

The Thorvald Stoltenberg Seminar

13th – 18th June 2023, Utøya, Norway

“Most people believe that individuals who shy away from conflict are poor leaders. But I say, when you meet a person who tries to avoid conflict in order to solve a problem, keep that person, because we need them, they are not so many” (Thorvald Stoltenberg)

The European Wergeland Centre (EWC) and Utøya invite young activists, educators, and community leaders from across Europe to the Thorvald Stoltenberg Seminar at Utøya, Norway.

The Thorvald Stoltenberg Seminar is a training course to support young people's actions to foster co-existence, trust and dialogue among people living in diverse societies.

The training takes place at Utøya June 13th (day of arrival) - June 18th (day of departure), 2023.

Apply [here](#) by 8 March 2023.

Read more about the Thorvald Stoltenberg Seminar [here](#).



What is the Thorvald Stoltenberg Seminar?

Former Norwegian Minister of Defence, Minister of Foreign Affairs and diplomat Thorvald Stoltenberg was a pioneer for peace diplomacy. He strongly emphasized the importance of dialogue, often exemplified by his “kitchen meetings”, where he would invite state leaders and foreign ministers to his home to enjoy a cup of coffee, relax and have a talk at his kitchen table.

Thorvald Stoltenberg passed away in July 2018. In his memory, and to honour his strong belief that knowledge and respect could overcome xenophobia and hate, the annual Thorvald Stoltenberg seminar takes place at Utøya, Norway. The seminar was first arranged in 2019, and has become an important international meeting place for young people engaged in democracy and human rights.

About the training

The aim of the training is to support and promote youth engagement in Europe to foster co-existence, trust and dialogue in diverse societies.

At the training course, participants will

- identify current threats to democratic and inclusive societies
- explore how to address these challenges working with young people
- explore dialogical approaches to conflict resolution and controversial issues
- exchange experiences and good practices

Honouring the legacy of Thorvald Stoltenberg and his struggle for peace and dialogue is unfortunately timely in a time of war in Europe. At the same time, polarisation, anti-democratic sentiments and distrust in democratic institutions and between people across and within states seem to be on the rise in many European countries.

The Thorvald Stoltenberg seminar aims to address these common European challenges by creating a platform for young people from where to strengthen their democratic engagement for peaceful dialogue and co-existence in Europe.

The training will last for **6 days**, which include 4 full days of training, 1 day of arrival (13th June) and 1 day of departure (18th June). We bring together **30 participants** from all over Europe, selected through an open call.

The training is for **young people** who are involved in youth work, campaigns, networks, youth organizations or other activities with young people promoting youth engagement in society.



About Utøya

On 22 July 2011, a right-wing Norwegian extremist killed 69 people at Utøya in Norway, most of them young people attending the Norwegian Labour Party Youth's summer camp. The terrorist asserted that people with different cultural backgrounds cannot coexist in a society and promoted the conspiracy theory that Europe is slowly taken over by the Arabic world.

Utøya carries a strong testimony of why values such as tolerance, equality and diversity cannot be taken for granted, but need to be promoted and practiced in everyday life. For this to happen there need to be more places for people to meet, not less.

Since 22 July 2011 Utøya has been rebuilt as a commemoration- and learning centre. More than 10 000 young people come to Utøya every year to take part in educational programs, seminars, conferences and summer camps. Utøya is today a remarkable example of young people's response and resilience to terror and violence.

Practical information

The training is free of charge

There is no participation fee. Travel, meals and accommodation are covered by the organisers.

Working language

The working language is English. In order to participate, your understanding of and command of English need to be at a sufficient level to actively take part in sessions, discussions and social events.

The organisers

The European Wergeland Centre (EWC) is a resource centre on education for democratic citizenship, human rights and intercultural understanding. It was established by the Council of Europe (CoE) and Norway in 2008, with a mandate to support member states implement CoE policies in practice. EWC designs and offers trainings and educational programmes to educational professionals and civil society actors all over Europe.

www.theewc.org

Contact information

Do you have any questions? Please contact:

The European Wergeland Centre:

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Venue and accommodation

Utøya is situated approximately 50 minutes from Oslo. It has modern conference facilities and accommodation on site.

Utøya is a commemoration - and learning centre at the site of the terror attacks on 22 July 2011. It offers educational programmes, seminars, conferences and summer camps for young people in Norway and from other countries.

www.utoya.no

Utøya:

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