



INTERMINISTERIAL COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

I NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY

PURSUANT TO SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2250 (2015)

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List of acronyms

AIG	Italian Youth Agency
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAAC	Children and Armed Conflict
CCP	Civil Peace Corps
CIDCI	Italian Coordination of Diasporas for International Cooperation
CIDU	Interministerial Committee for Human Rights
CNG	National Youth Council
CNR	National Research Council
COE	Council of Europe
CONNGI	National Coordination of New Italian Generations
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DGAP	Directorate-General for Political and Security Affairs
DGSCU	Department for Youth Policies and Universal Civil Service
DPPA	Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
EBCO-BEOC	European Bureau for Conscientious Objection
ECFR	European Council on Foreign Relations
EEAS	European External Action Service
ESC	European Solidarity Corps
EU	European Union
GCE	Generation Climate Europe
IAI	Institute of International Affairs
ISPI	Institute for International Political Studies
MAECI	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NAP	National Action Plan
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NYPs	National Youth Parliaments
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PBC	Peacebuilding Commission
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PCTO	Pathway for Transversal Skills and Orientation
PSDC	Common Security and Defence Policy
RIMI	Italian Network for International Mediation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UFM	Union for the Mediterranean
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
UNODA	United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
UNYO	United Nations Youth Office
VET	Vocational Education and Training
W20	Women 20
WIIS	Women in International Security

WPS/DPS	Women, Peace and Security
YFJ	European Youth Forum
YPS/GPS	Youth, Peace and Security

Preface

In a complex international scenario, the Government is at the forefront of promoting dialogue, peace and security in all crisis areas. The premise is that there can be no future without security, and there is no security without peace and dialogue.

The younger generations have a key role to play in this endeavour. Involving young people in decision-making processes, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction means investing in tomorrow's security.

The Youth, Peace and Security Agenda, provided for by United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250, has defined the role of the younger generations as key players in building safer and more inclusive societies in a peaceful world.

These principles are among the Government's strategic priorities. This is why we have promoted the first National Action Plan on Youth, Peace and Security, through in-depth dialogue between institutions, civil society, academia, youth networks and research centres.

The Plan is intended to be a strategic document to strengthen the youth dimension in national policies and foreign policy action, in Europe, at the UN, in the G7 and in all international forums.

Through the Plan, we are sending a strong message: Italy attributes a central role to young people as builders of peace and future. Their energy, creativity and capacity for dialogue are essential resources in our commitment to promote peace and growth in the world, starting with an enlarged Mediterranean.

With this important initiative – our Plan is the second in Europe and one of the first worldwide – the Government intends to reaffirm its commitment to promoting peace, dialogue and growth, focusing on the role of the younger generations as protagonists of change, with their eyes on the future but rooted in the responsibilities of the present.

Rome, April 16th 2026

Antonio Tajani
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of
Foreign Affairs and International
Cooperation

Andrea Abodi
Minister for Sport and Youth

Introduction and methodology

The definition of objectives, the formulation of measures and actions, and the establishment of a national structural and operational framework for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2250 of 9 December 2015, 2419 of 6 June 2018, 2535 of 14 July 2020, and 2087 of 12 December 2025 - which gave rise to the global Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda - represent the main foundational steps of this National Action Plan. This strategic-programmatic document has been adopted by Italy to ensure a targeted commitment at national, local, regional, and international levels.

The process aimed at adopting the First National Action Plan on Youth, Peace and Security (1st NAP YPS) began in 2024 through an **inter-institutional dialogue** involving the active participation of relevant national offices and entities¹. These stakeholders formed a Working Group coordinated by the Directorate General for Political and Security Affairs (DGAP) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI), chaired by the **National Coordinator for the YPS Agenda**. This group has been meeting periodically since November 2024 to define shared approaches for exploring and deepening the Agenda among institutional actors, civil society, academia, think tanks, and youth-led networks and movements.

This inclusive approach was preserved during the subsequent phases, scheduled in the first half of 2025. It began with the publication of a public **survey conducted by the National Youth Council** from 10 to 12 March 2025, as an advisory body established by Law No. 145/2018 tasked with representing youth in dialogue with institutional stakeholders in shaping youth policies.

The survey, which involved a representative sample of the Italian population aged 18 and older, segmented by gender, age, major geographic areas, and urban centre size, revealed extensive knowledge of the United Nations system and its statutory goals, but limited awareness of the YPS Agenda and, at the national level, of the Civil Peace Corps. Once the pillars of the Agenda were introduced, strong importance was attributed to the aspects of protection and prevention. In contrast, participatory components and issues related to disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of youth affected by conflict were perceived as less relevant. Significant attention was placed on the role of partnerships between States to ensure political, financial, technical, and logistical support in conflict and post-conflict situations. The limited knowledge of the Agenda led to a call for more information, preferably accessible through digital channels rather than dedicated in-person meetings or training sessions.

In light of this, a clear need emerges to deepen the educational dimension - not only regarding the Agenda but also concerning peace and security issues in general – which requires targeted actions by the national system (especially institutional, governmental, and parliamentary actors, supported by civil society). It also highlights the importance of youth presence in international relations through diplomatic channels and mediation processes.

Among the key findings that guided the drafting of the 1st NAP YPS the survey respondents' perspective on the role of youth in promoting peace at both national and international levels has been decisive. Foremost, knowledge of peace and security issues is seen as essential for spreading values such as tolerance, respect, and cooperation. The proactive role of young generations is also crucial and is expressed both in public spaces - through groups, movements, and networks, as well as through specific projects or campaigns - also via digital platforms. While youth are seen as potential “ambassadors of peace”, facilitating intergenerational contact and dialogue, confidence in the impact of their participation in decision-making processes is still limited. Today this critical factor is linked to a perceived lack of trust from institutional actors, compounded by practical obstacles such as the discontinuous nature of debates and training on peace and security issues and the scarcity of financial resources enabling genuine active participation.

These quantitative insights were confirmed by broader data on variables contributing to youth distress, reported in the **2025 Youth Report** compiled by EU.R.E.S. at the request of the CNG and the Italian Youth Agency (AIG)². Contributing factors include the exponential increase in armed conflicts in regions close to Italy and the challenges faced by national and international institutions in actively resolving critical situations.

Regarding ongoing conflicts, young generations express significant concern but remain confident in their ability to effect change using their skills and taking concrete action both in daily life, through peer dialogue in public spaces (particularly to counter disinformation on these issues), and in their roles as citizens engaging with institutions to adopt and implement peace-oriented and international cooperation policies.

Various considerations emerging from the survey results led to the proposal, in agreement with relevant national offices and entities, of an **in-depth informational model on the YPS Agenda**.

A first meeting was organized by AIG in Rome on 11 April 2025³, with the active participation of youth from across the country selected through a public call. Divided into working groups, they exchanged information and proposals with the goal of formulating operational recommendations for implementing the Agenda in Italy. The exercise was based on an analysis of international documents produced by the United Nations on the topic, to identify core material elements and provide an interpretive framework for domestic implementation. This analysis emphasized youth engagement strategies to translate their roles and commitments under the 1st NAP YPS, including: civil society and field experience through direct collaboration with youth; formal and informal educational services, particularly in schools; and the family as the basic environment where young people are taught to think, communicate, and act. In parallel group discussions focused on each Agenda pillar, current obstacles were identified and targeted recommendations were developed to guide the drafting and implementation of the 1st NAP YPS. These included the need to establish a system for data collection and analysis and to create a structured and systemic monitoring and evaluation mechanism for public policies relating to youth participation in decision-making.

A second meeting was held remotely by the CNG on 15 May 2025⁴. It involved a working group composed of youth selected through an open application addressed to associations and youth movements affiliated with the Council. This model is used by the CNG to ensure youth participation and contribution in defining policy priorities and shaping institutional interventions. During the meeting, the timeline and methodology of this activity were shared and adopted. Under the guidance of a coordinator, participants were divided into subgroups to analyse the pillars of UNSC Resolution 2250, complemented by extensive UN materials. This approach encouraged a thematic reading of the YPS Agenda that highlights its multifaceted nature and implementation, in line with its foundational principles and specific needs and conditions of any conflict-affected area involving youth.

To support the subgroups' work, an analytical framework was developed to formulate a set of recommendations for each Agenda pillar. These recommendations were structured according to parameters such as: responsible actor/entity, objective, operational measure or action, implementing modalities, monitoring mechanism, and indicators for evaluating outcomes.

The outputs of the two meetings, alongside the results of the inter-institutional coordination, enabled the establishment of the timeline and methodology for drafting the 1st NAP YPS. This led to the finalization and the public sharing of the document, particularly with youth and youth-led movements and associations directly involved, as well as with institutional stakeholders. The adoption of the Plan has been scheduled for the year 2025, 10th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250, on 9 December 2025.

