



6TH INTERNATIONAL MAYORS' CONFERENCE NOW

## „Promoting Social Cohesion - Youth Participation in our Communities“

27 – 29 JANUARY 2019, VIENNA / AUSTRIA

Returning to our motto of the 1st International Mayors' Conference NOW in January 2016, "Listen, Learn, Ask, Answer":

Act.Now will provide the space for dialogue - frank, open, uncensored, and on equal terms - between the Mayors and civil servants of the NOW Mayors' Network, local, regional and international politicians, policy- and decision-makers, educators, experts, representatives of GOs and NGOs, and a large international group of young people from Europe and the MENAT region – around the main topics of participation and education.

Young people are underrepresented in decision-making processes which affect them, although their engagement is crucial to democracy.

Our aim is to co-create and develop bold ideas and projects, jointly lead by young people and municipal and educational institutions, to shape the societies they are going to live in.

Growing dissatisfaction with and alienation from politics - leading to a noticeable rise of very conservative to right-wing movements - represent a challenge to the basis of our democracies: human rights, equality, freedom of choices, freedom of speech and the press, just to name a few.

We intend to work towards "changing the narrative" and making it possible for young people to engage and remain engaged in the public sphere.

Teenagers and young adults need access to physical spaces in their communities to support their personal, cultural and political development. Marginalised young people as well as young migrants and refugees should be able to participate in decision-making processes and be recognized as key players, particularly in processes concerning their own rights, wellbeing and interests.

We want to make you, your positive examples, leadership, best practices and expertises visible as inspirations and worthy of imitation or as impulses towards new creations.

*We need to learn to understand that we may be citizens of a certain country with our own cultural environments and traditions, and that at the same time we are citizens of the world, our home is the whole planet for which we have to take joint responsibility. (André Heller, 2016)*

*"Few will have the greatness to bend history itself; but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation" (Robert Kennedy)*

*"Real leadership is showing the courage to help people embrace change, and adjust in a fast-paced world - not making false promises about returning to the past." (John Kasich)*



Act.Now  
Hohe Warte 28/3  
1190 Vienna, Austria

E: [office@act-n-o-w.com](mailto:office@act-n-o-w.com)  
T: +43 1 890 90 05  
F: +43 1 890 90 05-5

[www.now-conference.org](http://www.now-conference.org)  
[www.act-n-o-w.com](http://www.act-n-o-w.com)

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