
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

United Nations Youth Office

The President of the Republic of Lithuania

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania

Lithuanian Permanent Mission to the United Nations

**OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF THE LITHUANIAN YOUTH COUNCIL (LIJOT)
ON THE UNITED NATIONS SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE OUTCOME DOCUMENTS:
PACT FOR THE FUTURE, GLOBAL DIGITAL COMPACT, AND DECLARATION ON
FUTURE GENERATIONS**

The Lithuanian Youth Council General Assembly No. 60

Adopted on the 19th-20th of October, 2024

Vilnius

The Lithuanian Youth Council (hereinafter referred to as LiJOT), the foremost non-governmental coalition of youth organizations in Lithuania, which unites 54 diverse national youth and youth-serving organizations, alongside municipal youth organization councils, hereby acknowledges the commendable efforts of the United Nations in addressing global challenges through the "Pact for the Future".¹ We wish to emphasize the pivotal role that the youth plays in shaping a sustainable and equitable future. Nevertheless, we must express our concerns regarding the Pact.

It lacks the requisite strength and binding commitments that are necessary for the effective and meaningful integration of youth into decision-making processes. As representatives of the Lithuanian youth, we find ourselves compelled to convey our disappointment with the predominantly soft and voluntary-based approach taken in key areas that directly influence the future of young people.

¹ United Nations Summit of the Future Outcome Documents: Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact, and Declaration on Future Generations: < https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sotf-pact_for_the_future_adopted.pdf >

- **Voluntary Nature of Youth Integration:** While Actions 36 and 37 of the Pact address youth participation at national and international levels, they are presented solely as voluntary measures. We contend that reliance on voluntary actions is insufficient to guarantee substantial youth involvement in decision-making. It is imperative that youth participation be institutionalized, regulated, and rendered mandatory across all Member States to ensure that the voices of young people are consistently heard and duly considered in policymaking.
- **Lack of Binding Frameworks:** Action 34 advocates for investments in the social and economic development of youth, but fails to include binding commitments. While we appreciate the emphasis on youth development, without enforceable measures, there is no assurance that countries will follow through on these commitments. LiJOT urges the establishment of clear and enforceable frameworks that compel governments to allocate adequate resources that would ensure that young people have equitable access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities.
- **Youth, Peace, and Security (Action 20):** The recognition of the role of the youth in promoting peace and security through Action 20 is commendable, however, it is once again framed as a voluntary initiative. For youth to exert meaningful impact on the matters of peace and conflict resolution, it is essential that national and regional roadmaps for youth, peace, and security be made mandatory, with explicit targets, resource allocation, and accountability mechanisms.
- **Climate Action and Environmental Justice (Action 9):** Climate change represents a defining issue for young people today, however, the Pact does not guarantee their inclusion in climate policy decision-making processes. The current wording lacks the necessary commitments to engage youth in shaping climate responses. LiJOT insists that youth must be recognized as key stakeholders in all climate discussions, and their voices should be integral to national and international climate policies.
- **Economic Inclusion and Employment (Actions 6 and 34):** While Action 6 addresses poverty eradication and Action 34 focuses on youth development, there is an absence of explicit mention of the pressing challenge that is posed by youth unemployment. The Pact should incorporate robust policy directives aimed at reducing youth unemployment and ensuring decent work opportunities for young people, particularly in developing nations where youth are affected disproportionately.

- Digital and Technological Inclusion (Actions 28 and 29): The Pact highlights the transformative potential of digital technologies, however, it neglects to address how these advancements will be made accessible to youth. To foster equitable access to the digital economy, there must be commitments to bridge the digital divide affecting young people, especially those in rural areas. LiJOT advocates for universal digital access and comprehensive digital literacy programs to equip youth with the skills necessary to thrive in the modern economy.

LiJOT recommends the following:

- Mandatory Youth Participation: Youth integration in decision-making should be a binding commitment for all Member States, rather than an optional, voluntary measure. We advocate for the institutionalization of youth participation through youth advisory councils, youth quotas, and other mechanisms that ensure young people possess genuine influence in governance at both national and international levels.
- Concrete Implementation and Accountability Frameworks: The Pact should establish specific, measurable targets for youth inclusion, supported by monitoring mechanisms to hold governments accountable. Member States ought to report on their progress in engaging youth in decision-making and addressing youth-specific challenges, including access to education, employment, and health services.
- Allocated Resources for Youth Programs: Governments must pledge to allocate sufficient resources to support youth programs, particularly in areas such as leadership development, capacity building, and civic engagement. The Pact should encompass financial commitments from Member States to fund initiatives aimed at empowering youth.
- Youth in Climate Policy: Given the disproportionate impact of climate change on future generations, the Pact must guarantee youth representation in all climate policy discussions. Young people should occupy formal seats at decision-making tables during international climate negotiations, with clear mandates to influence policies pertinent to climate action and environmental sustainability.
- Employment and Economic Inclusion: The Pact should explicitly tackle the youth unemployment crisis by including stronger commitments to generate jobs and provide decent work opportunities for young people. Governments should concentrate on youth-oriented economic policies that facilitate pathways from education to the labor market,

ensuring access to employment opportunities that afford economic security for young individuals.

- Digital Equity and Inclusion: To fully harness the opportunities presented by digital and technological advancements, the Pact must incorporate specific commitments to bridge the digital divide affecting young people. This includes guaranteeing that young individuals, particularly those in underserved communities, have access to technology and digital education.

In conclusion, while we recognize the potential of the "Pact for the Future" as a vital document in addressing the challenges facing today's youth, we firmly believe that it could have been a more impactful and effective framework had the perspectives and insights of young people been duly considered and actively discussed. The successful realization of the aspirations of the Pact necessitates a commitment to genuinely engage youth in all stages of decision-making, thereby ensuring that their voices are not only heard but also integrated into the policies that shape their futures.

President of the Lithuanian Youth Council

Umberto Masi