

NEWS YEPPer

12ND EDITION | JUNE 2025



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Editorial

Architects of a New Alliance: the courage to LEAN IN!

The Transatlantic Youth Summit has come to an end—an intense, inspiring experience that went far beyond a simple exchange of ideas. It was a true political laboratory for our time: full of energy, debate, visions for the future, and — let's be honest — a lot of fun too. A summit where we shared one common goal: to build a new alliance. One that is necessary, one that belongs to us. Not the one we inherited, but the one we want to shape with our ideas and our hands. Throughout every panel and conversation, one clear question emerged: What kind of relationship do we want to build between Europe and the United States? It may sound like a simple question, but it touches the very foundations of how we think about politics, democracy, security, and our future. Over these days, three major challenges emerged — all of them requiring urgent and coordinated action. The time for waiting is over. What we need now is vision, courage, and cooperation.

First of all, security has changed. Defense is no longer just about troops. Today, it means protecting digital infrastructures, securing data flows, and combating disinformation. It means understanding that a cyberattack may strike before a missile does — and that a \$300 drone can disable million-dollar systems. We need a new pact between technology and policy, grounded in real trust among allies. Because without trust,

there is no deterrence. And without deterrence, there is only instability and chaos.

Second, it became clear from the panels that the energy transition is not optional. Buildings account for nearly 40% of global emissions. Infrastructure is aging. Demand is rising. But the good news is: solutions already exist. Innovation, renewable energy, clean technology. Still, the private sector can't do it alone. We need bold public leadership, clear regulation, major investments, and a shared transatlantic vision. The green transition won't happen by itself — we must guide it with purpose and determination.

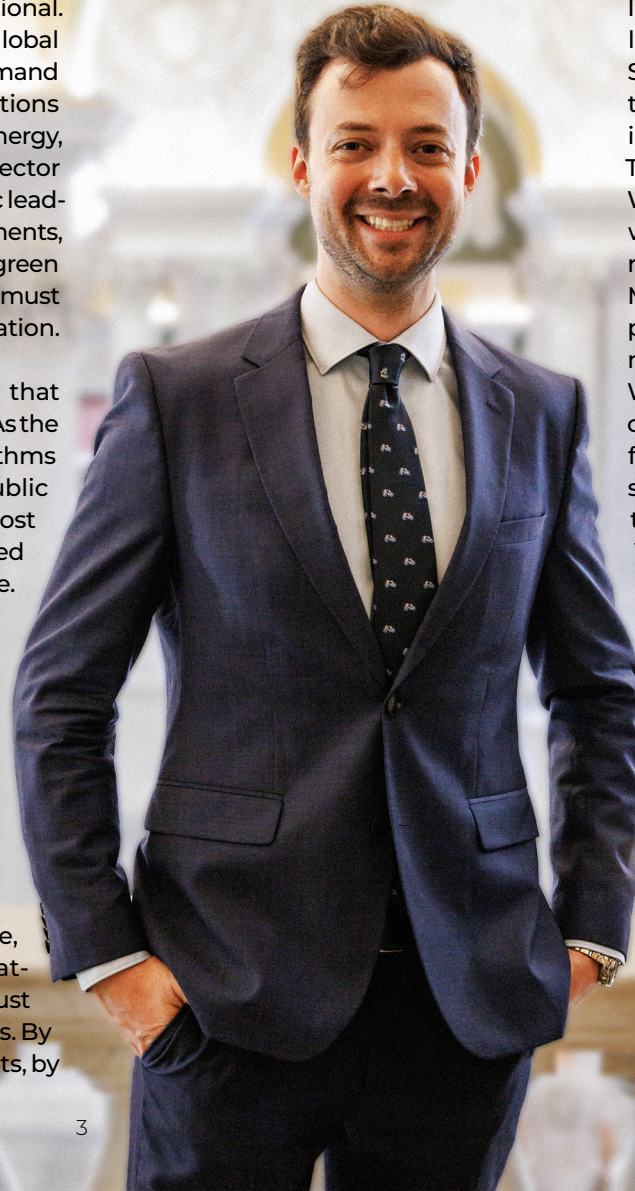
Finally, it can no longer be ignored that digital democracy is under pressure. As the Romanian elections showed, algorithms now shape — and can distort — public opinion. In a world where one viral post can change political outcomes, we need a new digital governance architecture. We can't let the digital public square become a lawless space. Digital freedom must be paired with accountability, transparency, and civic education. Without that, it's not freedom — it's abandonment. And when democracy collapses, it doesn't do so with a bang — sometimes it collapses with a click.

