation>.*

Today, youth parliamentarism does not merely create scope for representing young people as a separate social group and protecting their rights and legitimate interests. It also constitutes a social driving force behind cooperation among young people who engage in parliamentary activities at home.

Further advances of the youth parliamentary movement facilitate young people's direct involvement in shaping the future of their countries and the world. Their participation in lawmaking contributes to molding the legal framework with due regard to the interests of young people and streamlines the legislative process.

Youth parliamentarism:

- enables young people to participate in law-making;
- allows legislative bodies to obtain accurate first-hand information on every issue related to young people's everyday life and take it into consideration in lawmaking;
- draws public attention to the youth and its problems as well as to finding solutions;
- is instrumental in human resource development, contributes to building a talent pipeline for legislative bodies;
- helps to foster legal and political culture among the young
- allows studying electoral processes and learning how public bodies are formed.



The upward trend in youth participation in national parliaments. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). 2016. URL: <https://www.ipu.org/our-work/youth/data-youth-participation>. Since 2014 the share of MPs under 30 has increased from 1.9% to 2% of all deputies.

### Common Approaches to Developing Youth Parliamentarism

Youth bodies have been set up and now operate in legislatures at all levels, including the interstate, national (federal), regional, municipal, student, school, and local ones.

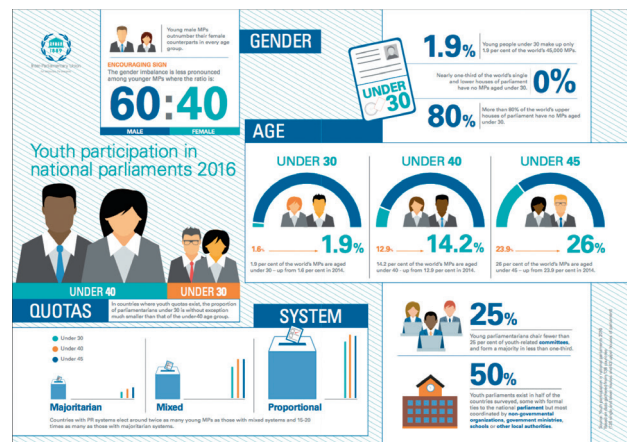
The First All-Russian Youth Forum of the State Duma was held in Moscow in November 2017.

### Data on the First All-Russian Youth Forum of the State Duma

- **423** participants from **80** federal subjects
- Foreign participants from **South Ossetia, Armenia, Germany, Uzbekistan, Abkhazia, Kazakhstan**
- The Forum brings together **143** young MPs
- **92** representatives of regional youth parliaments
- **48** participants of Territoriya smyslov na Klyazme (Territory of Meanings on the Klyazma) invited by the Chairman of the State Duma
- **12** bloggers and young journalists
- **113** representatives of non-profit organizations and youth wings of political parties

Traditionally youth parliaments are organized and function in either of the two ways:

1. A youth parliament is established and works on a permanent basis for a fixed term;
2. A youth parliament is convened for youth parliamentary sessions, with participants varying a lot from session to session.



Youth participation in national parliaments. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). 2016. URL: <https://ru.scribd.com/document/321432490/Youth-participation-in-national-parliaments-2016>.

### Interstate Associations of Young Parliamentarians

#### Inter-Parliamentary Union

It is the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) which channels much effort into engaging young people across the globe in inter-parliamentary activities.

The Forum of Young Parliamentarians set up in 2013 within the IPU framework is tasked with spearheading ef-



forts to boost the participation of young people in national parliaments.

The Forum is steered by a Board composed of 12 people from six groups of states (two from each group).

It meets twice a year within the framework of IPU Assemblies.

The last session held at the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly in Geneva (Switzerland) focused on youth policies, activities of youth organizations and parliamentary structures, as well as other burning issues and challenges.



*The Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the Inter-Parliamentary Union*

### **European Youth Parliament**

The European Youth Parliament (EYP) was established by the French Fontainebleau Youth Foundation in 1987. The EYP seeks to engage young people in European integration processes and to safeguard their interests.

To date, the EYP is one of Europe's largest platforms for political debate, international meetings, political education, and exchange of views for young Europeans from 35 countries. Over 120 events are held annually throughout Europe under its auspices, with over 250 people participating in its annual international sessions. In addition to international sessions, the National Committees of the EYP member-states stage local events, like regional sessions and youth forums.



*The European Youth Parliament brings together young people from all over Europe*

The EYP international activities are carried out under the auspices of the Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe and of the President of the European Parliament.

Russian official delegations took part in EMP sessions from 2002 to 2014. Currently, Russia's participation has been suspended.

The Young Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (YIPA CIS)

The Young CIS Interparliamentary Assembly was created by the Council of the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS) on November 22, 2012. It is an IPA CIS permanent advisory body. The YIPA CIS comprises youth parliamentary delegations of the CIS member states, each having equal rights, i.e. one vote in the Assembly.