Part One – The international and regional context

The legal framework and key elements of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda

The United Nations Security Council Resolutions

The creation of the United Nations legal and programmatic framework around the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda (YPS Agenda) is based on the process launched in 2015, when, at the initiative of Jordan, Resolution 2250 was adopted by the Security Council on 9 December, defining the framework itself and outlining the conceptual and operational priority areas for the best implementation of its contents by the UN Member States.

For the first time **Resolution 2250** places young people at the centre of conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict rebuilding scenarios⁵. Their role and contribution are both individual and collective and, in order to be effective, require to be properly framed within the conflict context. In this perspective, the **five pillars of the YPS Agenda** have been formulated: encouraging youth participation in all aspects relevant to peace and security, including decision-making processes and peacebuilding mechanisms promoted and implemented at the local, national and regional levels; ensuring the protection of young people in armed conflicts; involving young people in the prevention of violence related to conflict situations; involving young people in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration processes; promoting partnerships, highlighting the need to consult and collaborate with young people to achieve objectives and carry out activities related to peace and security.

Undoubtedly, the importance of the issue has prompted significant further study, resulting in a request by the United Nations Secretary-General for a **Report to be compiled through a global consultation** involving more than 4,000 young people⁶. In its introduction, the document emphasizes the added value of youth in order to discourage the traditional interpretation over a negative role to the younger generation in peacebuilding, based on a presumed direct and proportional link between population growth and youth violence, the presence of young refugees, migrants and displaced people and the risk of social instability, as well as the risk of recruitment of young people by terrorist groups. The Report highlights the importance of educational policies for a decisive and equal impact on youth, preventing inequalities that cause social tensions, individualistic dynamics and violent demonstrations by young people. Isolation is linked to a lack of access to public debate and decision-making processes and to the (presumed) scarce willingness among young people to contribute to the economic growth of their community by seizing professional opportunities for permanent and indefinite access to the labour market. The large number of examples of peacebuilding interventions involving youth, extensively provided in the Report, not only confirmed the need to ensure the involvement of the younger generation in these critical circumstances, but also the need to invest in their knowledge and skills, individually and collectively, to facilitate their contribution to the design, implementation and evaluation of programmes and projects related to the YPS Agenda.

The Report led the Security Council to renew its commitment through the adoption of **Resolution 2419** of 6 June 2018, co-sponsored by Peru and Sweden⁷. Although conceived in the wake of Resolution 2250, this Resolution was not intended to consolidate the pillars of the Agenda in both formal and substantive terms: it rather refers to the importance of considering concrete needs of young people in conflict situations, jointly with the opportunity for their active involvement in peace processes through consultation and decision-making mechanisms activated by the Peacebuilding Commission and, of course, the Security Council.

At the same time, Resolution 2419 did not introduce a mandate for the Secretary-General to report annually to the Security Council on progress in involving young people in peace processes, nor did it provide a voluntary mechanism for Member States to compile and adopt national policy and strategy documents on the YPS Agenda. Instead, Resolution 2419 invites regional and sub-regional Organisations to implement tools and programmes aimed at involving young people.

Overcoming this slowdown in the discussion of the YPS Agenda within the United Nations system, on 14 July 2020, on the initiative of France and the Dominican Republic, the Security Council adopted **Resolution 2535**⁸ which takes a much broader view of the issue, referring to human rights' protection, access to justice, integrity and respect of the rule of law in institutional structures, the creation of a safe environment for young people working in critical contexts for peacekeeping, and the protection of public spaces for civic and political debate. Deserving particular attention to peacekeeping operations, Resolution 2535 emphasizes the importance of including young people in the definition and realization of such operations: this will, in fact, promote their broader and more effective involvement in peace processes as well as in periodic discussion and dialogue convened by the Security Council. Resolution 2535 introduces the mandate of the United Nations Secretary-General **to produce a biennial report dedicated to the YPS Agenda**, asking to facilitate its implementation in United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions and operations, to enable the involvement of young people according to their basic and specialist skills in every process at local, national, regional and international levels to ensure the concrete implementation of the Agenda, and to promote the widest possible dissemination of information and recommendations addressed to young people - so that they could be updated on the results following the implementation of the Agenda through the official periodic documentation of the UN Secretariat. Such complex commitment is extended, in Resolution 2535, to the whole United Nations system, so as to ensure a broad and comprehensive relevance of the YPS Agenda in every document that may concern the role and contribution of young people to peace processes. The Resolution initiated a long-term reflection on the creation of coordination mechanisms that include national institutions and representatives of youth movements in defining national priorities and commitments in implementing the Agenda and in promoting multi-dimensional and inter-geographical collaborations and partnerships.

More recently, on 12 December 2025, the Security Council adopted Resolution 2807⁹, in which all stakeholders were invited to “consider ways to increase the full, effective, safe and meaningful participation and leadership of young people in peace processes, conflict prevention, peacebuilding, recovery and reconstruction at all levels”. The Security Council intended to preserve an open debate to focus on the Agenda and the periodic review provided by the Secretary-General's annual report. The Resolution also emphasised the contribution of Member States in assessing the opportunity to adopt a national action plan or strengthening it, if already adopted and under implementation, by providing concrete support for youth-led peacebuilding initiatives, including through the involvement of civil society.

Three recent steps have confirmed the above mentioned engagement: the creation of a **Group of Champions on YPS** as an open and dynamic platform for the exchange of knowledge, experiences and good practices among UN Member States for the better implementation of the Agenda; in 2013, the appointment of the **Special Envoy of the Secretary-General** directly responsible for issues and policies dedicated to young people, including the topic of peace and security for younger generations; in 2022, with General Assembly Resolution 76/306, the creation of the **Office for Youth (UNYO)**¹⁰, located in the UN Secretariat and tasked with coordinating other relevant UN bodies (Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs - DPPA, United Nations Development Programme - UNDP, United Nations Fund for Population Activities - UNFPA), to ensure attentive and comprehensive promotion, monitoring and assessment of the implementation of Member States' commitments, including in relation to the pillars of the YPS Agenda; finally, in 2023, the appointment of the **Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs**, who also took over the management of the aforementioned Office, with the task of coordinating the United Nations system on this issue and promoting collaboration on youth issues, ensuring the full and effective involvement of young people on sustainable development, human rights, and peace and security.

In this context, a recent step aimed at updating the analysis of the role and impact of the mandate of this UN body is represented by the publication of the third report of the Office¹¹, focusing on activities carried out in the period from 1 June 2024 to 31 May 2025. The report highlights the institutional commitment to multi-stakeholder dialogue, in line with the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan¹² and the broader Youth2030 Strategy of the Organisation¹³. At the same time, through the Working Group on the Implementation of the Pact for the Future (see below) and the Task Force dedicated to youth participation, the Office has concluded a consultation

process for the development of fundamental principles to be adopted by States in order to facilitate and increase youth participation in intergovernmental processes promoted by the United Nations¹⁴.

Reports of the United Nations Secretary-General on the analysis and assessment of the implementation of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda

The United Nations Secretary-General has paid particular attention to the role and contribution of young people in general and has explored this topic in depth with reference to the YPS Agenda, in line with the mandate to compile and submit a biennial report, as provided for in Resolution 2535.

The first Report, adopted on 2 March 2020 (S/2020/167)¹⁵, focuses on critical conditions of young people on a global scale and the resulting impact in terms of missed opportunities to contribute to development, economic growth, social responsibility and civic engagement, and support in decision-making processes that directly affect them, both in peace and conflict situations.

In the Report, there are two key considerations on which the Secretary-General bases his assessment of the implementation of the YPS Agenda: young people play a central role in maintaining and rebuilding international peace and security; there are still many obstacles that prevent young people from participating in and effectively influencing decision-making processes, which see them as victims whose rights and freedoms are violated, who are not adequately involved and trained due to scarce policies and investments targeted at their future. The creation of educational and professional pathways is considered a core measure to invest on preventively for the maintenance of peace. Young people must feel safe in peaceful situations and must be protected in conflict situations when their safety is at risk and there is a high rate of intimidation and attacks that result in violations of their rights, often without the perpetrators being prosecuted. Inclusive dialogue and multi-level participation are crucial at every stage of conflict, where the power and influence of young people must be enhanced. In this regard, the Secretary-General considers essential to initiate informal pathways which might evolve into formal mechanisms and procedures that ensure the full involvement of young people in public and political life at the national, regional and international levels, as well as in the United Nations system. Participation, precisely because it is based on personal and community experience, is equally important in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration processes, where young former combatants must be involved in the design and implementation of local programmes. Collaborations and partnerships are critical for the best implementation of the YPS Agenda and must be designed and implemented with adequate financial resources.