These three challenges lead to a single, vital truth: the future of the transatlantic alliance is not guaranteed. It must be chosen, built, and defended. By us. By young people, by activists, by students, by

emerging leaders who aren't satisfied with how things are, but are ready to imagine how they should be.

In conclusion, I believe there are three key lessons we have learned throughout the Summit. We should be architects, not caretakers: we shouldn't just manage what we inherited but rather build something new. The postwar system is no longer enough. We need to design political structures like we would a home: with vision, care, and responsibility. More just. More resilient. More inclusive. We should value interdependence, not dependence: autonomy is not isolation. Sovereignty is not solitude. We need strong, smart, flexible alliances, capable of adapting and enduring. In a fragmented world, interdependence is strength. And finally, we should turn frustration into fuel: Yes, bureaucracy is slow. Yes, disinformation spreads fast. Yes, climate deadlines are tight. But that's exactly why we must stay engaged. Keep showing up. Speak out. Take action. As we said during the summit, the most powerful message is simple: lean in. Don't back away. Lean in with courage, and take your place at the table.

By Michele Roncoroni,
International Secretary Junge Mitte
Switzerland and TYS Rapporteur



Op-ed

The Future of the Transatlantic Relationship

In 1918, the War Department of the United States government gathered historians and educators from across the country together to grapple with a very distinct problem – a lack of affinity between the citizens of the United States and their counterparts in Europe. United States had just entered World War I and was now sending soldiers to fight abroad – and American society was not ready for it. This would be the first time US citizens would be conscripted into service for a war of this purpose, and it was not clear soldiers understood why they should defend their European partners in the first place. The War Department wanted to imbue the idea that they were fighting alongside Europe for a common cause.

What historians came up with was a ‘War Issues’ class for college students. The War Issues class, mandatory for all American students in 1918, was meant to stress the origins of World War I via a common understanding of European history. After the war, this transformed into the more widely-spread Western Civilization course, a general education requirement for almost all American college students that would teach them a version of history stressing a “common European life” to which the modern United States also belonged. This was perfectly timed with the United States’ newfound presence in Europe and after its isolationist period. For some 50 years, the American higher education system, with

enthusiastic backing by European counterparts, told its students that the transatlantic relationship was built on a shared history, a shared understanding of liberty, and most importantly of all, shared values.

This story illustrates how the transatlantic relationship has historically been, and still is, an active project. The War Issues curriculum was designed to give Americans and their European counterparts common language, and build affinity between very disparate societies. Policies were enacted on both sides of the Atlantic to build a cohort of politicians and statesmen that would come to view the US and Europe as part of one larger community, with shared goals and shared ideals. Even after the end of the Cold War, civil society across Europe embraced this concept of a shared community as an aspirational goal for new democracies that were then emerging.

The Biden administration was very much a product of this project. His advisors and President Biden himself grew their careers in this postwar era where shared values were a bedrock principle of the US-EU alliance. President Biden thus represented the high-water mark of US support for a transatlantic relationship – and this should be taken as a stark warning.

If you ask me about the future of the transatlantic relationship, I would tell you that its existence is not guaranteed. The idea that US-European Union ties depend on shared values is not a given – if the rising generation does not continue to pursue meaningful transatlantic ties, it will cease to exist. There is no rising leader in either major party of the US that will see the transatlantic relationship as an immutable good for the US as President Biden did. They will

instead wonder openly about the costs and benefits of that relationship, as I see with my contemporaries in the US now.

The European Union and the US must learn from the origins of their diplomatic ties to pursue new, active projects that cultivate a sense of common cause. It is for this reason I participated in the 2025 Transatlantic Youth Summit and encourage more Americans to do so next year. It is an example of what can be done to build the future foundation for a new US-Europe relationship – and it starts just by talking, one country to another, and coming to realize we are part of the same cohort set to inherit a very different world from the one we grew up in.