The youth delegation is formed by the national parliaments of the member-states which send MPs under 35 from national, regional and municipal legislative bodies and representatives of youth parliaments, youth associations, etc.

The first YIPA CIS session was held on March 29, 2013 in St. Petersburg (Russia). It was attended by 300 young parliamentarians. On June 26, 2017, the 9th session of the YIPA CIS took place in Cholpon-Ata (Kyrgyzstan). The agenda included the implementation of the youth policy in countering terrorism and nationalist and religious extremism among the young.

The Young IPA CIS mainly seeks to engage young deputies in fostering political, economic, humanitarian, environmental and cultural cooperation among the CIS members, as well as cooperation in other fields. It also aims to pave the way for the dialogue among young CIS parliamentarians and representatives of youth organizations and set the stage for sharing their experience, to involve young people in parliamentary diplomacy, and to develop the legal culture and youth social and civic engagement.

Youth parliamentary delegations initiated and produced the law draft "On Activities of Student Groups", the draft recommendations "On Cooperation between Young Scientists of the CIS Member States", recommendations for defining and meeting standards in primary prevention programs for social hazards affecting the youth (adopted by the IPA CIS on May 20, 2016). Young MPs also examine draft laws and other documents dealing with the youth and youth policy, as well as develop relevant recommendations for the IPA CIS.

The St. Petersburg Youth Interparliamentary Forum of the CIS countries held in October 2014 and backed by the IPA CIS Council is seen as an YIPA CIS achievement.



*The Youth Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS member states mainly aims at expanding youth parliamentarism*

The Youth Chamber was set up at the session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Belarus-Russia Union State in December 2017. The new youth parliament comprised 20 representatives from each country, with the age of deputies determined by the national legislation. Among other things the Youth Chamber seeks to engage young citizens of Belarus and Russia in building the Union State. The first session of the Youth Chamber under the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union State of Belarus and Russia is due in June 2018.

### **Youth Parliamentarism in BRICS**

The idea of a forum for young BRICS MPs emerged on the sidelines of the 2017 BRICS Youth Summit in Beijing and was included in the final Action Plan.

In 2017, the first Young Parliamentarians Forum of the BRICS Countries was held in St. Petersburg during the 137<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly. The final document included recommendations on developing youth parliamentary and economic diplomacy and e-diplomacy, as well as the initiative to create the International Youth Parliamentarian Association (IYPA).

The Second Forum of Young BRICS Parliamentarians of the countries is scheduled for 2018.

### **The Eurasian Dialogue Council of Youth Parliaments**

The Youth Parliament under the State Duma initiated the Cooperation Agreement between the youth parliamentarian bodies of the Eurasian states, including Russia, Armenia, Belarus, and Tajikistan, which was inked in 2015. The document provided for the creation of the Eurasian Dialogue Council of Youth Parliaments, a permanent interparliamentary coordination body whose young members seek to facilitate cooperation among youth parliaments of the Eurasian countries.

The Council mainly serves as a platform for sharing experience gained by youth parliamentary bodies, studying legal practices of working with laws and regulations, and conceiving and running important social projects and programs.

Nongovernmental organizations from the Republic of Moldova, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, and the Republic of Kazakhstan joined the Eurasian Dialogue Council in 2018.

### **Youth Parliaments: Russian Experience**

#### **Youth Work in State Duma**

The State Duma established the Youth Public Chamber of Russia (YPC), a deliberative and advisory body, in 2001.

The YPC comprised Duma deputies, Federation Council members, representatives of legislative and executive bodies, representatives of all-Russian and interregional youth associations, trade unions, and regional youth parliaments, all of whom worked there on a voluntary basis. The Chamber largely aimed to assist the State Duma in legal and regulatory matters to safeguard young people's rights and legitimate interests.

In 2011, the Youth Public Chamber received a second name to be referred to as the Youth Parliament (YP). It operates under the general supervision of the Chairman of the State Duma, who is also the honorary Chairman of the Youth Parliament.

The Parliament mainly aims to help the State Duma in legal and regulatory matters to protect young people's rights and legitimate interests.

The YP also seeks to engage young people in parliamentary activities and shape their legal and political culture.

Young parliamentarians are elected for a two-year term, with YP leaders nominated from the deputies' ranks through voting.

The YP is made up of young MPs aged from 18 to 35 from regional legislative (representative) bodies, with one representative from each relevant body.

The Youth Parliament can work with all the relevant State Duma committees directly and present bills, with draft laws affecting other areas as well as youth-related matters.

In 2013, the YP launched several major projects. Since 2015, young parliamentarians have been administering tests on Russian history and the history of the Great Patriotic War (Russia's triumph over fascism) to provide patriotic education and raise historical awareness. By

now, over 1.5 million people from 52 countries have been tested.