The second Report of the Secretary-General, adopted on 16 March 2022 (S/2022/220)¹⁶, addresses the challenges of implementing the YPS Agenda in relation to several current crises, such as those related to health and climate issues, alongside the traditional concept of conflict, which puts young people's safety at risk, curtails their rights and limits their active participation in decision-making processes for preserving and building peace. The Secretary-General notes that the institutionalisation of the Agenda, both within the United Nations system and in Member States, has consolidated its structural and operational scope; however, youth trust in decision-making bodies is not sufficient to meet their needs and requires a new interpretation of the principle of intergenerational solidarity based on the inclusion and active participation of younger generations in public and political dialogue and debate.

The Report also refers to the specific significance of financial resources needed to implement the YPS Agenda. In this perspective, in 2021 the Peacebuilding Commission approved a Strategic Action Plan on Youth and Peacebuilding, which identifies several lines of action that require dedicated, adequately flexible and responsive financial support, especially in crisis situations: advocacy, consultation, coordination, partnerships, and monitoring of results concerning active involvement of young people in peacebuilding processes. The allocation of dedicated financial resources to cover interventions under the YPS Agenda is ensured by the Peacebuilding Fund, relying on contributions from Member States, which have increased considerably over the years and are made available to civil society organisations and youth movements on a global scale.

In the most recent **Report of the Secretary-General, adopted on 1 March 2024 (S/2024/207)**¹⁷, interesting results are reported in relation to the institutionalisation of the topic and pillars of the Agenda at the national, regional and international levels, although they have not been complemented by the allocation of adequate targeted financial resources. This critical issue is seen as complementary to the need to strengthen the political and strategic commitment of UN Member States to define and implement concrete and effective interventions in favour of young people and their involvement and participation in decision-making processes, in peace and conflict situations, and to create and operationalise data collection and analysis mechanisms for monitoring and boosting commitment when necessary.

[An interpretation of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda within the framework of the Pact for the Future](#)

The **Pact for the Future** was adopted by consensus by the General Assembly on 22 September 2024¹⁸ and is the United Nations policy document aimed at guiding the commitments and actions of Member States in priority areas, namely: sustainable development and financing for development; international peace and security; science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation; young people and future generations; and the ongoing transformation of global governance.

The topic Youth, Peace and Security is addressed in the Pact in relation to its second and fourth priority areas, with particular attention to the participatory and protective dimension of young people and opportunities for multi-stakeholder partnership and collaboration.

In relation to international peace and security, actions formulated refer to the role and contribution of young people; **Action 20** explicitly states the importance of the involvement and active participation of young people in decision-making processes for conflict prevention and resolution, starting with purely institutional contexts convened under the auspices of the United Nations. The interventions must be framed within strategic and programmatic documents adopted at national and regional level, being characterised by a voluntary conceptual and executive approach. This approach can be shaped through a twofold line: multi-level, which guides proposals and operational measures of both Member States at national and local level and regional and international organisations in a coherent, effective and efficient manner; multi-sectoral, with regard to an interpretation of the YPS Agenda that includes political, social, economic and environmental considerations. Equally important is the request to the Secretary-General to produce a further independent report, which will be instrumental in analysing the executive dimension of the YPS Agenda with regard to peace and conflict resolution processes in recent years.

The fourth priority area of the Pact for the Future includes a series of actions to achieve effective results which, in line with the YPS Agenda, focus on the participation of young people in decision-making processes promoted and implemented at national and international level. In this perspective, the commitment should be translated into the creation of consultation mechanisms that extend possibilities for open and inclusive involvement of young people in decision-making processes (including through an increase in dedicated funds within the United Nations), ensuring transparent and constructive intergenerational, facilitating the transformation of existing informal mechanisms into permanent and structured processes that meet formal criteria and parameters, and increasing financial resources for the implementation of national policies, especially at the local level, responding to the needs and requirements of young people.

A process is underway, entrusted to a special Working Group on Youth, divided into three Task Forces, whose results will be periodically shared to Member States.

Within the framework of the first Task Force, which refers to **Action 34** of the Pact, the Secretary-General will work to update the commitment - starting with a dedicated Options Paper - to create a Global Youth Investment Platform to attract funding to be invested in interventions, programmes and projects in support of the younger generations in Member States.

The second Task Force, referring to **Action 37** of the Pact, is tasked with developing a targeted awareness-raising plan to increase support to the UN Youth Fund, requiring the Secretary-General to actively support this process.

The third Task Force, focused on **Action 37d** of the Pact, again involves the Secretary-General in the development of key principles, in consultation with Member States and youth representatives, for Meaningful Youth Engagement in intergovernmental processes and, more generally, in the United Nations system.

The dynamics of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda in the main regional intergovernmental systems

The relevance of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda at the United Nations has promoted an extremely dynamic debate within some regional intergovernmental systems. A common element is the need to contextualise the pillars of the Agenda in relation to the characteristics of each system or region and the strategic priorities defined by the Member States of each regional Organisation with regard to peace and security issues from the perspective of the younger generations.

The **European Union** has always paid particular attention to policies that directly and indirectly affect young people in a comprehensive and cross-cutting manner; however, the consideration of these policies in relation to peace and security issues is more recent. The interest in the YPS Agenda is evidenced by consultations held for and with young people in 2017, with the aim of gathering contributions for the report commissioned by the United Nations Secretary-General: this process was complemented at the operational level by the launch of the Young Med Voices Plus Initiative, a programme whose main objective was to promote intercultural dialogue among young people as agents of change. In 2018, the first **European Conference dedicated to Youth, Peace and Security** was organised in partnership with the United Nations, with the aim of intensifying the debate on four key areas: the creation of spaces for active involvement of young people, the inclusion of young people from different backgrounds in informal networks or communities of practice dedicated to post-conflict building, the encouragement of processes to transform young people's proposals into achievable projects, and the increase in financial resources for the implementation of initiatives conceived and led by young people. Among the main outcomes of the Conference: from a political point of view, **the European Council Conclusions on the role of young people in building a secure, cohesive and harmonious society**¹⁹ introduced the YPS Agenda as a key priority into the European framework; from an organisational point of view the issue was clearly positioned within the framework of the European Union's foreign policy and therefore within the mandate of the European External Action Service (EEAS). In this document, young people are not only considered victims of violence, and therefore persons who must be protected, but also active actors who work to overcome critical conditions and violations in conflict situations, thus making it necessary to consolidate their participation in decision-making processes.

A second and more recent phase has featured the European Union approach to peace and international security issues, considering the youth dimension through a series of measures designed to implement the YPS Agenda at the European level. In this sense, the **European Council Conclusions on "Youth in External Action"**²⁰ and the **Action Plan for Youth in the European Union's External Action 2022-2027**²¹ should be framed: core actions contained therein include the creation of peer-to-peer dialogue platforms, the enhancement of the youth dimension in staff training and capacity-building programmes, the definition of joint programmes within the framework of the neighbourhood partnership focused on youth participation, and the possibility of strengthening the involvement of young people in the EU delegations through the figure of the contact point in charge for these issues. In this regard, the **European Union Guidelines on Mediation and Peace**²² were developed and adopted in 2020 (and updated in 2023), in which the YPS Agenda is expressly mentioned in order to enhance the role of young people in conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes through mediation. The second **European Conference on Youth, Peace and Security** was held in Brussels from 10 to 14 November 2025, with the aim of stimulating discussion between EU institutions, representatives of Member States and over 120 young peacebuilders and partners from around the world to shape the future of

Team Europe's action in this area, concluding with the adoption of the **Joint Declaration on Youth, Peace and Security**²³.

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has referred to the role of young people in international peace and security in a number of ministerial declarations adopted over the last decade, in particular under the Italian Presidency in 2018. The OSCE Secretariat, autonomous institutions and field missions are also committed to integrating a youth perspective into their activities across the three dimensions of political-military, economic-environmental and human security, including through the organisation of initiatives and projects dedicated to young people, such as the Perspectives 20-30 Initiative, OSCE Models, OSCE Scholarship for Peace and Security in the OSCE area and Youth Trails in Albania, which are also financially supported by Italy. From an organisational perspective, some recent presidencies, including Italy in 2018 and the Finnish Presidency, have appointed one or more Special Representatives on Youth and Security for the Organisation. In July 2025, the Finnish Presidency hosted the Chairpersonship Youth Forum, whose outcomes were incorporated into recommendations proposed by participants to national and international governmental bodies, addressing the challenges of defining the involvement and active participation of younger generations in decision-making processes and the issue of peace and international security from the statutory and operational perspective of the Organisation.