A new War Issues class is not a project I would recommend for this purpose. I bring it up only to illustrate what is possible to do in the middle of a world-shaking conflict to bring rising leaders together. At the Youth Summit this year, what I was struck by was how readily the other delegates and I discovered we held shared concerns. Shared concerns about specific issues, such as housing affordability and women’s bodily autonomy, and about more abstract ones such political extremism, national security, and illiberal anti-intellectualism.

These shared concerns are the incipient form of finding shared values – what we do not like, versus what we all like – that can then create a new community across the Atlantic. But crafting that will require sustained effort on both sides for people-to-people ties and engagement at the societal level – outside of Washington, D.C., and outside of Brussels. Nonetheless, there is room for optimism. More than ever, I see a young, rising transatlantic community eager to build new institutions and new

social ties across borders. When empowered, I believe that will lead to a new transatlantic relationship, with broad-based support across civil society. But much like the old transatlantic understanding, it will be borne out of the conflicts engulfing Europe and the rest of the world today.

By Drake Long,
U.S. participant at the
Transatlantic Youth Summit 2025



Past Events

Transatlantic Youth Summit in Washington, D.C.

From June 1–4, 2025, thirty young political leaders from across the European Union and the United States gathered in Washington, D.C. for the Transatlantic Youth Summit — a four-day forum focused on strengthening transatlantic relations through dialogue, policy discussions, and leadership development.

Organized by YEPP, the Summit convened rising leaders and policy experts to engage in timely conversations on critical topics including defense and security, climate and industrial transition, trade and economic resilience, the war in Ukraine, freedom of speech, and digital governance. The event also served as a platform for transatlantic networking, strategic collaboration, and policy innovation.

Over the course of the program, participants engaged with 23 high-level speakers and thought leaders across institutions and sectors. Key panels included:

■ **“Defence & Security: New Realities and Transatlantic Responsibilities”** featuring Angel Smith (Microsoft), Heather Conley (German Marshall Fund), and Courtney Rickert McCaffrey (EY), moderated by Gordon Lubold (NBC News);

■ **“High-Level Clean Industrial Transition”** led by Scott Tew (Trane Technologies), Elise Krekorian (Williams), and moderated by Tom Hassenboehler (CO2EFFICIENT);

■ **“Data-Driven Governance”** with Theodor Stolojan, Wilfredo “Wifi” Fernández (X), and Stan Veuger (AEI);

■ **A Freedom of Speech workshop** with keynote remarks by Nicole Bibbins Sedaca (George W. Bush Institute);

■ **A Trade & Economic Security panel** at Akin with Meredith Broadbent, Sally Stewart Laing, and moderator Christopher Smith;

■ And a closing keynote discussion featuring Amb. Julianne Smith and Amb. Joe Donnelly, moderated by Linda Feldmann (The Christian Science Monitor).

“Over the past few days in Washington, I had the honour of joining more than 36 young leaders from Europe and the United States, united by a shared commitment to strengthening transatlantic ties. Through open dialogue on security, climate, digital transformation, trade, and freedom of

expression, we reaffirmed a common belief: the future of the EU-US alliance depends on more dialogue, more ambition, and more action.” — *Lidia Pereira, MEP*”

Participants also visited the Library of Congress, held institutional meetings, and joined social and cultural activities, including a reception at the Bertelsmann Foundation and a farewell dinner hosted by the Hanns Seidel Foundation.

The Youth of the EPP expresses deep gratitude to our generous sponsors, whose support made this transformative experience possible: AKIN, Microsoft, PAX Sapiens, Trane Technologies, Bertelsmann Foundation, EY, Hanns Seidel Foundation, Robert Schuman Foundation, and Philip Morris.

As transatlantic ties face new global challenges, the 2025 Transatlantic Youth Summit reaffirmed a shared commitment to partnership, democratic values, and future-focused leadership.





EYE in Strasbourg

Earlier this month, YEPP took part in the European Youth Event (EYE) at the European Parliament in Strasbourg — a unique gathering that brings together thousands of young people from across the continent to share ideas and shape the future of Europe.

Our President Lidia Pereira opened the event by welcoming the participants with a motivating speech that set the tone for an engaging and forward-looking discussion. Her words reminded everyone of the crucial role young people play in defending and renewing democratic values.

