



26 October 2026 | ESCP Business School, Paris

YFU SYMPOSIUM ON INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE & DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT

Reframing International Education as Democratic Infrastructure

13:30-14:00

Opening of the Symposium

14:00-14:20

Framing Education in a Multipolar World

Aydan Özoguz

The opening keynote will elaborate on the role of youth exchange and intercultural education for democratic societies and international cooperation.

14:20-15:35

Democratic Competence and Civic Outcomes

Prof. Stefan Kammhuber

From macro-level analysis to demonstrable impact, presenting research evidence linking intercultural experience to enhanced democratic engagement

Olli-Pekka Heinonen, Dr. Mamiko Reeves, Martin Lavesen

These YFU alumni will speak about how their exchange experiences shaped their understanding of democracy, their capacity to engage across difference, and their commitment to international cooperation.

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15:35-16:10 | Coffee Break

16:10-17:00

Scaling Impact Through Partnership and Policy

Prof. Francesco Profumo, Laurence Wohlers, Chris Arnold

This panel will address the harder question: how to make the positive outcomes of youth exchange systemic rather than exceptional?

17:00-18:15

Youth Diplomacy and Strategic Vision

Javier Fernandez Lasquetty

This intervention will bring together the key themes of the day in a forward-looking reflection on the role of youth exchange in shaping international cooperation and multilateral engagement.

Rita Stegen, Prof. Jussi Nuorteva, Dr. Kerry Longhurst

The panelists will engage in a moderated dialogue exploring the future of diplomacy through youth exchanges and how to position it within strategic frameworks of international cooperation.

Vito Borrego Scarlassa

The session will conclude with reflections from a young YFU alumnus, offering a personal perspective on the impact of exchange, and the future of the YFU movement in an interconnected world.

18:15-18:30

Closing remarks

The symposium will be followed by a
cocktail reception until 20:30