The **African Union** has outlined its conceptual and operational framework related to the YPS Agenda within the strategic document “Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want”. At the first meeting of the Organisation Peace and Security Council in November 2018, a commitment was made to compile and adopt a **Continental Framework**²⁴ in 2020, which includes a ten-year implementation strategy structured along the same pillars as the YPS Agenda, emphasizing the causes of conflict and the role that young people can and must play in supporting peace, democracy, the rule of law, justice, the protection of human rights and social reconciliation. The Framework is put under annual monitoring (translated into a report to be submitted to the African Union Peace and Security Council) with regard to measures and actions taken in three priority areas: the recognition and enhancement of the contribution of young people to peace and security, the dynamics and dimensions of multi-stakeholder partnerships, and the compilation and implementation of national action plans by Member States. On 25 April 2022, the African Union Peace and Security Council approved the **Bujumbura Declaration**²⁵, which summarises and translates into commitment the outcomes of the Continental Dialogue on Youth, Peace and Security, emphasizing the need to ensure that younger generations could engage in dialogue in public spaces, both real and virtual, with the aim of promoting peace and mobilising broader participation in decision-making processes, strengthening protection tools and measures through education and knowledge, reinforcing the preventive approach through youth participation, facilitating formal and informal partnerships in a multi-level and transparent manner, and finally supporting young people in the exit-out process from emergency and post-conflict situations for reintegration into the social fabric of their communities. From an organisational point of view, the Commission has appointed a Youth Envoy, five regional youth ambassadors for peace, and an interdepartmental task force dedicated to peace and security issues in youth literature. In general, an incremental target has been set for the proportion of young staff in the Organisation aged between 18 and 30, in line with the United Nations definition of “youth”.

The **League of Arab States** has adopted its own **Strategy for Youth, Peace and Security 2023-2028**²⁶, via a process of consultation and engagement with young people, experts and stakeholders. Since its introduction, the document provides an analytical regional overview, highlighting the main issues affecting the peace and security of Arab youth. The strategic approach is instrumental in supporting the commitment of Arab countries to enhance the role of the younger generation in the area, contributing positively to economic and social development and the achievement of peaceful and secure stability, and strengthening their participation in decision-making processes, thus consolidating values and principles of effective and incisive youth leadership.

The **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** has collaborated with the United Nations to focus attention on the YPS Agenda, adopting a first **ministerial declaration**²⁷ on the subject at the ASEAN Regional Forum in 2021.

National Action Plans dedicated to the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda

In the current international context, also examined on a regional scale, eleven National Action Plans dedicated to the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda are in place and being implemented: Burundi, Cameroun, Democratic Republic of Congo, Finland, Gambia, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, South Sudan, Tunisia. The Philippines has adopted a document entitled “Compendium” and Jordan is completing the compilation of its national strategic document on the YPS Agenda.

These Plans have been analysed and duly considered also in a comparative perspective for the purposes of drafting this Plan, with particular attention to the Finnish model (currently the only one in the European regional framework), using analytical parameters that highlight common elements and specific characteristics of each document: the time frame (four or five years), the structure of the Plan (in terms of articulation and sequence of content), the objectives (of political scope and operational relevance), the consideration of the YPS Agenda in relation to the relevance of each pillar, the presence of thematic insights, the creation of a mechanism or body responsible for monitoring and evaluating the results of the Plan from an executive perspective, the allocation of financial resources dedicated to supporting the adoption and implementation of measures provided for in the Plan.

Cross-cutting themes for a comprehensive appraisal of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda

The material scope of the YPS Agenda, although it is a relatively recent document, suggests multiple interpretations that cut across the five pillars of the Agenda, making it relevant and allowing States and Organisations that adopt a strategic-programmatic document to contextualise the implementation of targeted commitments in a comprehensive and inter-sectoral approach through the use of the so-called nexus, which are proposed below.

Environment-climate-peace and security nexus

The dual impact of the environmental and climate crisis and situations of crisis and conflict, viewed from a global perspective and framed on a local scale, particularly affects the younger generations who must be called upon to participate actively in decision-making processes, contributing to the identification of emergency measures and effective solutions in the medium and long term. Their transformative role in such circumstances refers directly to the first pillar of the YPS Agenda, so that open, inclusive and constructive dialogue, promoted in a multi-level both formal and informal environment, might see them as active agents of change.

The specific connotation of post-conflict vulnerability, which sometimes requires the design and implementation of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, poses a significant challenge for younger generations. Young people can devise local solutions to overcome the effects of climate change in a green and sustainable way, for shared management of natural resources when these are limited or have been reduced due to environmental and anthropic causes, often becoming claimed in local conflicts.

Thus, the international debate advises the following thematic areas:

- Include young people in climate and peace policies;
- Integrate the principles of the YPS Agenda into nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and national action plans (NAPs) on climate and peace;
- Ensure the participation of young people in the design and monitoring of climate and security programmes;
- Fund youth-led initiatives, in particular:

- ✓ establish dedicated climate and peace innovation funds for youth organisations, particularly in vulnerable regions;
- ✓ simplify access to funding for grassroots youth groups;
- Ensure safe and inclusive participation, namely:
 - ✓ protect youth activists and peace workers from harassment and violence;
 - ✓ supporting youth participation in high-level forums on climate and peace.
- Finally, developing youth capacities, in detail:
 - ✓ investing in education and training on climate adaptation, conflict resolution and peacebuilding;
 - ✓ supporting intergenerational mentoring to transfer knowledge and skills.

In this context the international Youth4Climate initiative has been launched by Italy and now co-led by the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as a concrete platform where young people could contribute ideas, solutions and projects on the nexus between climate, peace and security. With its “Call for Solutions” – which, since 2025, has included a section dedicated to “Climate, Peace and Security” – and international events held in the run-up to climate negotiations, Youth4Climate offers visibility and support to youth initiatives in vulnerable countries, ensuring safe participation, access to funding and capacity building. In this way, the initiative will contribute to the implementation of this Plan, serving as an operational tool to make youth leadership effective in global and national policies.

Digital challenges-peace and security nexus

The preventive and protective approach over younger generations set out in the YPS Agenda can be decisive in addressing real and virtual risks that undermine their rights and increase their vulnerability to violence, hate speech and radicalisation, as well as recruitment for criminal and terrorist purposes. At the same time, knowledge of the potential of digital technologies enables young people to participate and actively contribute to combating the above-mentioned phenomena.

The scope of the YPS Agenda in relation to this nexus goes beyond the purely security dimension to include a human rights-based approach that conveys the contribution of young people living in or outside conflict areas, individually and collectively, including through monitoring, analysing and combating disinformation and manipulation of information in a manner complementary to the mandate of institutional bodies to prevent and suppress manifestations of violence and oppression in the digital space.

Thus, the international debate advises the following thematic areas:

- Ensure the digital protection of young peacebuilders, namely:
 - ✓ adopt policies to protect young activists from online harassment, surveillance and digital attacks;
 - ✓ promote laws that protect digital rights, freedom of expression and data privacy of young people.
- Integrate digital security into YPS strategies and, in this regard:
 - ✓ provide secure online platforms for the involvement of young people in peace processes and decision-making processes.
- Promote digital literacy and resilience, considering actions such as:
 - ✓ expanding access to digital education, particularly in cybersecurity, critical thinking and media literacy;
 - ✓ collaborating with schools (including Italian schools abroad), NGOs and technology companies to provide online safety training for young people.
- Bridging the digital divide, taking specific action to:
 - ✓ invest in equitable digital infrastructure, particularly in rural, marginalised and conflict-affected areas;
 - ✓ ensure safe and affordable internet access as a right for youth participation and peacebuilding.
- Finally, supporting youth-led technology for peace, namely:
 - ✓ funding youth-led digital innovation projects for conflict prevention, early warning and dialogue facilitation;

- ✓ encouraging intergenerational knowledge sharing on digital ethics, security and peacebuilding.

Food security-peace and security nexus

The YPS Agenda explores the nexus between conflict and widespread insecurity, which also includes the food factor in terms of access to natural resources, food and water, with a view to the potential preventive, protective and participatory contribution of young people in rural areas that are also conflict zones.

In extremely fragile contexts, where social and economic conditions are critical and at high risk of becoming permanent, food insecurity is one of the main obstacles to overcoming conflict and rebuilding a peaceful society. In the face of intensifying inequalities and high rates of absolute poverty, the role and contribution of young people in identifying possible solutions that restore order, security and peaceful conditions at the local level are crucial for an effective response both in emergencies and in the long term.

