



YOUTH CLAIMING THEIR SPACE WITHIN THE GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR ROAD SAFETY (2021-2030)

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1. About this submission

[YOURS - Youth for Road Safety](#) is a global non-governmental organization that acts to make the world's roads safe for young people since its origins in 2009. YOURS focuses on three key areas: global youth advocacy, youth empowerment, and supporting policy-makers with meaningful youth engagement. As one of the main outcomes of the 2nd World Youth Assembly for Road Safety in 2020, YOURS initiated the [Global Youth Coalition for Road Safety](#). The Youth Coalition currently has 449 members from 93 countries and contains passionate young leaders advocating and acting in their communities to improve road safety. Together with strategic partners, including the World Health Organization, YOURS is calling for a paradigm shift and to include youth leadership in our global fight against road traffic injuries and fatalities.

This submission was prepared by YOURS - Youth for Road Safety in collaboration with the [Youth Advisory Board](#) of the Global Youth Coalition for Road Safety and officially supported by the following organization from all sectors:

- [Amend](#)
- Center on Commercial Determinants of Health ([CCDH](#)), Milken Institute School of Public Health, George Washington University
- [Child Health Initiative](#)
- [EASST](#) - Eastern Alliance for Safe and Sustainable Transport
- [FIA Foundation](#)
- Global Alliance of [NGOs](#) for Road Safety
- [IRE](#) - International Road Federation
- [Mapfre Foundation](#)
- [Michelin](#) group
- [Restless Development](#)
- [Total Foundation](#)
- [Towards Zero Foundation](#)

Our call for the systematic inclusion of youth is supported by the UN Secretary-General's [Envoy on Youth](#). We have also been in touch with multiple member states and the UN Secretary-General's [Envoy for Road Safety](#) who will include the importance of youth engagement within their feedback to the Plan.

2. Background

Road traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for children and young people aged 5-29 years. The burden is the highest in low- and middle-income countries. More than half of all road traffic deaths are among vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, which is the tragic reality for many youth who walk to school every day.

The Stockholm Declaration¹ acknowledges the significant impact of road traffic crashes on children and youth and emphasizes the importance of taking into account their needs and those of other vulnerable populations including older people and persons with disabilities.

Nevertheless, youth leaders are often faced with a closed door when they want to take part in policy and practice processes. Consistently, they find themselves in a system that is not designed to take their views into account; a system where policymakers do not yet meaningfully engage with young leaders at all. Youth voices continue to be under-represented at all levels of policy making (ideation, development, implementation and evaluation) - and this is again clearly demonstrated in the draft global plan of action for the [2021-2023 Decade of Action for Road Safety](#) where there is no mention of youth.

The current draft global plan of action doesn't recognize youth as a stakeholder nor does it provide any specific guidance for the multisectoral collaboration with youth organizations among other civil society organizations as adopted in resolution [74/299](#) on improving global road safety. The omission of the slightest mention of "youth" demonstrates an evident lack of progress and failure to recognize the needs, perspectives and engagement of youth who are most impacted by road traffic injuries and fatalities.

There is still time to get this right. To include and embrace meaningful youth engagement at its core (not bolted on, not as an option, but as good practice within the safe system). During the 2nd Decade of Action for Road Safety we need the youth skills, energy and input to design and shape future sustainable and safe mobility in our communities and cities. We must recognize youth and remind member states to keep their word after the promises given in Sweden at the 3rd Global Ministerial Conference to work with us, as equal partners and assets to the road safety movement.

¹<https://www.roadsafetysweden.com/contentassets/b37f0951c837443eb9661668d5be439e/stockholm-declaration-english.pdf>

3. Youth Addressed in the UN Resolution on Improving Global Road Safety

The resolution addressed the youth by calling on the Member States to:

- Take measures to promote road safety knowledge and awareness among the population through education, training, and publicity campaigns, especially among **youth**, and to propagate good road safety practices in the community;
- Implement road safety policies for the protection of the most vulnerable among road users, in particular children, **youth**, older persons, and persons with disabilities, taking into account the respective obligations of Member States under relevant United Nations legal instruments, as applicable;
- Take a leading role in implementing activities in support of the voluntary global performance targets for road safety risk factors and service delivery mechanisms, as well as road safety-related targets in the 2030 Agenda, while fostering multisectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration that includes the efforts of academia, the private sector, professional associations, and civil society, including the national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, and encouraging further partnership activities and initiatives, such as the Global Network for Road Safety Legislators, supported by the World Health Organization, and the Global Road Safety Partnership, hosted by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and those of other non-governmental organizations, as well as victims' organizations, **youth organizations** and the media.

