



The Youth Progress Forum
Covid, Climate and Commitment

June 10th, A Virtual Forum

About the forum

We are at a critical moment in time. Young people have been hit hard by the pandemic, with many facing disrupted education, skyrocketing unemployment and a growing mental health crisis. So how can we protect and improve the quality of life for our young people and future generations?

The Youth Progress Index 2021 by the European Youth Forum with the support of the Social Progress Imperative, brings together data from over 150 countries around the world. By combining the crucial components of basic human needs, wellbeing and opportunity, the Youth Progress Index provides a unique insight into the progress states are making to empower their young people.

On June 10th we will host our live virtual event where the results of this year's Youth Progress Index will be revealed and you will have the opportunity to discuss the reality of young people today, including the impact of Covid-19 and the climate crisis, with policy-makers, business and civil society organisations.

Confirmed speakers

Salam Al-Nukta, CEO and Co-Founder of ChangeMakers

Darius Baxter, President and CEO, GOODProjects

Elmira Bayrasli, Co-founder and CEO, Foreign Policy Interrupted

Nadège Carlier, UN Youth Delegate for Climate, for the French-speaking Belgian youth

Shari Davis, Co-Executive Director, Participatory Budgeting Project

Joanna Drake, Deputy-Director-General, Directorate General for the Environment, European Commission

Michael O'Flaherty, Director, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

Michael Green, CEO, Social Progress Imperative

Hannah Grieve, Senior Communications Officer, European Youth Forum

Matjaž Gruden, Director of Democratic Participation, Council of Europe

Ryan Heath, Senior Editor, *Politico*

John Lisney, EU Lead and Research Analyst, Social Progress Imperative

Aditi Maheshwari, Director, Climate Action, Secretary-General's Climate Action Team, Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG), United Nations

Silja Markkula, President, European Youth Forum

Niklas Nienab, Member of the European Parliament

Yasmine Ouirhrane, Founder of We Belong Europe

Valentina Pop, Europe Express Editor, Financial Times

María Rodríguez Alcázar, European Youth Forum Board member

Sophie Sutherland, Global Communications and Marketing Director, Social Progress Imperative

Maria Walsh, Member of the European Parliament

Time zone is CET

3.00 pm

Welcome

María Rodríguez Alcázar, European Youth Forum Board member

Silja Markkula, President, European Youth Forum

3.15 pm

Presentation: **Youth Progress Index 2021 Results**

Michael Green, CEO, Social Progress Imperative

3.30 pm

Climate Change: Innovation, Activism or Governance?

Youth activism pushed climate change to the forefront of the conversation and forced policymakers to pay attention. From the European Green Deal to the Biden climate plan, policies for a carbon neutral future are moving forward, albeit with resistance. Some would argue that the plans are too little too late and that we need big societal change not incremental policy. Techno-optimists would say silver bullets in the form of clean energy, carbon capture and other innovations, will save the day. So who is right? How do

we align on the best way to move forward and how do we put out the fire which is already raging?

Part one A conversation with **Aditi Maheshwari**, Director, Climate Action, Secretary-General's Climate Action Team, Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG), United Nations

Interviewer: **Sophie Sutherland**, Global Communications and Marketing Director, Social Progress Imperative

Part two Interactive discussion

Nadège Carlier, UN Youth Delegate for Climate, for the French-speaking Belgian youth
Joanna Drake, Deputy-Director-General, Directorate General for the Environment, European Commission

Niklas Nienab, Member of the European Parliament

Moderator: **Ryan Heath**, Senior Editor, *Politico*

4.10 pm

Youth and Covid-19: The fallout and bringing back optimism

Young people around the world have been among the hardest hit by the shutdown, despite their resilience to the virus. From job and income loss, to a dramatic rise in mental health issues, this generation's youth are facing deep and long term consequences from the pandemic. Disruptions to education and the existing digital divide make it likely that inequalities have been exacerbated and it could be years before we find out the true cost of the virus. In this discussion we'll address what it means to be young during Covid-19, the potential policy and civil society actions we can take and how we bring optimism back.

Part one A conversation with **Maria Walsh**, Member of the European Parliament

Interviewer: **Hannah Grieve**, Senior Communications Officer, European Youth Forum

Part two Interactive discussion

Salam Al-Nukta, CEO and Co-Founder of ChangeMakers

Maria Rodriguez, European Youth Forum Board member

Moderator: **Valentina Pop**, Europe Express Editor, *Financial Times*

4.40 pm

Civic Space and Youth Rights

As marginalised groups and minorities have been disproportionately impacted by the global pandemic, it has shone a light on the deep systemic inequalities in our society. Covid restrictions have also limited people's capacity to meet and mobilise, contributing further to a growing global trend of governments' pushback on civic space. How can youth-driven social movements become the change we need for future generations, while governments are acting to restrict their civic space? How have Covid and related

measures contributed to further restrictions on young people's ability to mobilise for social causes?

Part one A conversation with **Michael O'Flaherty**, Director, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

Interviewer: **John Lisney**, EU Lead and Research Analyst, Social Progress Imperative

Part two Interactive discussion

Darius Baxter, President and CEO, GOODProjects

Shari Davis, Co-Executive Director, Participatory Budgeting Project

Matjaž Gruden, Director of Democratic Participation, Council of Europe

Yasmine Ouirhrane, Founder of We Belong Europe

Moderator: **Elmira Bayrasli**, Co-founder and CEO, Foreign Policy Interrupted

5.15 pm **Closing performance - When Art meets Activism**

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5.20 pm Closing remarks

María Rodríguez Alcázar, European Youth Forum Board member

5.30 pm End of event