Thus, the international debate advises the following thematic areas:

- Invest in young people in the agricultural sector, in particular:
 - ✓ provide young people with access to land, finance, tools and training in sustainable agriculture;
 - ✓ expand youth-focused agricultural entrepreneurship and rural employment programmes.
- Integrate the main contents of the YPS Agenda into food security policies through actions such as:
 - ✓ aligning national food security strategies with the YPS Agenda;
 - ✓ including youth representatives in food security and peacebuilding governance bodies.
- Promote youth-led peacebuilding through food, therefore:
 - ✓ support youth-led food initiatives that promote reconciliation and social cohesion in post-conflict areas;
 - ✓ use school feeding and agricultural projects as platforms for youth engagement and peace education.
- Finally, strengthen data collection and analysis methodologies, in particular:
 - ✓ improve data collection on the role of young people in food security and conflict dynamics;
 - ✓ fund research on the impact of youth involvement in agriculture on peacebuilding outcomes.

Cultural values and rights, peace and security nexus

The YPS Agenda can be shaped with regard to actions aimed at preventing conflict, protecting young people and seeking their active contribution to the recovery of the values and principles that underpin society, along a multicultural vision based on shared learning and education.

This vision has a local dimension, which translates into the strengthening of intercultural dialogue and the identification of best practices for securing the cultural, historical and artistic heritage, whether tangible or intangible, of a country, region or city, through strengthened partnerships led by youth associations and movements.

Thus, the international debate advises the following thematic areas:

- Integrate cultural heritage into the implementation of the main contents of the YPS Agenda through actions such as:
 - ✓ recognising the protection of cultural heritage as a tool for peace-building in national action plans on youth, peace and security;
 - ✓ including cultural education and heritage in peace education and community rebuilding programmes.
- Support youth participation in heritage governance:
 - ✓ involve young people in cultural policy-making, museum curation and heritage site management;
 - ✓ fund youth-led initiatives that preserve, transmit and celebrate local traditions.
- Use cultural heritage for post-conflict building processes, including actions such as:

- ✓ rehabilitate destroyed cultural sites and practices as part of peace and reconciliation programmes;
- ✓ promote inclusive narratives that respect cultural diversity and shared histories.
- Bridge the generation gap through culture, namely by
 - ✓ supporting intergenerational dialogue platforms for sharing stories, languages and traditions;
 - ✓ recognising young people as heirs and innovators of heritage.
- Finally, leverage technology for heritage preservation, thereby:
 - ✓ encourage young people to use digital tools to document and share intangible cultural heritage;
 - ✓ protect online cultural expressions from appropriation and erasure.

Youth, Peace and Security Agenda and disarmament

The YPS Agenda emphasises the central role of young people in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and the definition of inclusive security policies. In general, the topic addresses the needs of young people during rehabilitation, reintegration and reconstruction processes, starting with a necessary quantitative survey of data disaggregated by age and gender on young people involved in conflicts, in order to understand their experiences and ensure that their specific needs are taken into account in the planning of interventions at regional, national and local levels.

The United Nations General Assembly has reaffirmed the important and positive contribution that young people can provide for peace and security through its unanimous support for the biennial Resolution on “Youth, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation”, firstly adopted on 12 December 2019 (74/64)²⁸ and subsequently on 6 December 2021 (76/45)²⁹. With its adoption, Member States, the United Nations, relevant specialised agencies and regional and subregional organisations are encouraged to promote the meaningful and inclusive participation of young people on disarmament and non-proliferation. Resolution adopted on 4 December 2023 (78/31) is in line with this approach for a discussion of the topic focused on the participatory dimension and extended to the educational component of the younger generations³⁰.

In this context, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) provides a complementary framework by engaging young people in disarmament education, advocacy and awareness-raising on the risks of armed violence and small arms proliferation. Reading UNODA's initiatives in relation to the YPS Agenda reinforces national efforts to prevent the involvement of young people in armed conflict, promote community resilience and develop leadership skills in peacebuilding. By giving young people the opportunity to participate in disarmament dialogues and peace initiatives, the intersection between YPS and UNODA programmes promotes a comprehensive approach to peace that combines prevention, protection and active youth engagement, ensuring that young people are both beneficiaries and drivers of sustainable security and stability.

UNODA's flagship initiative, Youth4Disarmament, launched in 2019, connects young people from around the world with experts to learn about international security challenges and ways to participate in disarmament activities. Through tailored disarmament education initiatives, UNODA equips young people with the knowledge and leadership skills necessary to advance disarmament and non-proliferation goals. Key programmes include the Leaders to the Future series, the Young Leaders Fund for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, and the annual #StepUp4Disarmament Youth Campaign. These initiatives provide young people with platforms to participate in disarmament dialogues, raise public awareness, and contribute to policy discussions. Furthermore, UNODA's Disarmament Education Strategy, launched in December 2022, emphasises the central role of partnerships and relevant networking in disarmament education, highlighting the importance of engaging young people in promoting a culture of peace and non-violence.

Finally, within the framework of the Organisation, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) also actively engages young people in issues related to arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament through awareness-raising and dedicated training initiatives, with a view to developing knowledge, skills and expertise in the field of disarmament among the younger generation.

Interrelation between the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

Although the two United Nations Agendas dedicated to peace and security issues in relation to the role and contribution of women, girls and young generations were conceived at different moments in history, their basic conceptualisation is characterised by a very similar set of values, structure and operational framework.

Since 2000, when Resolution 1325 was adopted by the Security Council, outlining the programmatic framework of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, the relevance of the gender component in conflict situations and the contribution of women and girls to peace has grown substantially. Critical situations are perceived and experienced differently by women and girls than by men and boys: therefore, their role and the contribution to conflict prevention and resolution is varied and complex.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions³¹ affirm the important role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction. The resolution highlights the need for women's equal participation and full involvement in all processes aimed at maintaining, promoting and preserving international peace and security. Resolution 1325 calls on all institutional actors to take action to increase the participation of women and girls in peace-related decision-making processes and to include the gender dimension in the definition of priority objectives for post-conflict reconstruction at national and local level. At the same time, it highlights the importance of a preventive and protective approach, which translates into the adoption of special measures to strengthen the protection of women and girls from gender-based violence, in particular rape and other forms of sexual abuse, in situations of armed conflict.

The intergenerational interpretation inherent in Resolution 1325, albeit with a female focus, has nevertheless encouraged recognition of the specific role that younger generations, girls and boys, could and must play as a positive force in conflict prevention and resolution and in building sustainable peace. This interpretation was translated in 2015 into Security Council Resolution 2250, which introduced the YPS Agenda, complemented by further resolutions for its concrete operationalization. The Agenda aims to enable, support and increase the responsibility and momentum of younger generations on issues relating to peace and international security, including and above all through meaningful participation in all decision-making processes from a multi-level perspective. The meaningful participation and influence of young people in peacebuilding processes is a right and a resource that could enhance the relevance, effectiveness and impact of peace and security initiatives, policies and decisions.

Although different in structure, content and form, the two Agendas are interconnected and complementary, as both seek to include groups historically marginalised from peace and security processes, providing for fundamental commitments on participation, protection, prevention and inclusive and effective partnerships.

At the same time, however, recognition of the complementarity between the two Agendas should never lead to a perfect equivalence of their respective scope and identified objectives and actions: women, girls and young people have specific needs and face specific challenges, individually and collectively, in contemporary societies in crisis or conflict. On the contrary, it is essential that institutional actors and operators adopt an intersectional approach in interpreting and implementing the commitments set out in the Agendas, ensuring that all policies, programmes and initiatives fully capture the dynamics that consolidate the role and encourage the active participation of people on the basis of both parameters of age and gender.

The involvement of minors in armed conflicts

The dynamics around conflicts, with particular attention to the civil dimension in the last decades of the past century and in the current one, have a predominant impact on vulnerable groups, including minors, who are disproportionately exposed to immediate consequences of conflict as well as to the medium and long-term post-conflict effects.

The Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the General Assembly on 25 May 2000 and entered into force on 12 February 2002³², is the main binding legal instrument for the protection of minors involved in armed conflicts. Ratified to date by 173 UN Member States, the Protocol requires the Contracting Parties to prevent any act of recruitment of minors by state and non-state actors that results in their direct involvement in hostilities, to exclude them in military forces until they reach the age of majority, to enact legislative measures prohibiting such conduct and acts, to implement demobilisation programmes and to provide services for the physical and psychological support and social reintegration of minors.

Within the United Nations system, the commitment of the Secretary-General and the Special Representative on the issue (**Children in Armed Conflict – CAAC**), whose mandate was established by General Assembly Resolution of 12 December 1996³³, is translated – through the periodic compilation of dedicated reports – into strengthening the protection of minors (providing for the compilation and adoption of national action plans), raising global awareness of the phenomenon through targeted campaigns, encouraging the collection of data and information on the phenomenon, and facilitating cooperation processes that increase the level of protection of minors. At the same time, the Security Council has addressed the issue on numerous formal and informal occasions, with the aim of defining the types of conduct and acts committed in violation of international law (as well as international humanitarian law): recruitment and use, killing and mutilation³⁴, sexual violence³⁵, armed attacks on schools and hospitals³⁶, and abduction of minors³⁷.

