



young
elected
politicians

YEPs Monthly Newsletter

All you need to know about CoR's activities and events!

Issue 5 | January 2024

159th Plenary Session: Debate on the EU elections 2024

The January newsletter begins with the announcement of a landmark debate on the upcoming European elections, which will take place between 6 and 9 June 2024.

The debate will take place during the 159th Plenary Session **on 1 February 2024, from 10.50 am to 12.50 pm** and will be webstreamed live.



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[More information here](#)

Raise your voice!

Join us in shaping the conversation! How can you participate?

Share your insights, inquiries, and perspectives on the key topics of our upcoming debate. Email us at yep-programme@cor.europa.eu prior to the event with your contributions on these vital questions:

- What strategies can address the issues facing young people in EU regions and cities?
- How can we engage young people in EU regions and cities for the upcoming 2024 EU elections?

Please specify in your email which topic you are addressing.

Interview with Marko Vešligaj

In this month's edition of our newsletter, we feature an enlightening interview with Marko VEŠLIGAJ, Mayor, city of Pregrada and rapporteur of the [draft opinion on disability](#), focusing on the European Union's latest initiative: the European Disability Card (EDC) and the European Parking Card (EPC).



Marko Vešligaj, Mayor, city of Pregrada ©European Union/ Laurie D.

What are the key points of the Proposal for directive establishing the EDC and EPC concerning the local and regional level?

The local and regional authorities, who are responsible for issuing and renewing both cards, have a key role to play in ensuring swift implementation and thus better accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities.

Which could be the main challenges associated with implementation of the Directive at local and regional levels?

Firstly, neither the target group of people with disabilities nor the local and regional authorities must be confronted with additional financial burdens that could hinder swift implementation. Secondly, technical and material support is required above all to sensitize employees of local and regional authorities to the switch to both cards and to allow to communicate the information barrier-free through their channels.

How can young leaders in local communities contribute to promoting barrier-free communication and ensuring that the needs of young people with disabilities are addressed effectively?

At this point, I see a particular challenge but also an opportunity for our young leaders in local communities to use the introduction of both cards as a reason to seek closer collaboration at the local and regional levels with people with disabilities and to increase their involvement. We must not forget that they serve as role models, showcasing improved access and visibility within their age group.

[Read the full interview](#)

THE EUROPEAN CHARLEMAGNE YOUTH PRIZE 2024

#ECYP2024

charlemagneyouthprize.eu



European Charlemagne Youth Prize Applications are open!

Are you an EU resident aged 16-30 working on a project that helps change Europe? You could be the next winner of the European Charlemagne Youth Prize!

You can finally apply to be the next **European Charlemagne Youth Prize #ECYP2024** winner!

The [European Charlemagne Youth Prize](#) is awarded to youth-run projects that help change Europe and this is your opportunity to take your project to the next level.

The awards include up to €7,500 for your project, a chance to present your project in the European Parliament, an invitation to the winners' week in Aachen (Germany) and a traineeship in the European Parliament.

The application deadline is on 12 February.

[Apply here](#)

European Summit of Regions and Cities Mons | Belgium 18-19 March 2024



Don't miss the opportunity to be part of the largest European gathering of local and regional representatives and make your voice heard!

REMINDER

Registrations are open!

On 18-19 March 2024, Mons, in the Walloon Region of Belgium, will welcome mayors, councillors, regional ministers and high-level European and global decision-makers.

[Register now](#)

Info-point

Empowering Local Leaders: Guides on Tackling Extremism and Polarisation

In an era where global threats like hate, extremism, and polarisation are increasingly intertwined with local dynamics, mayors and local governments are on the frontline.

Recognising the urgent need for guidance and peer support, **Strong Cities Network** has introduced two essential guides for preventing and responding to local hate, extremism, and polarisation: *A Guide for Mayors* and *A Guide for Cities*.

Developed with insights from over 100 global local leaders, these resources offer practical strategies for city officials. Find out more below:

[Guide for Mayors](#)

[Guide for Cities](#)

Monthly Highlights

A New Chapter for Participatory Democracy



Missed the high-level conference on "A New Chapter for Participatory Democracy"? Don't worry, you can still catch up on all the insightful discussions and key takeaways. The event, held on 15th December 2023, delved into the heart of strengthening the democratic foundation of the EU. Local and regional leaders shared their perspectives on bringing citizen voices to the European level, a crucial step for impactful policymaking.

Watch the conference

Local dialogue in Croatia

CoR Member Marko Vešligaj (HR/PES) organised a local dialogue in his hometown, the city of Pregrada and he wrote a report and produced a four-minute [video](#) (in Croatian, but with English subtitles). Our YEP, Adelina Kunst (HR/PES) attended the event as well.



Click the image to watch the video

Flash News on Ukraine

In Ukraine, local and regional authorities are actively addressing war-related challenges.

The focus on decentralization, financial support for local governments, and transparent decision-making was highlighted at two key events: the XVII Ukrainian Municipal Forum in Kyiv on 4-5 December and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Lviv on 15 December.

CoR President Vasco Alves Cordeiro, addressed both events with video messages, and members of the CoR Working Group on Ukraine participated in debates.

On 14 December, the European Council approved the opening of accession negotiations for Ukraine. At the same time, €50 billion EU financial aid package for Ukraine was blocked by Hungary, and will be re-addressed by the EU leaders at an extraordinary meeting in January 2024.

Social Media Corner!

Do you have best practices in your municipality, city or region?

Share with the YEP community on our [Facebook](#) or [WhatsApp](#) groups and learn from others!

FACEBOOK

WHATSAPP

Get in touch with our Social Media Team for our masterclasses, one-to-one consultations and others.

CONTACT US

