



**ECOSOC**  
**YOUTH FORUM**  
10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

## **10<sup>th</sup> Economic and Social Council Youth Forum**

### **Linguistic Rights and Young People: Challenges and Opportunities**

#### **SIDE EVENT AT THE ECOSOC YOUTH FORUM**

**6th April 2021, 16:00-17:30 UTC**

#### **Overview**

This side event hosted by the Universal Esperanto Association (UEA) and the World Esperanto Youth Organization (TEJO) will take place on the 6th of April 2021, 16:00-17:30 UTC in a fully-online format. The event will focus on linguistic rights: the fundamental right of every individual to choose the language or languages for communication in the private or public sphere.

One year into the COVID-19 pandemic, international institutions and organizations have observed and reported on the lack of respect and several violations of fundamental human rights. Linguistic rights are not an exception; in fact, they have been negatively affected by the rapid transition of the majority of professional, educational, personal, and social activities to an online environment. During the COVID-19 crisis, researchers are highlighting the need for public health officials to provide information in a range of languages<sup>1,2</sup> and especially to provide public health information for indigenous people all over the world<sup>3,4</sup>. Linguistic minorities have been excluded from timely, high-quality information<sup>5</sup>.

#### **Objectives**

- Raise awareness of the importance of linguistic rights and especially how they have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Highlight the relation of linguistic rights with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDGs 3, 4, 10, 16 and 17;

- Raise awareness on language discrimination: how speakers of minority languages are excluded and how decision-makers can intentionally include them;
- Allow young people from diverse backgrounds to exchange views and experiences between themselves;
- Connect linguistic minorities and use this side event as a networking opportunity.

## Proposed Format

16:00-16:05	<p><b>Welcome and Introduction</b></p> <p>Co-hosts warmly welcome participants and explain how the session will work.</p>
16:05-16:20	<p><b>Introductory presentation on language discrimination</b></p> <p>An expert (Michele Gazzola) will give an introduction to the topic of language discrimination, how linguistic rights relate to the SDGs and the current situation within the pandemic, with a focus on the experiences of youth.</p>
16:20-16:50	<p><b>Discussion in breakout rooms</b></p> <p>Participants are divided into several separate rooms to give them more space to discuss the topic. Each room has an assigned language for participants to express themselves in the language they are the most comfortable with. The discussion is guided by moderators in different languages.</p>
16:50-17:30	<p><b>Plenary discussion</b></p> <p>Each group presents the results of its own discussion. A conclusion debate follows.</p>

## Platform

- Zoom  
We will use the Zoom platform, as it enables breakout rooms and simultaneous translation for our participants. Additionally, we will explore the use of other interactive tools, such as polls, Mentimeter etc.

Registration link for Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZEkdOuhpzIsGdS6HvKpmTkR3XVND3qzFAb0>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

## References

- 1 Piekari, R., Tietze, S., Angouri, J., Meyer, R., Vaara, E. (2021) Can you Speak Covid-19? Languages and Social Inequality in Management Studies. *J. Manage. Stud.* 58(2), 587–591. 10.1111/joms.12657
- 2 Shen, Q. (2020) Commentary: Directions in language planning from the COVID-19 pandemic. *Multilingua* 39(5), 625–629. 10.1515/multi-2020-0133
- 3 Chen, C.-M. (2020) Public health messages about COVID-19 prevention in multilingual Taiwan. *Multilingua* 39(5), 597–606. 10.1515/multi-2020-0092
- 4 García, G. M., Haboud, M., Howard, R., Manresa, A., Zurita, J. (2020) Miscommunication in the COVID -19 Era. *Bull Lat Am Res* 39(S1), 39–46. 10.1111/clar.13179
- 5 Piller, I., Zhang, J., Li, J. (2020) Linguistic diversity in a time of crisis: Language challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Multilingua* 39(5), 503–515. 10.1515/multi-2020-0136