



Vatican Youth Symposium 2020



Youth leaders have an important role to play in promoting human dignity and our common home by instilling the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Climate Agreement, and Pope Francis' new Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* – also in the context of *Laudato si'* – through producing awareness, expertise, entrepreneurship, and moral engagement around the world. With just 10 years left to achieve the SDGs, no country is currently on track to do so. People everywhere need to be equipped not just with technical knowledge and skills, but with a deeper understanding of the values needed to forge a peaceful and sustainable future. The Vatican Youth Symposium aims to strengthen global youth movements for sustainable development by bringing together youth leaders and experts in various fields in sessions devoted to the dimensions of youth empowerment and progressive practices and work streams that promote the advancement of the 2030 Agenda.

Our seventh annual symposium, but first in a virtual setting will convene youth leaders from around the world with the support of SDSN Youth and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences. Leaders of civil society, faith communities, businesses, academia, celebrity activists and members of the UN Secretary-General's SDG Advocates, will join the gathering to offer their guidance and partnership with the youth leaders. While this symposium typically takes place within the walls of the Casina Pio IV with a smaller group, COVID-19 has presented us with the opportunity to expand our reach and further diversify our audience. The virtual symposium will create access for those who otherwise may have not been able to participate or attend such a momentous event and, in the spirit of multilateralism, will strengthen partnership among those in the global movement for sustainable development.

The theme, “New Encounters on Humanity's Path Forward: Youth, Education, Nature, and Culture” will frame sessions devoted to the dimensions of youth empowerment and intergenerational leadership with discussions on how COVID-19 presents both an enormous challenge and opportunities for advancing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The global pandemic has caused major hardships for citizens around the world, especially young people who are grappling with the constraints placed upon their futures, including that of access to education and employment. Core sessions will be categorized into thematic areas split over two days; the first day will focus on Education for Sustainable Development from primary schools through professional settings and the second day will host discussions on Human Rights, Dignity & Fratelli Tutti, Sustainable Cities & Communities, and Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Technology presenting inspiring messages of how the synergy between the creativity of younger generations and the expertise of older ones curate progressive change.

MISSION 4.7

The first day of the Vatican Youth Symposium will be dedicated to the launch of Mission 4.7, and discussions around the implementation of SDG target 4.7. Mission 4.7 is joint initiative of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, UNESCO, Columbia Centre for Sustainable Development, the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens and Pope Francis, represented by H.E. Msgr. Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo.

Mission 4.7 brings together leaders from across the world to highlight the critical importance of SDG target 4.7 and its role in ensuring quality education for all and education for sustainable development, in synergy with the new Global Compact on Education, launched by Pope Francis. It will curate and create learning materials, push countries for greater investments in quality education, and identify ways to train and support educators around the world. Given the importance of SDG target 4.7 to children and young people, motivated by Pope Francis' new Global Compact on Education, the Vatican Youth Symposium is the ideal platform for the launch of this important global program. During the symposium participants will hear from policymakers, academics, civil society representatives and young leaders about their experience with advocacy and implementation of SDG 4.7.