Later in the programme, our Vice President Derek Groot led an inspiring workshop with participants from all over Europe, focused on the future of democracy and how young

people can actively contribute to improving it. The session was followed by a lively speed debate on some of today's most pressing political issues, encouraging participants to exchange views, challenge each other's ideas, and engage in constructive dialogue.

More than just a workshop, it was a space where young minds could connect, learn, and imagine new ways forward. In an era marked by democratic fatigue and growing disillusionment, the enthusiasm and energy of the youth present in Strasbourg reminded us that the future of democracy can — and must — be shaped from the ground up. Initiatives like EYE prove that when given a platform, young people are not just participants in democracy; they are its driving force.

YEPP meets PerspectieF

On Thursday 19 June, YEPP had the pleasure of welcoming a delegation from PerspectieF – the Christian Union Youth of the Netherlands, together with their International Secretary, Marie-Thérèse Geusau, for an exchange at the headquarters of the European People's Party in Brussels.

Chiara Notonica represented YEPP and provided the delegation with an in-depth overview of our organisation — its mission, structure, key priorities, and the impact it seeks to have on European politics. The discussion highlighted YEPP's role as a platform for shaping youth-centred policies, empowering national member organisations, and amplifying young voices within Europe's centre-right political family.

The delegates raised insightful questions on how to enhance the presence and influence of their national members within European youth politics, as well as on the internal structure of YEPP and its network of national organisations. They were particularly interested in how young leaders can engage more effectively at the European level and contribute to meaningful policy change.

The visit was a great example of the importance of open dialogue and exchange between member organisations. Strengthening ties, sharing best practices, and understanding each other's national contexts are all essential to building a more cohesive and dynamic European youth movement.





Board Meeting in Sevilla

YEPP Board Meeting in Sevilla – 20-22 July

From July 20th to 22nd, YEPP held its Board Meeting in the vibrant city of Sevilla. During the visit, YEPP had the pleasure of touring the headquarters of Partido Popular Sevilla and meeting with MEP Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez. In an engaging discussion, he shared valuable insights into his political career and the rich political history of the Andalusian region. This experience provided a unique opportunity to connect local context with European perspectives and deepened our understanding of Spain's political landscape.



The YEPP Show

Russian Interference in national elections and Moldova's Path to the EU membership – with Siegfried Muresan

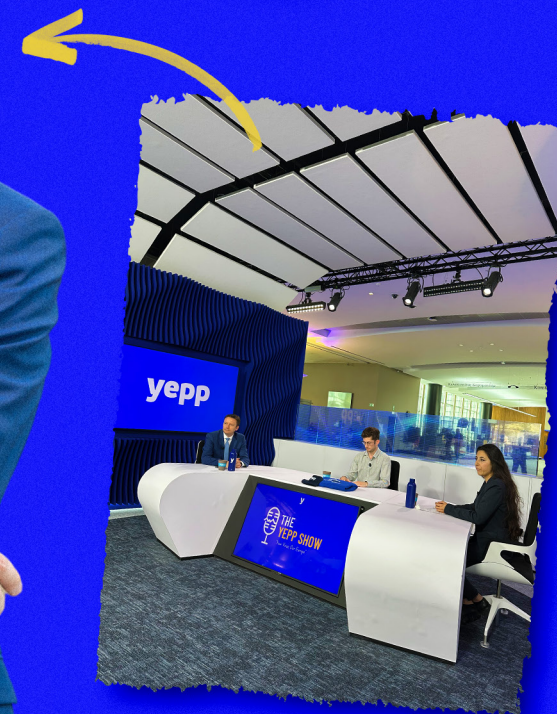
As social media now represents a significant part of our daily content consumption, 42% of Europeans aged 16–30 cite it as their main source for political and social news. Consequently, foreign interference in national elections has become a growing concern in Europe. The recent elections in Romania and Moldova have been emblematic examples of this. Firstly, with attempts to prevent the election of pro-European President Maia Sandu in Moldova, and secondly, by pushing for pro-Russian leader Călin Georgescu to win the then-annulled elections in Romania in 2024.