In 2023, at the Oslo Conference on the Protection of Children in Armed Conflict, UNICEF recalled that between 2005 and 2022, more than 105,000 children were recruited and used in conflicts, as victims of the above mentioned six grave violations against children according to the United Nations definition: killing and mutilations; recruitment or use of children as soldiers; sexual violence; abductions; attacks on schools and hospitals; and lack of access to humanitarian assistance. For this reason, including investments in humanitarian response and national personnel in charge for child protection, UNICEF has called on States to commit to: maintaining and implementing existing international legal standards to protect children in conflict, including the protection of schools, hospitals and other protected targets, such as water and sanitation facilities; ending the recruitment and use of children by armed groups and forces and stopping the use of explosive weapons in populated areas; holding those responsible for violations of children's rights to account; increasing critical resources to fund child protection in conflicts to the extent and at the speed necessary, in line with growing needs.

In this context, the European Union also adopted its Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict in 2003, updated in 2008 and 2024³⁸, characterized by an integrated approach, which constitutes the operational framework where institutions and Member States work to protect and guarantee the rights of children in armed conflicts and other situations of armed violence by terrorist organisations or organised criminal groups worldwide.

An important intergovernmental document in this field is the “Safe Schools Declaration”³⁹, adopted in 2015 via the support of Norway and Argentina and signed to date by 171 states, with the common goal of defending and ensuring the education of minors even during armed conflicts, limiting or excluding the use of school buildings for military purposes.

The insecurity that directly and indirectly affects minors in conflict situations has a very specific connotation: they could be victims of armed attacks in the communities where they live, especially in school buildings, which are among the main targets; armed militias use them for the positioning and recovery of explosive

weapons and mines, due to their ease and speed of movement; they are targeted for recruitment, using forms of training that expose them to multiple violations damaging their psychological and physical safety. Meanwhile the presence and participation of minors in peace talks and ceasefire negotiations, followed by peace agreements, is crucial for defining post-conflict solutions, release and support measures, as clearly stated in the Practical guidance for mediators to protect children in situations of armed conflict adopted by the United Nations system in February 2020⁴⁰.

Part Two – The national framework and commitments

The pillars and actions

The interpretation of the YPS Agenda within the national framework, for the identification of both general and specific objectives (targets) and operational measures and actions for each of the five pillars introduced in Security Council Resolution 2250, starts from a preliminary definition of ‘young’ people.

The text of Security Council Resolution 2250 identifies young people as those **aged between 18 and 30**, although it does not exclude different ranges at national and international level.

Alternatively, it is possible not to rely solely on the age parameter but to take into account other relevant factors: the biological component, which defines the various stages of age based on personal physical and mental growth; the functional component, which impacts awareness of individual abilities in dialogue and interaction with peers in a community; the social and cultural component, which features individual responsibility and relational choices in a community, often characterised by wide geographical and cultural heterogeneity and further bounded when the situation is extremely fragile, vulnerable, critical and conflictual. In the latter case, moreover, the enjoyment of rights and freedoms in compliance with international, regional, national and local legal standards is at risk, and the path of growth or transition to “adulthood” may be slowed down or accelerated by a set of factors that alter ordinary dynamics of peaceful conditions or the absence of conflict.

At the same time, at the domestic level, the collective dimension represented by the **Civil Peace Corps (CCPs)** is relevant, read in the light of the YPS Agenda: they were established on an experimental basis as a project model promoted by the Italian Government, in particular by the Department for Youth Policies and Universal Civil Service of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, providing for the availability and mobility of young volunteers in contexts of conflict or at risk of conflict, both in Italy and abroad, to promote peace, human rights, solidarity and non-violence. The role of CCPs is critical for the prevention and transformation of conflicts, due to their dynamic and flexible nature and their position as third parties in contact with those directly involved in the conflict, in order to provide and implement mediation and reconciliation processes aimed at restoring respect for human rights and influencing the local post-conflict building of the social fabric through multi-stakeholder networks. In order to ensure the CCPs intervention in the field, it is essential to allocate adequate financial resources, recently secured through a specific legislative measure for an amount of €2 million for each of the years 2025, 2026 and 2027.

The methodology adopted in this Plan is based, for each pillar of the Agenda, on the following parameters:

Who: subject-actor-body responsible for implementing the action

Plan: indication of the objective, starting from a contextualised and concrete formulation of the commitment

Do: indication of the operational measure/action

How: indication of methodologies to implement the operational measure/action; indication of the time frame for the implementation of the operational measure/action

Check: indication of the mechanism in charge for monitoring the action; formulation of targeted indicators to assess the results of implemented actions.

Within the framework of an *ad hoc* Working Group in charge for national commitments on the UN YPS Agenda, created pursuant to Art. 4, paragraph 2, of the Ministerial Decree 2000/517 establishing the Interministerial Committee for Human Rights (CIDU), the revision and implementation of the modalities of action could be managed, simultaneously identifying the subject(s)/actors/entities competent for the action and

related monitoring indicators (see the third part of the paragraph “*The monitoring and evaluation of the results in implementation of the YPS NAP*”).

Participation: objectives/targets/measures

The intentional and genuine involvement of young people in decision-making processes is an essential prerequisite for their active participation and contribution to institutional decisions at national and local level. This must be guaranteed both occasionally and in a systematic and structured manner, by appropriately assigning a formal and official role to young people who are in charge for peace-building or mediation activities between parties in conflict.

The actions were drawn up following a detailed analysis and careful study of the national context, also highlighting a number of limitations and obstacles, which were used as a starting point for identifying the measures indicated in this pillar. These include: a lack of awareness of the YPS Agenda at local and national level; a shortage of structured and accessible spaces where young people could contribute to public policy; and a lack of mutual trust between young people and institutions.

In this context, the following actions are proposed, as an expression of a potential response and proposal to the desire of young people for participation and active involvement:

Action 1

Goal	Stabilisation and new deployment of the Civil Peace Corps.
Operational measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Enhancement, also in terms of skills, of the role of the senior peace worker, who holds specific qualifications and whose activity is recognized as work, supported by volunteer junior workers. – Extension of the duration of junior projects to three years. – Extension of the participation age up to 35 years for junior operators. – Extension of the intervention areas, setting up security measures that allow senior operators to be sent also to high-risk areas. – Allocation of a dedicated and adequate fund, which can be further supplemented by citizens through the designation of the 6x1000 of their IRPEF contributions.
Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Italy’s participation in international missions, in accordance with the first paragraph of Article 1 of Framework Law No 145/2016, which places armed forces, military or civilian police forces and Civil Peace Corps on an equal footing as subjects of international missions. • Establish a Committee for non-armed and non-violent civil defence, ensuring the involvement of youth CSOs and professionals with experience in the field of peacebuilding, using the expertise of the Civil Peace Intervention Body and the experience of young people belonging to the associated bodies of the National Youth Council, chosen according to curriculum and other comparative assessments, provided they have proven and certifiable training of many years, or professional experience.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a clear and shared procedure for launching new projects, based on criteria of actual need and local relevance. The process should foster a bottom-up approach, focusing on listening to community needs and prior context-analysis. • Formalize the professionalization of the Peace operator, through the identification of specific skills. • Structure a training course that takes into account both theoretical and practical content on techniques and methods of conflict prevention/transformation, involving: entities that have been operating for years in the context of armed conflict; former operators of the CCP CoAzione Network; Universities and researchers of the PhD courses in Peace Studies; members of the National Youth Council, chosen according to curriculum and other comparative evaluations. • Improve dissemination activities among young people on these issues and actions through regular campaigns and communication initiatives.
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Action 2

Goal	Ensure the effective and meaningful involvement of young individuals in decision-making processes concerning peace and security, through the elimination of economic and institutional obstacles.
Operational measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Creation of official spaces for youth consultation, including through the use of digital services of the Department for Youth Policies and the Universal Civil Service. – Promotion of the presence of young people in decision-making bodies on issues of peace and security, with particular attention to remove participatory obstacles for girls. – Financing of projects for young people aimed at promoting peace and preventing conflicts. – Establishment at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of a funding line to financially support youth representatives in international contexts on peace and security and to encourage the presence of youth delegations in intergovernmental processes on peace and security.
Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate youth representation into the composition of official Italian delegations in multilateral peace and security processes and relevant national and international events. • Foster coordination and collaboration between all administrations, national agencies and youth organisations involved in peace and security issues. • Promote calls for projects submitted by youth associations and/or young people to strengthen their skills in the design phase.

