

BRAGA DECLARATION

25th RED CROSS RED CRESCENT EUROPEAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN YOUTH COOPERATION MEETING

The Red Cross Red Crescent European and Central Asian Youth Network (“the Network”) came together in Braga, Portugal, at its XXV European and Central Asian Youth Cooperation Meeting. The Network is composed of 53 member National Societies to support and strengthen knowledge management, youth advocacy, and cooperation. With this declaration, we are addressing National Societies in the European and Central Asian region, the IFRC Europe Regional Office, the Red Cross EU Office, the IFRC Governing Board, the IFRC Secretariat, as well as governments and the international communities of our region. This document builds on the foundations of previous regional agreements with a specific youth focus.



Strengthening the Network

We recognize the importance of a strong and united network. Youth Leaders of our region take the lead in creating an impactful network by ensuring accountability, sustainability and effective communication. We call on National Societies, the Coordination Committee and the IFRC Europe Regional Office to invest in and ensure the sustainability of the Networks activities through active participation and regular communication.



Youth engagement

Adequate investment in meaningful youth engagement is essential for the transfer of experiences, leadership renewal, and overall progress of the movement (IFRC Youth Policy, 2017). Youth makes the Movement present- and future-proof and creates resilient societies, hence it is paramount to fully implement the IFRC Youth Engagement Strategy.

We, as the Network, commit ourselves to:

- reduce barriers to engagement in the Network
- explore new ways of volunteering to stay relevant for young people as an impactful humanitarian movement
- support the implementation of the Youth Engagement Strategy 2.0 to contribute to strong National Societies.

We call on the leadership of National Societies from the European and Central Asian Region, the IFRC Europe Regional Office, the Red Cross EU Office, and IFRC Governing Board to:

- recognize the added value of youth to building back better after the pandemic and other emergencies, armed conflicts, and the ongoing mental health crises in our region.
- Reinforce youth participation and diverse perspectives in decision-making processes, especially regarding the upcoming RCRC Statutory Meetings in 2024 to further institutionalise intergenerational approaches.



Youth advocacy

Covering both advocacy for and by young people, the Network supports and can facilitate youth voices at RCRC Statutory Meetings, within National Societies, and in the international community. Young people can and should contribute not only to youth issues but to key priorities of the Movement, including migration, mental health, and climate crisis, as outlined by the Tbilisi Commitments. Young people, bring together the lived experience of growing up in a complex world as well as the expertise of frontline volunteering. We believe that through intergenerational dialogue and diversity of perspectives, we contribute significantly to our Movement goals.



MENTAL HEALTH: Promote the IFRC Youth Manifesto on Mental Health to recognize its importance, break the stigma, and initiate further intergenerational dialogue to scale up actions to alleviate the Mental Health Crisis.



MIGRATION: Engage meaningfully in the development and implementation of the upcoming IFRC Strategy on Migration at the next RCRC Statutory Meetings.



CLIMATE CRISIS: Recognise and reinforce the urgency of the climate crisis as outlined in the Tbilisi Commitments, and its impact on young people and their Mental Health to scale up efforts for adaptation and mitigation. Besides, lead by example in ensuring diverse representation at the upcoming COPs in the RCRC delegation.

We call on the leadership of National Societies from the European and Central Asian Region to:

- commit to meaningful youth representation and participation in key meetings, including but not limited to the International Conference, General Assembly, Council of Delegates, and European Regional Conference;
- acknowledge the successful humanitarian diplomacy of youth leaders and further share access to high-level advocacy opportunities for real perspective and representativeness.

We call on the IFRC Governing Board, Secretariat, IFRC European Regional Office, and Red Cross EU Office to:

- provide adequate funding and technical resources to support strengthening the Network and deliver our work plan;
- lead by example in ensuring diverse representation at the UNHCR Global Refugee Forum, including at minimum one young refugee or asylum seeker in the RCRC delegation.

We call on the governments and international community of our region to:

- respect and highlight the voice of those with lived experience of humanitarian crises, including but not limited to young people with experience of conflict and natural disasters;
- recognize the role of young people during humanitarian crises and ensure that their special needs are met.

We call on the entire RCRC Movement in our region to this statement and proactively participate in the process of creating a Movement community in which young people can thrive and inspire each other and their National Societies.

The achievements of the European and Central Asian Youth Network and the related calls on other actors in the Movement will be reviewed and taken into account during the 26th European and Central Asian Youth Assembly.