4. Youth Engaged in Road Safety Policy

Underpinned by the [UN Youth 2030 Strategy](#) and the [Urgent Call to Action for Adolescent Well-Being](#), youth leadership is actively sought, championed and seen as absolutely critical for the delivery of all the SDGs, including Goal 3 (on health) and Goal 11 (on sustainable transport in cities and human settlements); and the road safety targets 3.6 and 11.2. Furthermore, the [WHO Global Accelerated Action for the Health of Adolescents \(AA-HA!\)](#) guidance to support country implementation, emphasized that the meaningful involvement of young people in all aspects of their own, and their communities', development brings multiple benefits. From an operational perspective, youth participation contributes to better decisions and policies. It allows decision-makers to tap into youth' unique perspectives, knowledge and experiences, which brings a better understanding of their needs and problems and leads to better solutions. From a developmental perspective, the engagement of youth leaders enhances youth-adult relationships, develops youth leadership skills, motivation and self-esteem, and enables them to develop the competencies and the confidence they need to play an active, positive and pro-social role in society.

Respecting youth' views regarding their mobility issues ensures that more young people will support and drive the change forward, while remaining engaged in evaluating and improving new policies that keep them safe. Countries, multilaterals and the WHO should ensure that youth' expectations and perspectives are included in global and national programming processes. This can be effectively facilitated and sustained by the global plan for action for the Decade. Youth are assets at every level, have a right to meaningful participation, and the Decade could and should be leading by example.

5. Our demands to be included in the Global Plan

Demand #1:

Given the fact that youth are the most impacted demographic on the world's roads. We strongly recommend adding an independent box specifically on **Meaningful Youth Engagement in Safe Systems Implementation**. The suggested language would be:

Road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death for children and youth aged 5-29 years. Young males are almost 3 times as likely to be killed in a road traffic crash as young females.² Most young people killed in road crashes are vulnerable road users – pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and passengers of public transport – with those from the African and Eastern Mediterranean regions most at risk. Youth and other vulnerable road users have been given inadequate consideration in road safety and urban planning decisions. This presents an imperative need to formulate and implement youth-inclusive strategies that can be targeted specifically at reducing road traffic crashes among youth.³ To effectively drive a reduction in the road traffic toll among youth, political will, financial investments and multi-stakeholder involvement of academia, the private sector, professional associations, and civil society organizations, including youth organizations and other non-governmental organizations in the prevention efforts targeting young people and the broader population.

The future of a country is its young people. Nevertheless, young people have been perceived as problem road users when it comes to road safety, while having to deal with roads and infrastructure that are not tailored to youth needs nor inclusive. The safe systems approach acknowledges that humans make mistakes, including youth. To be effective in eliminating road traffic injuries and fatalities, an increased consideration by policymakers should be made to build safe systems to protect young people.

There is a diversity of interventions that can be most effective in reducing road traffic injuries among youth such as the separation of high speed or heavy traffic flow from areas where there are young children on the roads. Meaningful involvement of youth in all phases of the policy and practice (ideation, development, implementation and evaluation) would be a key facilitator for countries and other stakeholders in the Second Decade of Action to lead and implement youth-responsive policies that reflect the realities faced by young users, hence saving their lives.

We recommend member states to implement the [UN Youth 2030 Strategy](#) and endorse the [WHO Global Accelerated Action for the Health of Adolescents \(AA-HA!\) guidance and Adolescent Well-Being Framework 2030](#) to support country implementation as we understand that the meaningful involvement of young people in all aspects of their own, and their communities', development brings multiple benefits.

² <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/road-traffic-injuries>

³ <https://www.who.int/management/programme/ncd/Youth%20and%20Road%20Safety.pdf>

In particular, we call on member states to support the [Global Youth Coalition for Road Safety](#), which was formed to implement the [Global Youth Statement for Road Safety](#), adopted at the 2nd World Youth Assembly for Road Safety⁴. The Assembly took place in February 2020 and was an important landmark for enhancing meaningful youth participation as part of the global road safety agenda. The future envisioned, with an ambitious reduction of 50% in road fatalities globally in a 10-year period, cannot be achieved without youth participation - as an exercise of citizenship, empowerment and engagement of future leaders in today's decisions.