Action 3

Goal	Ensure meaningful and substantive involvement of younger generations in decision-making processes focused on identifying, addressing, and transforming
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	social injustice contributing to conflict, insecurity, and democratic alienation.
Operational measure	– Establishment, at the National Youth Council, of a dedicated body to study and discuss on social justice and peace. The body is also attended by members of bodies associated with the National Youth Council, chosen by curriculum and other comparative assessments, and guarantees the presence of youth representatives engaged in concerned sectors.
Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a call to select young experts, activists and representatives of youth organisations directly experienced on inequalities and social conflicts. • Activate training courses on social justice, democratic participation and peace-building. • Organize regular meetings of the body, including public sessions and direct discussions with local and national institutions. • Promote collaborations with universities, research centres and human rights monitors. • Publish annually a National Youth, Social Justice and Peace Report.

Action 4

Goal	Strengthen the role of younger generations as active actors in international relations, through experiences of transnational mobility, structural youth diplomacy and permanent dialogue channels with Italian and European institutions in charge for foreign policy and development cooperation.
Operational measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote youth mobility also through scholarships for young activists, youth workers and students to participate in exchanges, training and volunteer programs on peace, global justice, environment and human rights in priority countries of Italian cooperation, with particular attention to remove participatory obstacles to training activities for girls. - Promote initiatives aimed at fostering intercultural dialogue among young people also through the financing of cultural diplomacy projects. - Structuring participatory youth diplomacy, through the activation of a permanent Youth Forum in foreign policies, also to contribute to the definition of three-year cooperation plans and to monitor their consistency with the YPS principles and SDG16 (and 16+), comprising representatives of national networks, officially involving also granted to members of entities associated with the National Youth Council. - Activate multilevel advocacy spaces: promoting access for young Italians to international mechanisms (UN Youth Delegates, Council of Europe, Union for the Mediterranean, Euromed Forum), with educational, linguistic and political support. - Increase the number of Italian Youth Delegates to the United Nations (from the current two to a maximum of ten). - Ensure the maintenance of the ad hoc Working Group in charge for national commitments on the UN Youth, Peace and Security Agenda, created pursuant to [Article

	4(2)] of Ministerial Decree 2000/517 establishing the Interministerial Committee for Human Rights (CIDU) as a space for open dialogue between civil society and institutions.
Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch a public call for the establishment of the permanent Forum, including the official participation of members belonging to bodies associated with the National Youth Council, with due consideration of gender balance, territorial, social and thematic origin. • Promote the dissemination of information on international opportunities, also through the creation of dedicated sections within existing institutional websites and platforms. • Implement annually three calls on strategic mobility for young peacebuilders in MENA countries, Balkans, Latin America. • Actively engage embassies, Italian delegations and cultural centres in the promotion of the programme.

Action 5

Goal	Disseminate among young people knowledge on peace and security in order to encourage involvement and active participation.
Operational measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisation of initiatives aimed at raising awareness and informing about peace and security, also in collaboration with schools and universities. - Promotion of dissemination activities through the organisation of dedicated events or within already organised/programmed initiatives and festivals, at national and local level, including in cooperation with youth organisations.
Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out fact-finding surveys, including with the involvement of educational institutions and universities, to assess the level of knowledge of young people on peace and security. • Design initiatives aimed at closing any knowledge gap identified, in order to encourage the involvement of young people in decision-making processes, and bring them closer to youth associations.

Action 6

Goal	Boost the importance of sport as a tool for promoting peace among young people.
Operational measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of a youth network that supports initiatives to raise awareness about peace, through the enhancement of using sport as a tool for inclusion, dialogue and social cohesion. - Shaping, within sporting events, dedicated spaces aimed at raising young people's awareness on peace, encouraging youth participation.
Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the recognition of so-called Ambassadors of Sport Peace who, through sport, disseminate the values of peace, inclusion and dialogue. • Promote initiatives to prevent and combat hate speech and violence in sport.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement projects that use the attractive force of sport to involve young people, including through the provision of places of aggregation and debate, to counter marginality and criminality, with particular attention to neighbourhoods with high social vulnerability.
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Protection: objectives/targets/measures

The protection of young people is a central objective of the YPS Agenda, which takes into account multiple risks and conditions of fragility and vulnerability in crisis or conflicts, now also reflected in virtual dialogue in the digital space.

Protective measures, however, can be truly effective if they include relational dynamics aimed at overcoming the mistrust and self-exclusion of those young people who no longer rely on institutional interlocutors for allegedly failing in a consistent and effective manner to the values and principles underpinning a democratic system, protecting human rights and ensuring the safety of the population and young people.

In the national context, a number of factors have been identified to formulate dedicated measures: in the absence of specific guidelines, young people aged between 18 and 30 risk not being adequately considered in protection mechanisms in the event of crisis or conflict; the protection of young people from online violence, multiple discrimination and psychological distress linked to traumatic experiences or marginalisation is not systematically integrated into youth policies; mental health services for young people do not always provide an adequate response to trauma related to conflict, forced migration or social exclusion.

In this context, the following actions are proposed:

Action 7

Goal	Ensure legal and humanitarian protection for young conscientious objectors, deserters, and conscription evaders from conflict-affected countries, recognizing their status as refugees or vulnerable persons under international law.
Operational measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide for a dedicated mechanism for the identification, taking charge and protection of young people who refuse to participate in armed conflict on ethical, political or religious grounds, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ access to simplified asylum procedures; ▪ recognition of the status of conscientious objector as a valid ground for international protection; ▪ raising the awareness of the Territorial Commissions for the Right to Asylum; ▪ monitoring of national contexts of forced recruitment; ▪ the deployment of international observers, in cooperation with EBCO-BEOC, in judicial proceedings against objectors/defectors in the countries of origin.
Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate between government agencies, UNHCR, EBCO-BEOC and specialised organisations. • Compile operational guidelines for commissions for protection recognition. • Develop specific training for legal and social operators.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch information campaigns at reception centres. • Prepare a protocol for the participation of international observers in relevant processes.
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Action 8

Goal	Enhancement of the Universal Civil Service (USC) abroad as an instrument of Peace and Reconciliation.
Operational measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of a new initiative, with ad hoc financial resources (not borne by the National Fund for Civil Service Abroad) in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, framed within the USC abroad. - Framing of this initiative in territories where international cooperation is present, in areas of conflict, at risk of conflict and post-conflict, in environmental emergency in foreign countries and in Italy.
Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen and reinforce the USC abroad with interventions specifically dedicated to cooperation under the YPS Plan. • Sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department for Youth Policies and Universal Civil Service and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation to launch the initiative.

Action 9

Goal	Strengthen national engagement in international, regional, national and local contexts and processes affected by crisis and conflict situations for the protection of children directly and indirectly involved in hostilities.
Operational measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of operational, informative and training tools, programmes and projects aimed at protecting children involved in conflicts, in relation to the relevance of the topic in the framework of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda.
Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define a model/activity on the protection of children involved in conflicts, characterized by objectives and operational measures targeted and standardized as for the area of intervention. • Involve institutional actors and CSOs in the process of mapping and identifying proper needs of the country situation to outline specific interventions (programmes, projects). • Dialogue with competent international bodies and consolidate the Italian position and contribution for multilateral and multi-bilateral interventions. • Promote information and training activities (basic, highly specialised, for experts in the field) on the topic, activating synergies with all stakeholders.

Prevention: objectives/targets/measures

The preventive dimension of the YPS Agenda is reflected in the advanced assessment of risks that young people might be victims of real or digital violence, exploitation or recruitment for criminal and terrorist purposes. This implies a preliminary analysis of all factors that contribute to the vulnerability of young people and the arrangement of measures, interventions and dedicated programmes that not only aim to make youth environment safe but also to enhance positive and productive factors for peace and stability on a national and local scale.

At the domestic level, several critical factors are instrumental for the planning and adoption of dedicated measures: peace education is negligible in school curricula and extracurricular activities; NEETs are often excluded from quality training opportunities; youth policies sometimes tend not to be fully integrated with social inclusion and prevention policies, making it more difficult to implement interventions that take young people into account.

In this context, the following actions are proposed:

Action 10

Goal	Create National Youth Mediation Units as a permanent body within the Italian Network for International Mediation (RIMI) with trained mediators aged no more than 35 and who have obtained certification according to current legislation, active in schools, communities and fragile territories at national and international level, with an institutional mandate.
Operational measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Promotion of a training course for young mediators from civil society in the field of mediation and facilitation of dialogue.- Institutionalization of the role of Young Mediators in the framework of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation jointly with RIMI and representatives of civil society.
Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support training courses and local projects promoted by citizens residing in Italy aged no more than 35.