In this context, YEPP had the pleasure of engaging with the Vice-President of the EPP Group and Member of the European Parliament from Romania, Siegfried Mureșan. Mureșan is Chairman of the Delegation to the EU-Moldova Parliamentary Association Committee and has been very

vocal against Russian foreign interference in the EU. During the episode, he explained that the recent elections in Romania, Moldova, and Georgia saw consistent attempts by Russia to influence results by paying for votes, creating fake accounts on social media, and spreading propaganda messages. He focused on social media platforms' interests in keeping users engaged by promoting certain types of content and emphasized that EU institutions must strengthen regulation over these platforms.

Regarding Moldova, Mureșan highlighted the country's strong European identity and the people's desire to join the EU. He stated that despite massive attempts by Russia to sway the outcome, pro-European forces managed to win the referendum on EU membership and elect the pro-European leader, President Maia Sandu. In his view, it is utterly in the interest of the EU to have them as Members.

Listen to the full episode on Spotify, YouTube, or YEPP's social media!



Get to Know: Giovani PATT – The Young Voice of Autonomy in the Heart of the Alps



Giovani PATT is the youth wing of the Partito Autonomista Trentino Tirolese (PATT) – a party rooted in the unique traditions, culture, and self-government of the Autonomous Province of Trento. Guided by the core European values of solidarity and subsidiarity, Giovani PATT stands at the crossroads of tradition and modernity, shaping a new generation of leaders to safeguard and strengthen the autonomy that defines our land.

We are a youth organisation with a clear mission: to protect and advance Trentino's autonomy, while fostering regional and European and euro-regional cooperation. We believe real political leadership starts from the bottom up – in our towns, valleys, and local councils – where citizens are closest to decision-making. We prepare young people to navigate complex institutions and equip them to fully leverage the opportunities that our special form of self-government offers. Our province may be small, but its location is strategic: nestled in the Alps along the Brenner corridor, a vital route connecting Italy to the heart of Europe. Trentino has always been a bridge between cultures – a place where autonomy is not just an administrative framework, but a way of life.

A Legacy of Autonomy and Civic Action

The origins of our movement date back to a time when Trentino was part of the

Austro-Hungarian Empire. Even then, local communities enjoyed a form of limited self-rule within the multi-ethnic imperial structure. After Trentino became part of Italy in 1918, this tradition of autonomy was abruptly suppressed during the Fascist regime, which imposed centralised governance and erased regional distinctions.

But the spirit of self-government never faded. After World War II and the birth of the Italian Republic, the people of Trentino strongly endorsed republican values – with over 85% voting for the Republic in the 1946 referendum, the highest percentage in the country.

The ASAR (Associazione Studi Autonomistici Regionali) emerged in this context as a mass grassroots movement calling for autonomy. With over 100,000 members, it laid the foundations for institutional recognition of Trentino's specific identity. Thanks in part to the efforts of Alcide De Gasperi one of the Founding fathers of the European Union, a Trentino native and a key figure in post-war Italy, autonomy for Trentino and South Tyrol was enshrined in the new Italian Constitution.

From ASAR came the PPTT-UE (Partito Popolare Trentino Tirolese per l'Unione Europea), a Christian-democratic party with a strong pro-European outlook. In 1988, several autonomist forces merged to form what we now proudly represent:

the Partito Autonomista Trentino Tirolese (PATT), with its Two Edelweiss, a flower as powerful symbol of our territory. Since then, the party has maintained a continuous and active presence in local institutions, making it one of the longest-standing political forces in Italy's Republican era.

Building the Future on Alpine Roots

Today, Giovani PATT focuses on the challenges and opportunities that come with living in a mountainous region. We address issues like rural depopulation, access to basic services, housing shortages, and the impact of climate change – all of which are felt even more sharply in alpine territories. These are not just technical issues; they threaten the survival of our unique mountain communities, because we believe that local communities are the lifeblood of autonomy. Their deep sense of belonging and strong civic commitment make Trentino a national leader in active citizenship and volunteering. Our goal is to ensure that these communities remain vibrant, resilient, and represented.

**By Martino Tisot,
Giovani PATT International Secretary**



Social Media Highlights

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YEPP traveled to the European Parliament in Strasbourg 🇪🇺 to attend the EYE!

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16 of June

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From June 1–4, 30 young leaders gathered in Washington, D.C. for the Transatlantic Youth Summit 🇺🇸🇪🇺

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5 of June

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health should be talked about more often !

[74 comments](#)

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Youth of the European People's Party

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Visuals: BLAT - Creative Powerhouse Lda