The *Youth Team of the Country* project helps young people of different political leanings to acquire knowledge and skills to conduct the election campaign. In 2017, 126 participants of the project were elected deputies of municipal legislatures.

The *P3 to Provide Housing for Young Families* project seeks to help young people with accommodation. Since the launch, its organizers have managed to coordinate efforts at all levels of government and to engage banks in it. In the Republic of Buryatia, the Molodost' settlement was built. Nowadays a total of 636 young families and specialists among the project participants live there.

Since 2018 the YP publicly has been describing its activities on its Youtube channel *Youth about politics*.

As part of the international dimension of their work, young parliamentarians participate in international events and interact with foreign organizations.



The 19th World Festival of Youth and Students, the largest youth project in the world and the most ambitious event in Russia's modern history, was held in Sochi in 2017. It was attended by about 25,000 young people from 188 states. Young parliamentarians participated in many forums during the festival. Among others, they initiated the Image of Russia's Future National Youth Policy Manifesto, which was adopted there.



*The XIX World Festival of Youth and Students shaped the image of the future of youth and youth policy in the world*

### Youth Work in Federation Council

In 2012, the Federation Council created the Chamber of Young Legislators, a permanent advisory body acting on a voluntary basis.

The Chamber comprises young deputies aged from 18 up to 35 from regional legislative (representative) bodies and or municipal representative bodies.

Russia's regional state bodies nominate two young deputies to work for the Chamber, with one from the local legislature (a representative body) and the other from the local executive body.

The Chamber of Young Legislators operates through plenary meetings convened on an ad hoc basis which are to be held at least twice a year.

The Youth Chamber mainly strives to assist the Federation Council in legal and regulatory matters to protect young people's rights and legitimate interests, as well as to produce recommendations and proposals on how to address youth-related problems which affect their rights and legitimate interests while keeping to the letter of the law.

The Chamber's key functions include:

- Monitoring federal and regional laws protecting the rights and legitimate interests of young people;

- Examining and evaluating draft laws affecting the rights and legitimate interests of young people together with the Federation Council's committees;

- Participating in parliamentary sessions, round tables and other events held in the Federation Council on issues affecting the rights and legitimate interests of young people;

- interacting with youth nongovernmental organizations in matters related to the activities of the Youth Chamber;

- interacting with international youth associations to exchange practices of how to solve urgent youth-related problems.

### Youth Parliamentary Work in Russian Regions

Since 2016 numerous youth councils have been established across Russia. The bodies include young deputies under 35 representing legislative bodies of various levels.

Municipal youth parliaments have been created in over 1,900 municipalities.

The number of young Russian parliamentarians exceeds 42,000 people.

The first Russian youth parliament was established in 1996 in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). The Student Public Duma of the Tyumen Region set up by the Tyumen State University and the Tyumen Regional Duma, was a pioneer in the field of youth engagement and youth parliamentarism in Russian regions.

To date, youth parliaments have been created in 81 subjects of the Russian Federation, with ten having the right of initiative (in the Jewish Autonomous Region, Samara, Kaluga, Tomsk, Volgograd, Kurgan, Tambov, Magadan, the Orenburg Region, and the Stavropol Territory).

Young regional parliamentarians focus on proposing bills and developing legislative initiatives, organizing



*The Chamber of Young Legislators under the Federation Council discussed the draft of the Federal Law "On Youth and National Youth Policy in the Russian Federation".*

forums, teaching young people about political technologies, and informing them about the activities of government bodies.

Annually young parliamentarians run in election campaigns at various levels. They bring forward numerous bills in legislative bodies.

The Youth Public Chamber under the Legislative Assembly of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast had fifteen of its regional bills adopted, with eight laws currently in effect.

A regional law on young professionals has been adopted due to the Magadan Youth Parliament. It provided for the assistance to young people who leave for remote districts to work there. The Magadan Youth Parliament also railroaded through the bill on assisting students, which makes students eligible for more benefits.

The Youth Parliament under the State Council of the Republic of Adygea (in Adyghe, the Khase) put forward amendments to the law regulating the national youth policy which entitle youth volunteer movements and student groups to state support.

### Discussion Points

1. How much should the state intervene in the life of young people?
2. What should be prioritized in the national youth policy?
3. What are the most effective interaction mechanisms between legislative and executive bodies and the youth?
4. How can the culture of youth parliamentarism impact on young people's interest in politics? What place should youth parliamentarism hold in the national youth policy?
5. What global issues do young MPs highlight?
6. The age of young parliamentarians: international practices.
7. How can the young people's role in interparliamentary cooperation (parliamentary diplomacy) be made more important? How will stronger youth parliamentarism influence international organizations and what prospects will it offer?
8. How can the synergy of youth structures in interstate integration projects be provided? How promising is the youth dimension of integration?
9. How can youth parliamentarism and public diplomacy contribute to the resolution of global problems?