

UN forum's key message: Young people must be meaningful participants in policy-making

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2 February 2018 –

Young people must be involved at all levels of policy-making and in all processes that affect them, including in the design of national plans, according to a summary statement issued at the end of a United Nations forum on youth.

The [statement](#) – issued by the President of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Marie Chatardová – highlights key messages and recommendations emerged from discussions during the 2018 ECOSOC [Youth Forum](#), held on 30 and 31 January in New York.

The Forum, which the Council has been convening since 2012, continued to grow in size and stature, bringing together 38 Ministers and senior officials, the largest number to date, and more than 700 youth participants from around the world, the statement said.

Through plenary discussions and breakout sessions, the Council listened to a wide diversity of voices and ideas from young people across all regions.

“We were inspired by [young people's proposals](#) to climate change and social inequity – smart water, energy efficiency, compost and recycling, decentralized economy think tanks, biodiversity and forest conservation and preservation of indigenous knowledge,” the statement said.

Policymakers shared their approaches to engaging young people in decision-making and implementing of the [2030 Agenda](#) and addressing their priorities in their national Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) implementation strategies.

Youth focused their attention on access to water, sanitation (SDG 6), and energy (SDG 7); sustainable and inclusive cities (SDG 11), sustainable consumption and production (SDG 12); sustainably managed forests (SDG 15); use of science, technology and innovations in facilitating youth engagement, development and resilience (SDG 17).

The Forum called on Member States to ensure that young people have the institutional and political space to contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at country, regional and global levels.

“The voices of young people can be amplified at the global level if they are included as youth delegates at the UN and if they are part of national

delegations for the review of implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the High-Level Political Forum,” the statement said, adding that they should hold their Governments accountable for their commitments, including through vigorous shadow reporting.

Full Text of Presidential Statement on Economic and Social Council Youth Forum[here](#)

The statement also said that “ministries responsible for the youth portfolio have a huge responsibility to ensure young people are prioritized.”

They were urged to do this through collaboration with other line Ministries while fostering partnerships with youth and other civil society organizations.

The Forum was also told about the need to channel resources from all sources – public, private, philanthropic and official development assistance – to promote direct investment in the priority issues that affect young people, including youth initiatives and enterprises, youth organizations, and in productive sectors and activities that benefit them most.