Action 11

Goal	Peace education.
Operational measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Inclusion in school curricula, starting from primary education, of peace education pathways that cover topics such as prevention and nonviolent conflict management, nonviolent communication, restorative justice, human rights, diversity and inclusion, and the recognition of the key role of the human element in interpersonal relationships and work, developed in collaboration with CSOs and higher education institutions.- Collaboration between educational institutions, including Italian ones abroad, and local CSOs for practical training on peace issues through activities on the territory (for instance, by encouraging work-school dual training in the third sector pursuant to Article 1(2) of Legislative Decree No 77/2005).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of new higher education courses dedicated to Youth Peace and Security. - Non-formal peace education through youth CSOs active in the territory.
Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a working body for the development of new school curricula in synergy between the Ministry of Education and Merit, civil society organizations (CSOs), and youth CSOs. • Implement the curricula in the 2026/2027 academic year. • Launch higher education training courses.

Partnerships: objectives/targets/measures

In order to achieve stability, peace and security with the contribution of younger generations, in line with the YPS Agenda, institutional actors are called upon to act in synergy by designing and implementing interventions, programmes and projects based on shared responsibilities and concrete actions. Partnerships are effective if they are characterized by mixed and multi-sectoral participation, which particularly values local actors and, among them, young people who act individually and collectively to maintain or restore international peace and security.

A valid partnership model must provide for the participation of young people in the processes of designing, implementing and monitoring interventions in the field and be equipped with adequate financial resources that are accessible and easy to manage from an administrative point of view by youth partners.

In this context, the following actions are proposed:

Action 12

Goal	Strengthen the ability of Italian youth organizations to operate under an international and intercultural dimension, promoting processes of mutual learning, transnational advocacy, and peacebuilding through networking with youth entities from diaspora communities in Italy and in the countries covered by this National Action Plan.
Operational measure	- Promotion of pilot projects involving young people from Italian diasporas as facilitators of cooperation with countries of origin.
Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure capacity building pathways for small youth organisations and diaspora networks.

Action 13

Goal	Build and consolidate spaces of shared governance between youth organizations and women's and girls' organizations to ensure an effective synergy between the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agendas.
Operational measure	- Promotion of projects involving young women in peace forums and initiatives related to peace, security, and non-violence.

Means of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise regular meetings with other women's organisations. • Create a permanent discussion body involving youth organizations, women's networks and representatives of youth diasporas, to develop synergies between the WPS Agenda and the YPS Agenda, with a focus on co-development, female empowerment.
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Action 14

Goal	Promote and facilitate the creation of national and international partnerships among Italian youth organizations active in cooperation and peacebuilding.
Operational measure	- Promotion of collection, enhancement, dissemination and sharing of information relating to Italian youth organizations active in cooperation and peacebuilding.
Methods of implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out a national mapping through a public call for membership and the involvement of the National Youth Council; • Validate and update annually, by the National Youth Council, data collected and implement an automatic matching to facilitate contacts between Italian organizations on topics, geographical areas or target beneficiaries.

Demobilisation and reintegration: objectives/targets/measures

The YPS Agenda outlines the role of young people in humanitarian crises and post-conflict reconstruction processes, facilitating their active participation in planning and shaping interventions and deciding what actions to take in the field of disarmament, demobilisation and physical and psychological reintegration for the reconciliation and rehabilitation of young people in their communities.

In the national context, is essential to consider two categories of young people who need disengagement and reintegration pathways in order to support the achievement of objectives set out in the YPS Agenda: young people who wish to move away from deviance, crime or radicalisation; young migrants or refugees from conflict areas, who often live without structured support in their paths of re-elaboration, integration and autonomy.

In this context, the following actions are proposed:

Action 15

Goal	Promote the social and community reintegration of young people at risk or who have undergone detention or judicial processes, through restorative justice programs based on accountability, relationship care, community dialogue, and recidivism prevention.
Operational measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carry out a survey and analysis in terms of potential response to the objective of all restorative justice programmes yet in place active in prisons or at the new "Centres" for restorative justice, established at local and regional authorities according to Article 63 of Legislative Decree No. 150/2022. - Carry out a survey and quantitative analysis of the presence of so-called young adult prisoners, i.e. those aged 18-25, in different local areas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment about restorative justice programmes yet in place in areas where the number of prisoners is higher. - Launch of a policy to raise awareness and stimulate treatment for young adults in detention so that - they can move away from paths of deviance, crime or radicalisation; - they can, as migrants, benefit from structured support in their paths of re-elaboration, integration and autonomy.
<p>Means of implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw up MoUs with one or more organisations working with young people and restorative justice, with particular attention to local authorities where restorative justice centres are being set up, as well as the centres themselves. • Strengthen the participation of youth associations active in different local areas on prison treatment activities. • Provide social and employment support measures, vocational training and post-release mentoring, and integrate these measures with social services and juvenile justice for a multidimensional reintegration process.

Part Three – The national governance system and procedures for monitoring and evaluation over the implementation of the National Action Plan on Youth, Peace and Security

The institutional mechanism

The creation of an institutional mechanism (National Steering Committee on the YPS Agenda), based upon a Working Group which gave rise to this Plan, will enable the launch of a monitoring process on the implementation of the commitments in relation to the five pillars of the YPS Agenda.

The mechanism has a hybrid composition, both institutional and non-institutional (Multi-stakeholder Committee on the YPS Agenda), involving in an open and inclusive manner both representatives of the main administrations of the national governance system (through the Interministerial Committee for Human Rights - CIDU) and formal and informal networks operating on a national and international scale (through the National Youth Council) and which have the opportunity to engage in dialogue on an occasional or systematic basis, providing opinions or participating in targeted projects.

Dialogue with local, national, regional and international bodies and organisations

The institutional mechanism, whose primary mandate is to monitor results achieved through the implementation of the commitments made in the 1st NAP YPS, operates mainly at national level.

However, through the contribution of its members representing the national and local governance system and civil society, it also promotes active and fruitful dialogue with all actors who, in the international and regional context, on an intergovernmental as well as non-governmental basis, work towards the implementation of the YPS Agenda. There are many different operating methods, which might include dialogue platforms, communities of practice, open consultation processes, information and dissemination activities, general or specialist training models, and the coordination and implementation of targeted projects in regional areas or pilot countries.

Financial resources for the implementation of the National Action Plan on Youth, Peace and Security

In the executive dimension of the YPS Agenda, in line with the need to translate commitments into actions that produce concrete results in the field, an annual allocation of dedicated financial resources is envisaged for the financing of projects implementing the Plan, selected by a special body set up within the Directorate-General for Political Affairs and International Security of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

Monitoring and evaluation of the results of the implementation of the National Action Plan on Youth, Peace and Security

In order to ensure that the commitments set out in this Plan and articulated in objectives, measures, interventions and actions envisaged for each of the five pillars of the YPS Agenda are implemented, the institutional mechanism is responsible for carrying out periodic monitoring and evaluation of results achieved, preparing an analysis matrix and specific indicators.

The key aspects and topics to be examined in order to assess results achieved might include:

- the impact of projects on the field, related to the pillars of the YPS Agenda and the lines of this Plan;
- the level of involvement and active participation of young people through targeted projects (structural and operational parameter; flexible time parameter; trans-geographical connotation; production of materials – toolkits and checklists);
- the creation of mechanisms and systems for inclusive participation of young people or the consolidation and extension of the mandate of existing ones to include the topics of the YPS Agenda;
- the planning of dialogue and discussion activities as well as training and mentorship with young people for the exchange of experiences, good practices and lessons learned;
- the promotion of dialogue and the exchange of knowledge, experiences, good practices and lessons learned from a multi-level perspective;
- the availability, allocation, access and transparent, effective and efficient use of financial resources in a planned yet flexible manner, with particular attention to the local dimension.

Time frame

For the complete, effective and efficient implementation of the commitments set out in this Plan and articulated in objectives, measures and actions envisaged for each of the five pillars of the YPS Agenda at national, local, regional and global level, a four-year implementation process (2026-2029) is envisaged. The process includes: the release of a first **Report** by the institutional mechanism, that focuses on actions carried out and that could be shared publicly, also providing in detail for actions/operational measures/means of implementation while, identifying the relevant competent actors; a **mid-term Report** that reports on the operational dimension and results achieved by all those actors directly and indirectly involved in the implementation of the NAP commitments; a **final Report** illustrating, in a plain and critical manner, the translation of commitments into concrete, efficient and effective results as for defined priorities and to compiling the next multi-annual Plan with the active involvement of all institutional stakeholders.

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