Demand #2

If there is one single group that needs global recognition as a separate stakeholder within road safety, it is youth. Throughout the plan, we highly recommend to include youth as stakeholders, next to all other stakeholders. Youth face real and perceived barriers to be included in policy-making. They do not have the same access to resources or professional lobby groups that large NGOs have. If we want to unlock the power of young people to energize the 2nd DoA and include them in designing their future cities, we must recognize them as stakeholders.

⁴ http://www.youthforroadsafety.org/uploads/tekstblok/wya_report_web_comp.pdf

Annex 1: Youth in Global Policy Processes

UN Campaigns and Working Groups

[UN Global Road Safety Week 2021](#)

- The Global Youth Coalition for Road Safety led and joined a number of activities for the 6th UN Global Road Safety Week. Members of the Coalition joined both global and local events across the week with Sana'a Khasawneh from Jordan and Omnia El Omrani from Egypt representing youth voices in the global launch as hosted by the UN Road Safety Collaboration. Throughout the week, Coalition members spoke about the road safety situation in their regions and raised awareness on why 30 km/h speed limits and better urban design contribute to streets for life. You can find our events [here](#).

[UN Youth Advisory Group for Climate Change](#)

- Building on the youth climate movement, the Secretary-General launched his Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change on 27 July to amplify youth voices and to engage young people in an open and transparent dialogue as the UN gears up to raise ambition and accelerate action to tackle the climate emergency. Its members will bring the voices of young people into high-level decision making and advise the Secretary-General on the implementation of his 2020-21 Climate Change Strategy.

UN Decades and Declarations

[Stockholm Declaration](#)

- Call upon Member States and the international community to address the unacceptable burden of road traffic injury on children and young people as a priority, increasing political commitment, by ensuring that the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health delivers necessary action on road safety;

[UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#)

- Youth organisations will be particularly instrumental in catalysing and maintaining a global movement given their presence at a local level, and their strong role in social media trends and activities. The involvement of youth in the UN Decade is critically important not only for the sustainability of restoration initiatives designed to last beyond the 21st century, but also for promoting intergenerational equity.

- A digital hub will be established by the core team of the UN Decade in Pathway I that provides the following: targeted calls to action for changing how society perceives the need for ecosystem restoration; flows of information among stakeholders from research, policy and practice; peer-to-peer learning and experience exchange; a platform for restoration practitioners (individuals, groups and communities, with a specific focus on indigenous peoples, farmers, women and youth) to connect with each other and with investors, the general public, and funders; compendiums of best practices in different ecosystems; guidance for increasing the resilience of restored ecosystems under climate change.

[UN Declaration on the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations](#)

- We will listen to and work with youth. Youth is the missing piece for peace and development. As we benefited from the foresight of the founders of the United Nations, young people today will have to live with the consequences of our actions and inaction. For too long, the voices of youth have been sidelined in discussions about their future. This has to change now through meaningful engagement with youth.

[UN Decade of Sustainable Energy for All](#)

- Energy facilitates eradicating poverty, increasing food production, providing clean water, improving public health, enhancing education, addressing climate change, creating economic opportunity, and empowering youth and women;
- Continue to expand global consultations with all stakeholders in both developing and developed countries: civil society, businesses, youth, and Governments should continue the dialogue in order to ensure that the perspectives of all stakeholders are appropriately captured and fed into the Decade program, the post-2015 development framework, and other relevant processes.

[UN Decade of Action on Nutrition](#)

- The Nutrition Decade is inclusive, addressing all forms of malnutrition, maximizing participation by all actors, and ensuring that the needs of all people are addressed. To this end, the Nutrition Decade:
 - Addresses all people everywhere, particularly women and youth, as key stakeholders for success;
 - Engages with social movements representing peasant farmers, small-scale fishers, and fishing communities, pastoralists, refugees and migrants, urban poor, consumers, women, youth, indigenous peoples, and agricultural and food workers as key actors to establish a global movement on nutrition.